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Weekly Update | November 17, 2021

Vol. 11, Issue 3

A Message from Michelle

If you have a child diagnosed with a significant disability, or know someone who has, you understand what a **life-altering moment** that can be. You may go through the stages of grief, mourning what you thought life would be like. You probably felt lost because you now needed to navigate forward and didn't know what the future would hold. Many of you have read the poem "Welcome to Holland" by Emily Perl Kingsley. If you haven't, I urge you to read it [here](#). It sums up quite well what it is like when a child is first diagnosed.

After the initial shock wears off, you keep moving forward and somehow you get through the elementary and middle school years. Puberty strikes, and these years are not easy. People underestimate the stress of even navigating a simple birthday party for a child with a disability.

Now, don't get me wrong - this all sounds pretty negative, but all of this time is overlaid with beauty. It is intertwined with getting to **see the world through another lens**. It is about learning to celebrate what matters most, teaching your child to own who they are, and in the same breath bringing yourself forward to help the rest of the world see their strengths and capitalize on their strengths.

High school comes, and it's somehow a little easier because the overwhelming sensory situations seem to fall away (birthday parties, trick or treating, sleepovers) and students seem to be mature enough to **understand each other's differences**.

Hopefully, you have had someone urge you from the start to always be thinking about what you want for your child once school ends. This is so very important. This is what should have been driving all those IEPs for years. Your end goal and your child's end goal - you should always be working backward from that goal. This planning process is essential and it is something that, at the high school level, we urge families to consider carefully, especially if the child has a significant disability. Timelines become important, documentation becomes important, and knowing what the plan is for your child as an adult becomes a reality. **It's a whole new beginning.**

This planning process can start at age 14 - it is called the **Transition Planning Process**. The Massachusetts Department of Education website summarizes it like this:

*"For Massachusetts students receiving special education services, Secondary Transition is a time that begins when they turn 14 (or earlier, if the IEP team agrees). **From age 14 until they graduate or turn 22, students on IEPs receive transition services from their public school districts.** Transition services are defined by federal law (the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, or IDEA) as a 'coordinated set of activities...designed to be within a results-oriented process,...to facilitate the student's movement from school to post-school activities.' Transition services are based on the individual student's needs, taking into account his/her strengths, preferences, and interests. These services help young adults to live, work, participate in the community, and go on to further education or training as independently as possible when they leave high school."*

This year it is a goal of the Learning Services Department to increase our efforts facilitating this process starting at the age of 14. We will be **starting to standardize this practice** using an informal assessment with our students.



This assessment is called a Transition Planning Inventory.

Why is my child completing a Transition Planning Inventory? What does this mean?

(The following information has been adapted from the Massachusetts DESE Website.)

"Individualized, age-appropriate transition assessment is integral to the development of the IEP for students aged 14-22 and is required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Through ongoing transition assessment, the IEP Team learns the student's postsecondary goals in the areas of education/training, employment, and - where appropriate - independent living. The team gains an understanding of the student's needs, strengths, preferences, and interests, and measures the student's current performance and progress towards the development of skills.

At South Shore Charter Public School these assessments are informal and non-standardized inventories. The results help learning services liaisons write a student's Transition Planning Form.

The Transition Planning Form (TPF) is a state-required form to be used every year at IEP meetings, starting when the student is 14 years old (or earlier if appropriate). The TPF focuses the IEP team on the student's vision for their own future.

[Here is a brochure](#) from The Federation For Children With Special Needs with more information."

This planning is very integral to the future success of your child. The Learning Services Department wants to help **ease the transition process** and help plan for life after high school with you to help your child and you reach your goals. We understand the journey you have been on, and we want to make sure that once you leave us, the road ahead is paved for a **smooth transition into adulthood**. Please feel free to talk to your learning services liaison about transition planning at any time.

Michelle Gallagher

High School Learning Services Coordinator and Teacher
mgallagher@sscps.org

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.

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.

COVID-19 FAQ 2021-2022

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

COVID-19 Symptoms List

- **Fever (100.0°F or higher), chills, or shaking chills**
- **Difficulty breathing or Shortness of breath**
- **New loss of taste or smell**
- **Muscle aches or body aches**
- Cough (not due to other known cause, such as chronic cough)
- Sore throat, when in combination of other symptoms
- Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea, when in combination of other symptoms
- Headache, when in combination with other symptoms
- 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.

What happens if my student develops COVID-like symptoms in school?

If your child develops COVID-like symptoms at school they will be sent to the CARE room. If they have been registered for in school COVID-19 testing they will be tested at school. If the symptoms are minor they can remain in school with a negative test, for more severe symptoms they will be sent home and may return when they are fever free for 24 hours without meds and symptoms have improved. If students are not registered for COVID testing they will be sent home if they have any of the above bolded COVID symptoms or if they have multiple symptoms on the list and will need a COVID test before returning to school.

