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Weekly Update | January 6, 2021

Vol. 1, Issue 1

A Message from Alicia

Good evening. The news coming out of Washington, DC today has been difficult to watch and comprehend. At this time, it seems that the United States Capitol has been secured and that lawmakers are attempting to return to certify the Electoral College vote. We are living in strenuous and difficult times. The events of today may be confusing and some of the images upsetting. If you feel your child is feeling anxious and is in need of counseling, or someone additional to talk to, please reach out to your child's teacher or assistant principal so that we can make the necessary arrangements for additional support.

As we begin 2021, we remain hopeful that much will change for the better. For many of us, it would be hard to imagine a more difficult year than 2020. Yet here we are, day three of teaching and learning, and our students, teachers, and families are meeting that challenge once again.

As we do our best through computer screens and grids of small boxes, it remains clear that this is not the January we had hoped for when planning our school year over the summer. During those weeks of planning we had all hoped that COVID-19 would be gone by now and we would be in our classrooms with our students appreciating the return to normalcy. As much as we thought we were mentally prepared for all possible scenarios, it is hard to rise above the disappointment we all feel looking at the rising case numbers and remote instruction ahead of us.

This school year has been one of balancing the steps we need to take to mitigate the virus with the educational needs and emotional well being of our students. Teachers know that remote learning, even the most honed remote learning, is far from optimal. We have all had a front row seat to a show we never anticipated; in many cases witnessing first hand as teachers work twice as hard while students do the best they can to learn half as much. We are all waiting for the pandemic to

end. What we need to consider now is what steps we need to take before that long-awaited and overdue moment arrives when we overcome COVID-19.

On December 12, 2020, the SSCPS Board of Trustees voted to change how the school will determine whether or not to institute building or classroom closures. The past two campus closures were brought about when a certain percentage of our sending cities and towns entered the “red” category. Our buildings remain closed now because last week’s [Massachusetts Department of Public Health Weekly COVID-19 Health Report](#) identified 97.6 percent of those cities and towns as being red. As the number of COVID-19 cases statewide continues to trend upward, over 25 percent of our cities and towns have remained red for five consecutive weeks.

Moving forward we will no longer use the regional calculation metrics as the means of determining school closure. Instead, the Board of Trustees voted for a new system which uses COVID-19 positivity rates within the school as the basis for closures. Should the school experience 3 confirmed positive cases of COVID-19 in a specific cohort or building over a five school day period, the school may close the campus, a building, or parts of a building to mitigate the spread of the virus. The change will be effective January 20, 2021 and in-person and hybrid learning will resume on that day.

There is much to consider as January 20 approaches. By changing the closing determination from outside cities and towns to what occurs within our school community, an important distinction emerges. It means that instead of relying upon trends from our cities and towns, we may have some impact in controlling building closures by monitoring our own actions and behaviors. To keep our school community safe and our buildings open, we can all do our part by working together and following the statewide guidelines and recommendations. The collective good of our school community depends on the individual decisions we make in our homes and with our family members.

We are asking all members of our school community to make some hard decisions. This includes avoiding out-of-state travel, particularly traveling by airplane, train, or bus. If you must travel, please adhere to the state requirements of a 14 day quarantine. There is no test out option for school in-person attendance.

As residents of Massachusetts are we are also being asked to avoid gatherings, including in-home gatherings, with anyone outside of your immediate family. To quote the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, “Any time you gather with others outside of your household, you increase the risk of contracting or spreading illness. All residents are discouraged from gathering.” Governor Baker’s most recent order from December 23 may be found [here](#).

Once we return to some in-person learning, we are asking that all families fill out the daily questionnaire on School Pass and conduct daily temperature checks for each member of their household who will be attending school that day. If you need access to a thermometer, or forget to do a temperature check, please let the Health Office know so a nurse can conduct a temperature check on site.

Should your child test positive for COVID-19, please notify the Health Office immediately. We have been extremely fortunate that families have been helpful and cooperative in keeping the school notified of positive cases within their household. These swift actions have allowed our Health Office to begin contact tracing and determine close contacts rapidly. Notification is an essential component of virus mitigation and we ask all members of our school community to continue to keep us informed of all cases, including those cases in our full remote student population.

We all have a role to play that can have a meaningful impact on teaching and learning. We understand that COVID-19 restrictions and guidelines have grown tiresome. However, restrictions and guidelines are less tiresome than classroom closures. Your adherence to the health and safety guidelines recommendations is your choice; it is something that you can control during a time when so much seems out of our control.

