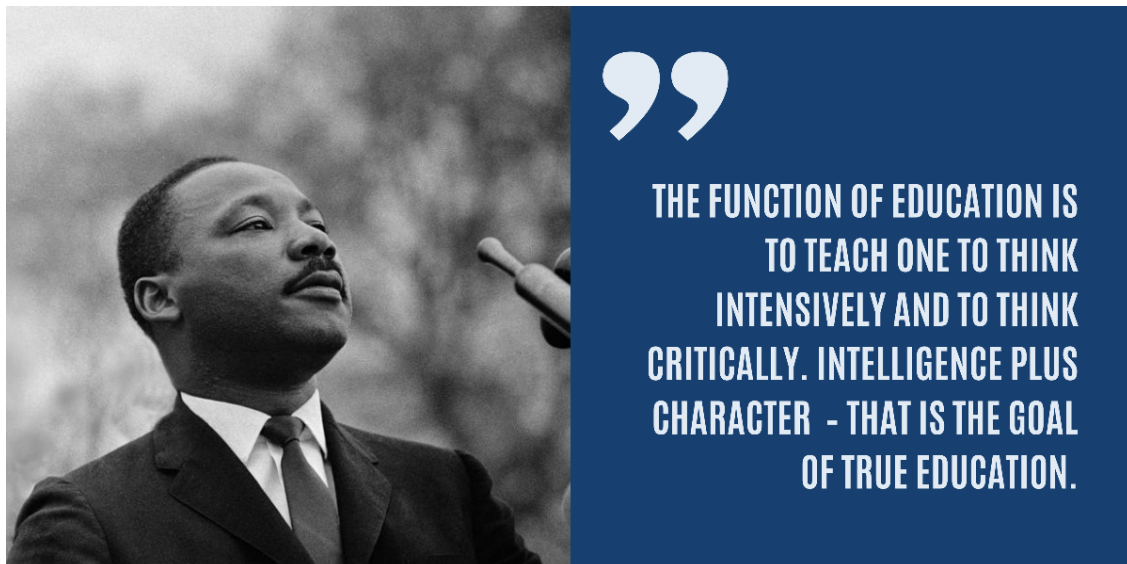


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Weekly Update | January 19, 2022

Vol. 1, Issue 3



*Remembering and honoring **Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.** (January 17th, 2022).*

CALENDAR CHANGE ANNOUNCEMENT

FRIDAY, APRIL 15TH:

There will be a half-day of school on Friday, April 15th to make up for the snow day on January 7th. Religious exemptions will be granted.

A Message from Donika

As we near the end of January, this is a very exciting time because it marks the midyear point of the school year. Students and teachers in grades 7-12 have been working hard to prepare for midyear exams. These exams are designed to assess student learning for the first half of the year in each content area. Teachers have provided study guides and are delivering various forms of review in the days leading up to the exams. These exams can add some extra stress at this time of year, but they provide crucial practice and assessment data for students in grades 7-12.

Midyear exams are designed to be taken in a 90-minute block. This timing helps build testing stamina and allows students to practice for the testing environment of standardized exams like the MCAS, PSATs, SATs, and AP Exams. The style of exam also helps prepare students for college-level courses where midterm and final exams are common practice. The more exposure students have to testing environments like this, the more comfortable they may feel at tackling the longer higher stakes exams.

There is also a lot to be learned during the studying and review process. Studying is a difficult skill to master at the middle school and high school level, and it usually takes many years to learn the strategies that might help best. Every student will have their own process and forms of success when learning how to effectively study for an exam. Teachers have been helping students as they guide them through review packets, topic outlines, practice, and notes. Not only is memorization important for recall, but the process in which students solve a problem, make a claim, analyze a text, interpret data, translate a phrase, speak in another language, and synthesize their understanding are all important skills that require many hours of practice. Memorization is crucial to their overall development in all content areas.

How can we help students prepare for such exams?

