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## Weekly Update | March 6, 2019

Vol. 3, Issue 1

### A Message from Alicia

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This afternoon faculty and staff will embark upon a half-day of professional development. Recently a student asked me what teachers do with three hours in the afternoon when teachers are present but the students are not. Although his suggestions to me included some highly entertaining options such as three-legged races and eating contests, the reality is that teachers spend that time designing assessments, looking at student work, designing lessons, and mapping curricula. This year we have been fortunate enough to have that work led by our Curriculum Coordinators.

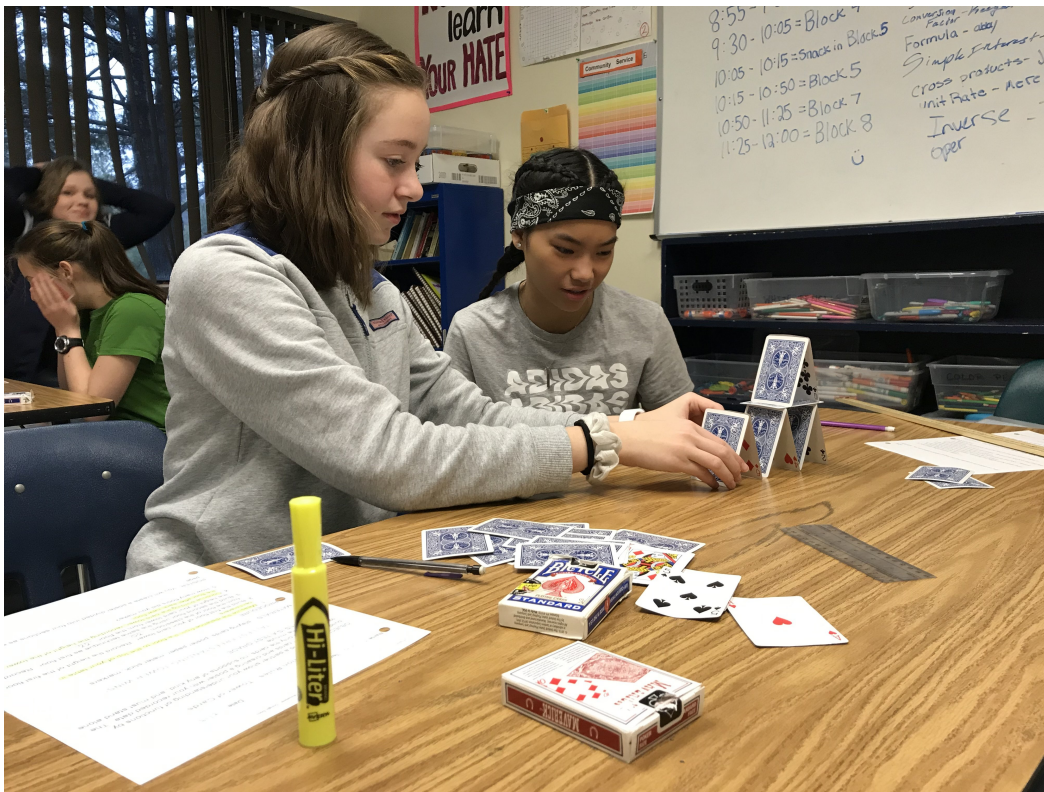
This work grown has grown in importance over the past four years when curricula and assessment were reconsidered nationwide. As No Child Left Behind became the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015, the role of assessment in our classrooms was reconsidered and part of contentious public debate. As students, parents, and teachers, we need not look to the nation to understand the reason; in a classroom few things can deflate happiness more quickly than a mandated state-wide assessment.

For an assessment to be truly effective it must be an integral part of a curriculum. State-mandated testing has it backward by testing students at the end of the year on criteria that measure classroom coverage of some of the learning standards. Although standardized testing has a role, and it does allow us to see how both individual students and the school is matching up to criteria, the usefulness of this type of assessment in the classroom is limited.

Amidst all of the standardized testing mandates, there is a need for balanced assessment that has coherence to what the students are learning every day. In our classrooms, this includes curriculum-embedded assessments. Instead of an end of the year standardized exam that tests every student at a particular grade level on the same standards, embedded assessments give a snapshot of a student at the moment of mastery. If the ultimate objective of all assessments is

happens in real time, in everyday classrooms, and with each lesson.

As teachers, much of our role here at SSCPS is to counter the standardized testing pall with exciting new ways to measure student learning. Without a doubt, the need for balanced assessment methods that truly inform instruction is the original intent of assessment. Ultimately, all assessments should inform instruction. Teachers need to be able to look at student work and gain insight into where the student is and where the student needs to be. The journey is that time between those two points, the journey is mapped out in the lesson. This is what teachers review and design during professional development. Teachers also do much of this work each day during their planning period, or on their own time at home.



Middle School Students Work on Building a Card Tower

So much of our professional development time spent on designing embedded assessments that work. One way we do this is through formative assessments. This year we added [Edulastic](#) as a way to design, implement, and organize assessments. Another way we assess learning is through exhibitions of mastery. We assess how well students have mastered the learning objective of that day, and each of those days leads to enduring understandings. There are examples of this in many of our classrooms.

In Jody Regan's middle school math class, an entire lesson may be around a single objective. One day that learning objective read, "Students must demonstrate their understanding of mathematical functions." In this case, a demonstration of understanding includes building a tower, a tower made of playing cards. The only construction tools students are given is a deck of cards.

student understanding of mathematical functions.