Lastly, I would like to thank you for all of your continued effort as you work with your children and support them at home. Children, families, and teachers have all had their lives significantly impacted over the course of this pandemic and there is no downplaying the sacrifices we have all had to make. On a very positive note, I would like to call your attention to our wonderful National Honor Society students who are offering virtual tutoring services for all SSCPS students in all grades at no cost to our families. If you are interested in virtual tutoring for your child, please send an email to SSCPS student Honora Sullivan, whose email address is below. Our students remain our greatest asset at all times, and this time is certainly no exception.

Sincerely,

Alicia Savage
Executive Director

**National Honor Society Virtual Tutoring
Free for All SSCPS Families**



NHS

ZOOM TUTORING

Need extra help with your classes this year?

EMAIL HONORA_SULLIVAN@STUDENT.SSCPS.ORG

all grades, K-12

IMPORTANT

Weekly COVID-19 Health Report

Released on Thursday

The [Massachusetts Department of Public Health Weekly COVID-19 Report](#), including the city/town data and map, will be posted on Thursday evening.

The weekly report provides the count and rate of confirmed COVID-19 cases and tests, including the daily incidence rate in Massachusetts cities and towns. We use this data as one way to determine if our school needs to transition learning models. Because over 25 percent of our student population municipalities turned red for **the fifth consecutive week last week**, the school has transitioned to full remote learning. The transition to full remote learning instruction is for all K-12 students, including students in Cohort C.

The report on January 1, 2021 identified 30 cities and towns where our students reside, 97.6 percent, in the red category showing an increase in the number of positive COVID-19 cases. Those districts include Ambington, Attleboro, Avon, Boston, Braintree, Bridgewater, Brockton, Carver, Cohasset, East Bridgewater, Halifax, Hanover Hanson, Holbrook, Hull, Kingston, Marshfield, Middleborough, Norwell, Pembroke, Plymouth, Quincy, Randolph, Rockland, Scituate, Stoughton, Taunton, Waltham, Weymouth, and Whitman.

We are asking all families to do their part so that we may reopen safely in January. This includes avoiding out-of-state travel, including traveling anywhere by airplane, and refraining from in-home gatherings with anyone outside of your immediate family.

Thank you for your support.

From the Health Office

If your child has received the flu vaccine or other vaccines, please send a copy to the appropriate health office. Governor Baker has issued a flu shot mandate for all Massachusetts schoolchildren. Forms can be mailed, faxed or emailed to the appropriate nurse.

High school: sdupras@sscps.org or bfolan@sscps.org

K-8 school: dedwards@sscps.org or jkelgaard@sscps.org

Fax # 781-982-4201

SSCPS has an email address to use when your child will be absent. This email address should be used for both In-Person and Remote students. The email is sent to the Health Office as well as both Front Desks.

Email: Attendance@sscps.org

Please include the following information:

- Your student's name and grade
- Reason for Absence
- Contact phone number

If the absence is due to illness the nurse will call you back and ask you questions about symptoms.

COVID-19 Check

Please remember to check your child for COVID-19 symptoms including temperature before arriving at school or getting on the bus. Wellness checks should be completed on School Pass. If your child is absent with symptoms or has been tested, even if negative you must **notify the health office** before your child returns to school. Please use the **attendance email** that is found on the SSCPS website to report a student absence even if your child is not ill but will be working remotely that day. If it is not reported you will receive a phone call from the school regarding the your child's absence.

Visit the school's [Health Office](#) page for additional information.

The nursing team here at the South Shore Charter Public School Health Office has compiled this COVID-19 FAQ sheet to provide families with information pertaining to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and school-wide procedures.

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

- **Fever (100.0° Fahrenheit or higher), chills, or shaking chills**
- **Cough (not due to other know cause, such as chronic cough)**
- **Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath**
- **New loss of taste or smell**
- **Sore throat**
- **Headache, when in combination with other symptoms**
- **Muscle aches or body aches**
- **Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea**
- **Fatigue, when in combination with other symptoms**
- **Nasal congestion or runny nose (not due to other known causes, such as allergies) when in combination with other symptoms**

What should I do every morning before my child goes to school?

Perform a wellness check every morning before your student arrives at school. Please check temperatures and check to see if your student has any of the above mentioned symptoms. Please fill out the questionnaire on the School Pass app before sending your child to school.