We can help them carve out time, find a place conducive for studying, and provide support for them to review and practice as much as they need. Teachers provide time during class, but it is important that students take the time at home to practice skills and review content. It is also important to have some space at home dedicated to focused studying. Google Classroom is the best way to see all the resources available for each class, but having a dedicated notebook/binder/folder per class is also helpful to organize notes or handouts. Students should also make sure to get rest and utilize break time at school to refuel with some nutritious snacks and water. If extra help or 1:1 review time is needed, students should reach out to teachers for

some added support. Students will take two exams per day and one on Wednesday if no makeup is needed. The afternoons will be dedicated to studying for the following day of exams.

When it comes to grading, midyear exams make up 10% of the overall final average for the year. This means that they do not get factored into a quarter grade (quarters are worth 20%), but will be on their report card as a standalone grade. This is also true with final exam grades. It is important to note that although they are worth something, the quarter averages weigh much more heavily on the overall grade. Hard work, practice, and getting the support they need will help students be successful.

As always, everyone is here to help and provide support. Midyear exams will help students grow their academic experience. Students should be reminded to reach out with any support or extra review they may need. After midyears, it is on to Quarter 3—happy testing!

Sincerely,

Donika Darabus

Mathematics Curriculum Coordinator

A Message Regarding Student Anxiety

In its most “normal” form, a low level of anxiety constitutes just one of the many emotions that accompany situational experiences throughout life. When fear is triggered by an unknown or a perceived challenge, anxiety is not an abnormal response. The hope is that it passes and does not take too firm of a hold on us.

A quick Google search shows a simplified definition of anxiety in the Merriam-Webster Dictionary as, “fear or nervousness about what might happen.” ([source](#))

The National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) states that symptoms of anxiety “can interfere with daily activities such as job performance, school work, and relationships.” ([source](#))

The American Psychological Association (APA) describes anxiety, and its potential symptoms, as being “an emotion characterized by feelings of tension, worried thoughts and physical changes like increased blood pressure.” ([source](#))

Students in grades 7-12 have upcoming midyear exams next week. Besides the already heightened level of unease during our current Covid climate, not much additional stress is needed to quickly raise anxiety to an overwhelming level. 7th and 8th grade students, in particular, face the factor of the unknown with these exams. Midyear exams typically begin for students in 7th grade at SSCPS, making the novelty a rite of passage for them. Our current 8th graders did not take these exams last year as we adjusted to remote learning; therefore, midyear exams will be a new experience for all Level 4 students this year.

Teachers have distributed study guides and have shared the format of the assessments, in an effort to minimize anticipatory stress for our students. Last week’s Advisory lessons were dedicated to explaining the impact, purpose and process of the midyear exams. During testing, mask breaks and snack time will be scheduled for students. As Monday approaches, if you notice signs of anxiety in your child, you can be supportive at home in a variety of ways.

Lynn Lyons is one of many professionals in the field who has written numerous books on this subject. One takeaway from her writing is the idea of creating separation between a person and the anxiety by building a clear boundary between the individual and the overwhelming emotion. Some of her suggestions are incorporated into the recommendations below.

Elementary Level:

At the elementary grade level, you can ask a child to picture the anxiety as a monster. Encourage the child to draw what that monster might look like - even name the monster! When experiencing the anxious feelings, the child can address the monster by name and tell it to go away. The mindset that the monster is neither in control of them, nor a part of them, can be empowering for the child.

Older Children:

Using the same idea with an older child, a similar version of this exercise might take the form of guided imagery to create a mental container or shelf where they discard the unwanted thoughts and feelings. Additionally,

a child might utilize an actual physical container in which they actively “throw away” pieces of paper containing the emotions, after writing them down.

All Students:

Students can practice positive self talk. Ask them to imagine what they might say to a friend who is experiencing similar feelings and remind them to show that same kindness, encouragement, and support to themselves.

The often underestimated, but typically effective, use of **deep breathing exercises** can go a long way. This strategy is very user-friendly in the classroom. Inhaling to a slow 5-count, holding for a 2 count, releasing and repeating as needed can create an almost immediate change in physical energy.

Another way to shift mindset is to use the **5 Senses Countdown**. This exercise consists of quietly noticing surrounding sensory input to change the focus from “stuck” thinking to something more neutral. This might look like:

Notice 5 things that you can see

Notice 4 things that you can touch

Notice 3 things that you can hear

Notice 2 things that you can smell

Notice 1 thing that you can taste

Having on hand a **photo of a beloved family pet** or a favorite “**happy place**”, something they drew or an inspiring motto might also provide some comfort.