The journey to the poster presentations is a long one. As students build and rebuild their towers, they are constantly measuring distances - the distance from the floor to the table, the height of the first tower story, the top of the tower from the floor, the height of each story after it has been built, the list of measurements is seemingly endless. Yet all of this measuring, working together, applying mathematical theory, and venturing that extra story of cards, creates an arena of active learning.

The embedded assessment, the poster, serves as the anchor of the lesson. The poster represents measuring student learning at its best. Students were tasked with making a clearly labeled table that indicates each card tower story that they were able to build. Students were asked to identify the dependent variables, the independent variables, and to analyze the direct application in their work. Students were tasked with writing an equation for the tower building function and to make a mathematical prediction of how tall the tower could become. Finally, working in pairs, students presented their posters and findings to the group.

This is the type of lesson that holds challenge and meaning for our students. It is a lesson where a coherent assessment has been embedded in student learning. It is a lesson that serves not only as an end but also as a launching point to the next learning objective. If you are interested in learning more about Jody's class and some of her lessons, I would recommend reading her blog, [\*Fractions Aren't Half Bad.\*](#)







Building and Measuring Each Story



This afternoon at three o'clock SSCPS will hold its annual Enrollment Lottery. This event is open to the public, however, our prospective families do not need to attend. Once again admission is competitive. This year we received 956 applications for admission for 200 openings in grades K-12. We received many applications from sending districts throughout the south shore. We received the most applications from three sending districts; 262 applications from Weymouth, 185 applications from Randolph, and 129 applications from Brockton. This has been a consistent trend over the past five years. The

Alicia Savage  
 Executive Director, South Shore Charter Public School

**SSCEF Annual Auction and COMEDY NIGHT!**

**FRIDAY, MARCH 29TH, DOORS OPEN AT 6PM, DOUBLETREE BY HILTON • 929 HINGHAM ST. ROCKLAND, MA**  
**DINNER WILL BE SERVED AND SHOW BEGINS AT 7:30!**  
 • CASH BAR •

*Featuring*  
**CAROLYN PLUMMER**

*Headliner*  
**PAUL GILLIGAN**

*Opener*  
**EJ MURPHY**

**TICKETS \$45**

\$35 TICKETS UNTIL MARCH 1ST OR UNTIL WE SELL OUT! • SPACE IS LIMITED. TICKET PRICE INCREASES TO \$45 AFTER MARCH 1ST...  
 SO MAKE SURE TO SIGN UP EARLY!

**MC/HOST BILL FARRELL**

**For Tickets: [www.sscps.org/comedy](http://www.sscps.org/comedy) or call Laurie: 781.982.4202, ext 207**

The Development Office is very excited to open [registration](#) for our very fun (adult only) Auction and Comedy night scheduled for Friday, March 29th at the Doubletree by Hilton in Rockland. The auction is our largest fundraiser of the year and we have been doing it for 24 years!! All proceeds raised toward this event benefit the South Shore Charter Educational Foundation that funds our K-12 community. The per person price this year is \$45 and will include dinner and show. Space is limited so



We will have a wide variety of amazing items that you can bid on to include many fabulous teacher experiences, artwork, local restaurant gift certificates, summer camp opportunities, sporting events tickets, spas, overnights and so much more. Additionally, our Level I students are all working on their classroom projects so please keep your eye out from your pod parent!

Thank you for being a part of this wonderful community. Reach out please to Laurie Dannison at [ldannison@sscps.org](mailto:ldannison@sscps.org) if you have access to local businesses or donations, or if you would like to support the event as a corporate sponsor.

Wednesday	03/06	Professional Development Early Release	12:00pm
Wednesday	03/06	Enrollment Lottery at 100 Longwater Circle	3:00pm
Thursday	03/07	School Council	3:40pm
		Family Engagement Task Force	4:45pm
Thursday	03/07	Stomp Dynasty Championship	5:30pm
Thursday	03/07	April 2020 Europe Trip Meeting – Music Room at 100	6:30pm
Monday	03/11	3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter Warnings Mailed	
Wednesday	03/13	Scotland April 2019 Trip Meeting at 700	6:00pm
Wednesday	03/13	INPAC Meeting at 100	6:30pm
Thursday	03/14	Level III Operation Conservation Project to Cape Wildlife	
Thursday	03/14	Winter Athletics Banquet at the SSCPS Gym	
		Parents are encouraged to attend. Please park at 100 Longwater Circle or 700 Longwater Drive.	4:00-5:00pm
Thursday	03/14	Board of Trustees Meeting	7:30pm
		Development Committee	7:00pm
		Finance Committee	6:30pm
		Governance Committee	5:00pm

Weekly Updates are emailed and posted to our website [www.sscps.org](http://www.sscps.org) every Wednesday.

Here are links to upcoming events and other items of interest.

- [Food Service](#) – March Order Forms and Menus are available!
- **Order your 2019 Yearbook!** Order online at [www.coffeepond.com](http://www.coffeepond.com) and use password: bluejaguar or complete an order form available at the front desks
- [SSCPS Counseling Department](#) offers workshop information and resources for students and families
- Visit our new online option to [purchase](#) SSCPS apparel
- Please visit our [Giving](#) link for information regarding *The Fund for SSCEF*
- From the Health Office: [March Nutrition Newsletter](#)
- [2019 Annual Parent Survey](#)

Please contact Pam Algera at [palgera@sscps.org](mailto:palgera@sscps.org) to submit SSCPS items for publication.

[Accountability Plan](#)

[SSCPS By-Laws](#)

[School Improvement Plan](#)

[School Council](#)

Schedules by Level:

- [Level I](#)
- [Level II](#)
- [Level III](#)
- [Level IV](#)

[Pick-up Procedures](#)



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[www.sscps.org](http://www.sscps.org)

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