What happens if my student is sent home from school with COVID-like symptoms?

If your child develops COVID-like symptoms at school they will be sent to the CARE room. They will be sent home and will not be able to return to school until they have a negative PCR COVID-19 test, a medical note clearing them to return, or your student will need to remain home for 10 days. Symptoms need to be resolved and students will need to be fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication before they can return.

What is the CARE room?

The CARE room is a separate room where students with any COVID-like symptoms are brought until they are picked up from school. The CARE room is a separate room from the health office. The students will remain in the CARE room with a nurse until they leave school.

If my child is sent home from school with COVID-like symptoms can their siblings be at school?

No, if a student is sent home with COVID-like symptoms all siblings and household members will also be sent home and cannot return until the symptomatic child is cleared to return to school.

My child has COVID-like symptoms and I am keeping them home, can I send my other children to school?

No, all siblings and household members will need to remain out of school until the child with symptoms is cleared to return to school by a negative PCR COVID-19 test, a medical note clearing them to return, or all household members will need to stay home for 10 days.

My child has COVID-like symptoms and I took them for a rapid antigen COVID-19 test that was negative, can they return to school?

No, a rapid negative antigen COVID test is not accepted as a substitute for the PCR test due to a higher rate of incorrect test results. The student may not return to school until they have a negative PCR test.

A household member has COVID-like symptoms, may my children go to school?

No, the student must remain out of school until the household member has a negative PCR COVID-19 test or is medically cleared by a doctor stating that the

symptoms are not due to COVID-19. No student can return to school if a household member has a pending COVID-19 test due to having COVID-like symptoms.

Where can my child or household member get COVID-19 PCR testing?

[Massachusetts COVID-19 Testing Sites](#)

[Mass.gov | Stop the Spread](#)

What should I do if my student is positive for COVID-19?

Please keep your student home and contact the school's Health Office immediately. The student will need to isolate for 14 days. The student will need to be cleared by the school Health Office before returning to in-person school and the student will need to have had a negative PCR COVID-19 test, or a doctor's note clearing them to return. They will also need to have resolved/improved symptoms and be fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication.

[Mass.gov | COVID-19 Isolation and Quarantine Information](#)

Do I report my COVID-19 test results?

Yes, both negative and positive test results should be reported to the appropriate Health Office.

Do I need to report a positive COVID-19 test if my student is fully remote?

Yes, the school is required to report all positive cases to DESE, even fully remote students.

How do I contact the school if my student will be absent from school?

Please use the email: attendance@sscps.org or contact the appropriate school health office. If your student has any COVID-like symptoms, please speak to the nurse directly.

HS: 781-982-4202 X 182 or email: sdupras@sscps.org or bfolan@sscps.org

K-8: 781-982-4202 x104 or email: dedwards@sscps.org or jkjelgaard@sscps.org

Why is it important for me to call my student's school nurse when they are home sick?

Keeping communication with your child's school nurse about your student's illness allows for the nurses to track illnesses in the school community and to maximize the health and safety of all students and staff.

What is a close contact?

Per the CDC, a close contact is someone who has been within 6 feet of a person positive for COVID-19 for a total of 15 minutes in the previous 48 hours of the onset of symptoms or from a positive COVID-19 result of an asymptomatic person.

What should I do if my student is a close contact to a person positive for COVID-19?

If your student is a close contact to a positive person they will need to quarantine for 14 days from the date of exposure. It is recommended that they have a PCR COVID-19 test on day 5 of being exposed. Regardless of the results they will need to remain in quarantine for a full 14 days from the exposure.

What should we do if a household member is a close contact?

If a household member is a close contact to a person positive with COVID-19 and asymptomatic the student may remain in school. If the household member is symptomatic the student will need to remain home until the close contact has a negative PCR COVID-19 test. If the household member is positive, the student will need to quarantine for 14 days from the date of exposure or 48 hours prior from the date of the test if the person is asymptomatic.

Can my student do remote learning if they are not able to be in person due to quarantining or having COVID-like symptoms?

Yes, students are expected to continue remote learning while in quarantine or are unable to be in school due to the student or family members having COVID-like symptoms. Please reach out to your child's administrators and teachers.

We are traveling to a high risk (red) state. Can my student return to in-person school if they have a negative COVID-19 test?

No, our school policy is that all students who have traveled to a state that Massachusetts has deemed as non low risk need to quarantine for 14 days starting the day after they return from traveling.