Remind your children that the only expectation is for them to **do their very best**. These exams will pass, along with the anxiety surrounding them. Remind your child that they have not ALWAYS felt anxious. Ask them to close their eyes and recall in detail a time that was free of the uncomfortable feelings.

Here at school, each building has two adjustment counselors available to support our students. If you have concerns about your child’s social/emotional well-being, your family pediatrician can also serve as a great resource for additional guidance.

Tanya Ames

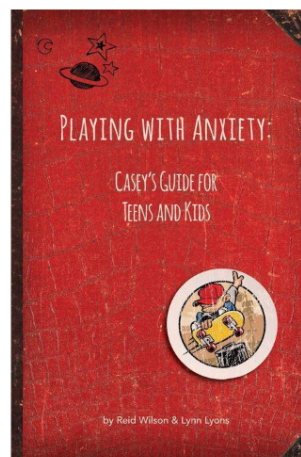
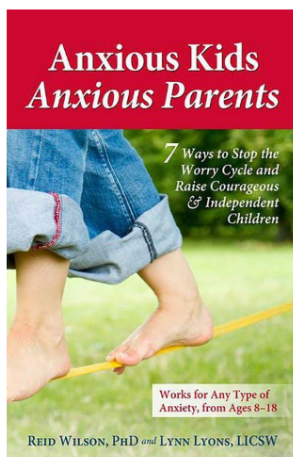
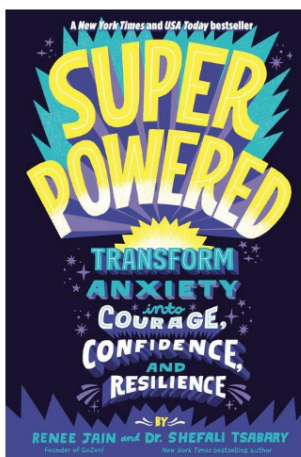
Adjustment Counselor

Anxiety Resources:

[Lynn Lyons Website](#)

[Dealing With Negative Thoughts](#)

Suggested Reading:



JAGUAR OF THE WEEK



**HIGHLIGHTING STUDENT ATHLETES
WHO EXEMPLIFY EXCELLENCE ON AND OFF
THE COURT AND FIELD**



Our first "Jaguar of the Week" Award goes to Freshman **Emily Houghton**.

Emily had a stellar performance in the Varsity Girls Basketball win over

Codman last week. Emily scored 14 points and pulled down 5 rebounds. The girls have now strung together two impressive victories in a row and look to continue their winning ways vs Neighborhood Charter later this afternoon (Home Game - Starland 3:30 PM). Congratulations Emily!



Jaguar of the Week Interview

Q: Emily, you and the girls have managed to win back to back games for the first time since 2017 and already have surpassed the win total from the previous season. What has contributed to the team's success so far?

Emily: "I think the team's success has a lot to do with us having each other's backs, talking on the court and having trust in one another."

Q: What are some goals that you and the team have set out for this season and the future?

Emily: "Some goals I and the team have set out for the season, and the future, included getting better at defense, practicing shooting, being better teammates and continuing our winning streak."

Q: What is your favorite place to eat?

Emily: "My favorite place to eat is P.F. Chang's."

High School Midyear Schedule 2021-2022

	Monday (24th)	Tuesday (25th)	Wednesday (26th)
8:30-10:00	A Block	C Block	E Block
10:00-10:30	Break	Break	Break
10:30-12:00	B Block	D Block	Make-ups
12:00-12:30	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
12:30-3:00	Study in Advisory	Study in Advisory	Study in Advisory

Level IV Midyear Schedule 2021-2022

	Monday (24th)	Tuesday (25th)	Wednesday (26th)
8:30-10:00	A Block	C Block	E Block
10:00-10:30	Break	Break	Break
10:30-12:00	B Block	D Block	Project Reflection & Make-ups
12:00-12:30	Recess	Recess	Recess
12:30-1:00	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
1:00-1:20	Recess	Recess	Recess
1:20-3:00	Study in Advisory	Study in Advisory	Study in Advisory

ANIMAL SHELTER DONATIONS

Our Level III Community Service Project is conducting a donation drive for the Scituate Animal Shelter.