[Mass.gov | COVID-19 Travel Order](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-travel-order)

What supplies does my child need from home for school?

- Water bottle with straw
- 2 face masks
- Chromebook
- School bin (can stay at school for the week)
- Change of seasonal clothing (kids go outside for most weather for recess, mask breaks, snack and specialist classes)
- Warm clothing (students go outside for snack, mask breaks, lunch at the high school and specialist classes)

Should my student bring warm clothing (jacket/hat/gloves) in the cold weather?

Yes, students at the high school have lunch outside in all weather conditions. Specialist classes and snack breaks are also held outside. Windows at 100 will be kept open to improve air ventilation. Students should bring warm clothing.

Why does my child have to wear a face mask?

Face masks are an important measure to take to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Face masks help reduce the spread by containing the infected person's respiratory droplets from traveling to other people.

What type of mask should my student wear to school?

All students and staff are required to wear a mask at school. Appropriate masks are two-ply face masks that stay up around the nose. Masks should be washed daily and students should have an extra mask in their bag. There are disposable masks available if one becomes dirty or breaks while at school. Gaiters, and bandanas, and masks with a valve are not acceptable for school.

What if my student is having difficulty wearing a mask at school?

Masks are required at school for all students and staff. Students will be given mask breaks during the day. If a student is not wearing their mask appropriately at the middle and high school students will be given a warning and a phone call home for the first offense. The second offense will result in the student being sent home.

How do I contact the school if I have questions about COVID-19 or need to report a positive case?

Should your child test positive for COVID-19, have symptoms, or if you have any questions, please contact the appropriate school health office and speak to one of our nurses directly.

High School: 781-982-4202 X 182 or email:

Susan Dupras, sdupras@sscps.org or Barbara Folan, bfolan@sscps.org

K-8: 781-982-4202 x104 or email:

Darcie Edwards, dedwards@sscps.org or Jaime Kjelgaard, jkjelgaard@sscps.org

Thank you for your ongoing support and for your assistance keeping our school community safe.

Susan Dupras, RN

Darcie Edwards, RN

Barbara Folan, RN

Jaime Kjelgaard, RN

FROM THE SSCPS NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY

SSCPS Homeless Shelter Outreach

As we all know, because of COVID-19 times have been hard. If you would like to help others this winter check out the charities listed below.

*only accepts new items

Items needed:

- Winter gear (coats, hats, gloves, blankets, socks, scarfs...)
- Hygiene products (toiletries, feminine products...)
- Clothing (adult & childrens)
- Water/Food items
- Baby products
- Kitchen supplies
- Masks
- Books/Children's toys
- Monetary donations



Shelters and Organizations:

- *Carolina Hill Shelter: 728 Main St, Marshfield
 - (781) 837-1377
 - <http://www.carolinahill.org/donate.html>
- Father Bill's & MainSpring: 38 Broad St, Quincy/54 N Main St, Brockton
 - (617) 770-3314; <https://helpfbms.org/donate/>
- Conway House Shelter: 14 East Grove Street, Middleboro
 - (508) 946-8505; Mondays-Fridays 8am-5pm
- Rosie's Place: 889 Harrison Ave, Boston
 - (617) 442-9322; <http://rosiesplace.org/give>
- Dorchester Community Fridge: 1471 Dorchester Ave, Dorchester
 - Accepting all food donations, will take homemade meals as long as they're labeled with ingredients and date made
 - Instagram: @dotcommunityfridge
- Catie's Closet: 63 Sprague Street, Boston
 - <https://www.catiescloset.org/donate-items>

In order to keep track of all items donated from those a part of the SSCPS community, please send an email to dominique_childs@student.sscps.org or jhought101@student.sscps.org stating that you donated and which organization you donated to.

If you have any questions or would like more information please email either email listed above, Thank you!

Travel Advisory

We would like to remind families of the health and safety guidelines put forward by Governor Baker and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health in the recently updated [COVID-19 Travel Order](#). The South Shore Charter Public School has enacted a strict travel protocol which requires that all students who return from traveling to high risk states or countries, or students who have been on a plane, must quarantine for fourteen (14) days. Students in grades 2-12 are expected to learn remotely during the 14-day quarantine period. Students in

grades K-1 are expected to utilize their learning bins.

Our school policy regarding voluntary travel is stricter than the Massachusetts Travel Order. There is no exemption from quarantine if your child tests negative **prior** to returning to Massachusetts. Because of the nature of COVID-19 transmission, and the chance of exposure within the 72-hour period prior to returning to Massachusetts, the school does not consider the described testing measure to be adequately preventative. A 14-day quarantine is required by our school's [Health Office](#).