Visit their website below to learn how you can help!

SCITUATE ANIMAL SHELTER

FY22 School Calendar Modifications

On December 9th, the SSCPS Board of Trustees voted to modify the FY22 School Calendar due to instructional days missed. Changes are as follows:

On April 15th, there will be a half-day to make up for the snow day on January 7th. Religious exemptions will be granted.

There will be no school on June 20, the state holiday Juneteenth.

ATTN PARENTS: COVID Test Information for Students

In order for your student to receive a COVID BinaxNOW test at school, or to participate in the Test and Stay program, **they MUST be pre-registered**. Please take a moment and sign up now. This allows your student to be able to stay in school if the test is negative.

If students are not signed up and are a close contact or develop symptoms at school, they will be required to be picked up immediately.

Register with your students' information with the following link:

<https://pbcovid.cic-health.com/register/with-code?code=KDHEHV>

If you are setting up a secondary account, Please put the code: **KDHEHV** under the organization code.

COVID vaccine: If your student has or is getting the COVID vaccine, please send in a copy of the vaccine card or proof after receiving the second vaccine. You only need to send a copy after the second dose is given.

STUDENT MASK REQUIREMENTS

With the rise in COVID cases, we are asking that you make sure your student comes to school each day with a properly fitting mask that covers both the mouth and nose. Properly fitting masks are crucial in reducing the risk of in-school transmission of COVID. Students should also have a back-up mask in their backpacks in case their mask becomes dirty or ruined throughout the day.

From the Health Office:

NEW – Meningococcal Requirements

7th GRADERS:

All 7th grade students need a current physical on file. They are required to have the first does of the Meningococcal Vaccine and the Tdap vaccine.

11th GRADERS:

Please send in your 11th graders updated physical as soon as possible. There is a new requirement for the Meningococcal vaccine.

SPECIFICS:

2 doses; second dose MenACWY (formerly MCV4) must be given on or after the 16th birthday and ≥ 8 weeks after the previous dose. 1 dose is acceptable if it was given on or after the 16th birthday.

Update from the Health Office Regarding Weekly Testing

COVID-19 cases are rising within the state and within our school community. If your student is sick please have them remain home. If they are experiencing COVID symptoms they will need a negative PCR test or Molecular NAAT test to return to school. Please contact the health office if your student is home from school due to illness. COVID symptoms are very similar to common cold symptoms and it is important to rule out COVID before your student returns to school. Please keep your student home if there is a positive household member and contact the health office about the next steps.

Your student must stay home if you are waiting for COVID test results, whether they are symptomatic or asymptomatic. Please send a copy of the test results to the appropriate health office.

With the increase of COVID cases throughout Massachusetts, we are going to be starting Weekly Safety COVID testing at school. The tentative start date for this testing is January 4th and the plan is to test weekly on Tuesdays. This is a shallow nasal swab that most students will be able to do by themselves. About 10 swabs are put in the same pool test and a PCR test is run. This takes about 24 hours. You will only be notified if your student is in a positive pool test. If this happens, all individuals will be tested separately using the Rapid BinaxNOW test at school to try to identify the positive individual. If your student is negative, then they can return to class and learn. If your child is positive, then we will ask you to come pick them up and quarantine. Please sign up for COVID testing below.

SIGN UP NOW

Please enter the student's information when registering. When creating a secondary profile please remember to include the school's organization code: **KDHEHV**

If you have a student currently signed up for COVID testing and would like to opt out of the Weekly Safety Testing, Please email Jaime at jkjelgaard@sscps.org to opt out in writing or send a note to the health office.

We understand that these are very challenging times for our families. Please remember that the Health Staff at SSCPS is doing it's best to keep everyone in our school system safe so we can continue to have in person learning.

Darcie Edwards, RN

(she/her/hers)

SSCPS School Nurse

781-982-4202 x104

dedwards@sscps.org

Important Notice from DESE:

Extension of DESE Mask Requirement Through At Least February 28th, 2022

Extension of Mask Requirement: On Monday, January 10th, DESE announced that after consulting with medical experts and state health officials, the mask requirement in all K-12 public schools is extended through at least February 28, 2022. [Guidance](#) and a [press release](#) are available online.

From the Yearbook Committee:

The 2022 yearbook is coming - now is your chance to order yours! Yearbooks are back to their normal pricing of \$40 each.

To order yours, head to the [Coffee Pond website](#) and enter the password "bluejaguar".

Parents of seniors can have a personalized page in the yearbook as well.

SENIOR AD PRICING:

-full page: \$150

-half page: \$75

-1/4 page: \$50

Residential Energy Assistance Program

The Attorney General's Office is pleased to announce the Residential Energy Assistance Grant (REAG) program. The program is designed to provide additional funding to programs that aid Massachusetts families currently receiving heating assistance and to expand assistance to more eligible households.

For full details please review the attached RFP. The grant announcement website, which includes a link to the application portal, can be found here:

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/fy2022-fy2024-residential-energy-assistance-grant>

If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to AGOGrants@mass.gov.

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 click below for more information.

HOUSING HELP

Food Service - Breakfast and Lunch Program

January Breakfast and Lunch Order Forms are now available!

All students enrolled at SSCPS qualify for Free Breakfast and Lunch for the 2021-2022 academic year. Please click on this link - [FamilyID Online](#)

[Registration](#) - and register for meals. If you have any questions, contact me at csalamone@sscps.org or at 781-982-4202 x156.

From the Parents Association

The next meeting of the Parents Association is tonight,
Wednesday, January 19, 2022.

Join the [Zoom Meeting](#) at 6:30pm. Click here to view the [meeting agenda](#).

amazon



wishlist

help our teachers!

The Parents Association is working to ensure teachers can fill their classrooms with the items they need. To help support our teachers and their classrooms, please view the wishlists below. Thank you!

VIEW WISHLISTS

SABBATICAL CLOTHING BANK

NEED CLOTHES?

FREE CLOTHING FOR THOSE IN NEED

- DESIGNATED MONTHLY PICKUP OPPORTUNITIES
- CLOTHING FOR ALL AGES
- COVID SAFE PRACTICES
 - GLOVES WORN WHILE PACKING BAGS
 - CURBSIDE PICKUP
 - DESIGNATED PICKUP TIMES

The logo is a circular emblem with a brown background. The words "Sabbatical" and "Clothing Bank" are written in a cursive font along the top and bottom inner edges of the circle, respectively. In the center, the letters "SCB" are printed in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

Sabbatical Clothing Bank and Lions Club Food Pantry

Sabbatical Clothing Bank is still open (by appointment only) for donations and for those in need of clothing. Visit their website below for forms and more information.

Sabbatical Clothing Bank:
<https://www.sabbaticalclothingbank.com/>

The Lions Club Food Pantry is also still hosting their "No Questions Asked Food Pantry", open on Mondays from 10:30 AM - 12:00 PM and Fridays from 4:30 PM - 6:00 PM.

Lions Club Food Pantry:
<https://duxburylionsclub.org/about-us>

Both organizations are located at:
136 Summer St, Duxbury MA

This Week | **Up and Coming**

Wednesday	01/19	Parents Association Meeting via Zoom	6:30pm
Friday	01/21	2nd Quarter Ends for Grades 5-12	
Mon-Weds	01/24-01/26	Grades 7-12 Midyear Exams – See schedule above	

IMPORTANT LINKS

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

- [Back-to-School Information](#)
- [Food Service](#)
- [COVID-19 Protocols 2021-22](#)
- [Health Office](#)
- [Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance](#)
- **Visit the [Parents Association Website](#)**
- **Visit our new online option to [purchase SSCPS apparel!](#)**

School Documents:

[2021-22 School Calendar](#)

[Student and Family Handbook](#)

[Arrival and Dismissal Procedures](#)

[SSCPS By-Laws](#)

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.



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www.sscps.org

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