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

Housing Help

Paying rent or a mortgage can be especially challenging during a pandemic. The Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development has centralized information about resources for families struggling to make rent or mortgage payments due to COVID-19. If you or another family you know needs assistance, please go to www.mass.gov/covidhousinghelp for more information.

WiFi Assistance

Please use the buttons below for information regarding low cost internet services in your area.

[Low Cost Internet Services](#)

[NDIA Free and Low Cost Internet Plans](#)

[Lifeline Cell Phone Service Provider](#)

FROM THE YEARBOOK COMMITTEE

The 2021 yearbook is now in progress and all the memories of the 2021 school year will be published forever in print. To order online go to www.coffeepond.com, to login use school password: bluejaguar. **Early ordering at discount price of 37.00 by Dec. 31st.** Parents may submit a special personalized page that will appear in the back of the book for their senior at these rates: Full page \$150, 1/2 pg. \$75, 1/4 pg. \$50. Due date is March 30, 2021. Please email Christine at cbodnar@sscps.org with any questions.

From the SSCPS Board of Trustees

Call for Applications or Nominations to Serve on the Board of Trustees

This June the terms of several members of the Board of Trustees will end. The Governance Sub-committee anticipates that there will be several openings for the three-year terms that will begin on July 1, 2021.

The Board is the governing body for SSCPS: it sets policy, creates committees, and acts as fiduciaries. As the governing body of the school, trustees play an important role in advancing the school and helping its administrators and teachers achieve the goals for our students.

Why apply (or nominate someone) to serve on the Board and what are the Board's needs and expectations? We are looking for candidates who

- are collaborative, active listeners, and problem-solvers
- are willing to contribute their time and share their expertise to help SSCPS achieve its academic, social, and emotional goals for all students and to secure adequate funding to accomplish them
- will work with other members of the BOT and the school to foster stronger ties with parents, businesses, non-profit foundations, and sending communities

How do I apply (or nominate someone)?

Application materials are available on the [SSCPS website](#).

Questions regarding application materials

Please contact Prue Goodale, Chair of the Governance Sub-committee at pgoodale@board.sscps.org if you have questions or need additional information

Submit materials by email to pgoodale@board.sscps.org

Mon-Thurs	01/04-01/07	Remote Learning for All Students	
Wednesday	01/06	Junior Parent Night Join Zoom Meeting https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84533808961? pwd=N1Y3a0JFUzIjYlYjUtaThwZStudz09_Meeting_ID: 845 3380 8961 Passcode: 206665	6:00pm
Thursday	01/07	School Council Meeting via Zoom Join Zoom Meeting https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84889839314? pwd=b01XUW9qUFdhLORCUjRxsIVtWGx4QT09 Meeting ID: 848 8983 9314 Passcode: 112189	4:15pm
Friday	01/08	Remote Learning for All Students	8:15a-12:05p
Mon-Thurs	01/11-01/14	Remote Learning for All Students	
Tuesday	01/12	Freshman Parent Night Join Zoom Meeting https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85163228154? pwd=R1ppdHNwcXhROFdYbTMyd2hWS3FLZz09 Meeting ID: 851 6322 8154 Passcode: 168414	6:00pm
Wednesday	01/13	Sophomore Parent Night Join Zoom Meeting https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81268195247? pwd=ejhMMjRiN1ZjMm5YRWdPcjJSOW5KQT09 Meeting ID: 812 6819 5247 Passcode: 016467	6:00pm
Thursday	01/14	Virtual Open House for Grades 9-12 Click here to Register	2:00pm
Thursday	01/14	Governance Committee Finance Committee	5:30pm 7:00pm
Friday	01/15	Professional Development Day – No Classes	

Important Links

Weekly Updates are emailed and posted to our website www.sscps.org every Wednesday.

- [Food Service](#)
- [Health Office](#)
- [Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance](#)
- Visit the [Parents Association Website](#)
- Visit our new online option to [purchase](#) SSCPS apparel

Here are links to upcoming events and other items of interest. Please contact Pam Algera at palgera@sscps.org to submit SSCPS items for publication.

School Documents

[2020-21 School Calendar](#)

[Student and Family Handbook](#)

[SSCPS By-Laws](#)



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Our website address is:

www.sscps.org

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