My student has a pending a COVID-19 Test but feels better. Can they return to school

while we wait for results?

No, students cannot return to school unless the health office has received a copy of the students negative results.

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 or outside 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?

Yes, siblings may remain in school as long as they remain symptom free.

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

Yes, if a household member has symptoms but the student has no symptoms they may be in school. If the household member was to test positive for COVID-19 the student would need to be picked up immediately.

Can I test my student using an over the counter rapid COVID-19 test?

No, we cannot accept OTC tests. Only tests administered through a healthcare facility are accepted.

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 be isolated for 10 days. The students will need to be cleared through the health office before returning. They will also need to have resolved/improved symptoms and be fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication. All siblings will need to remain home and quarantine unless they are fully vaccinated and have provided the appropriate Health Office with a copy of their vaccination card.

Do I report my COVID-19 test results?

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

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
HS: 781-982-4202 X 182 or email: bfolan@sscps.org
K-8: 781-982-4202 x104 or email: dedwards@sscps.org or jkjelgaard@sscps.org
If your student has any COVID like symptoms please speak to the nurse directly.

A household member tested positive COVID, can my student be in school?

Students must quarantine if a family member is positive unless they are fully vaccinated and

remain symptom free. Students who are not vaccinated will need to quarantine. Please contact the health office to discuss when students may return to school.

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 a 24 hour period in the previous 48 hours of the onset of symptoms or from a positive COVID-19 result of an asymptomatic person.

The following close contacts are exempt from testing and quarantine response protocols:

- Asymptomatic, fully vaccinated close contacts: Individuals who are asymptomatic and fully vaccinated are exempt from testing and quarantine response protocols.
- Classroom close contacts: An individual who is exposed to a COVID-19 positive individual in the classroom while both individuals were masked, so long as the individuals were spaced at least 3 feet apart, is exempt from testing and quarantine response protocols.
- Bus close contacts: Individuals on buses must be masked according to federal requirements. As such, individuals who are masked on buses when windows are open are exempt from testing and quarantine response protocols.
- Close contacts who have had COVID-19 within the past 90 days: An individual who has been previously diagnosed with COVID-19 and then becomes a close contact of someone with COVID-19 is exempt from testing and quarantine response protocols if:
 - The exposure occurred within 90 days of the onset of their own illness AND
 - The exposed individual is recovered and remains without COVID-19 symptoms.

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 outside of school or if they choose not to participate in Test & Stay if they are school close contact (within 3' of a positive student) they will need to be quarantined. If students remain symptom free they can test on day 5 after exposure and if they continue to remain symptom free may return to school on day 8 after exposure. If students opt not to test they will need to quarantine for 10 full days and may return on day 11 as long as they remain symptom free. Students will need to monitor for symptoms for a full 14 days and return to quarantine and retest if they develop any symptoms.

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

If a household member is in close contact with a person positive with COVID-19 and asymptomatic, the student may remain in school, unless the household member tests positive for COVID-19.

What is Test & Stay?

Students deemed close contacts (within 3' of a positive student in the classroom) will report to school each morning and have a rapid antigen test performed for 7 days. Students may remain in school if they continue to have negative tests and remain symptom free. Parents must remain close to the school for 15 minutes, until the results are in. Results will be sent via text message or the health office will call you if positive and you must immediately come pick up your student. Students who are close contacts due to outside of school exposure can not participate in this program. Your student will have to wear a mask during outside time, like recess or specialist, except for snack and lunch while participating in Test & Stay.

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, bandanas, and masks with a valve are not acceptable for school.

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.

Testing Programs

For more information on the testing programs, please visit the [SSCPS Health Office](#) webpage.

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

Barbara Folan, RN bfolan@sscps.org

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

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

FAMILY SURVEY: OCTOBER HOLIDAY

The SSCPS Board of Trustees will be voting on the 2022-2023 School Calendar in December. Up for vote during that meeting is the name of the October 10, 2022 holiday.

During the October meeting, the Board of Trustees was presented with some varying perspectives and a student presentation. **Students from the Social and Racial Justice workshop presented arguments for removing the name Columbus from the October holiday and instead referring to the day as Indigenous Peoples' Day.** Currently the School recognizes Columbus Day and Indigenous Peoples' Day as an observance for the second Monday in October. Members of the Board asked Faculty Representatives to survey the school community on their thoughts as to how that day should be recognized on the school calendar.

We are asking all members of the SSCPS community, students, families, faculty and staff, to participate in the survey. **Please fill out one form per family by November 30, 2021. Data gleaned will be non-binding, but will be used to inform the discussion at the Board of Trustees vote in December.** Thank you!

TAKE THE SURVEY

Important Notice from DESE:

Extension of DESE Mask Requirement Through At Least January 15, 2022

Extension of Mask Requirement: On Tuesday, October 26, 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 January 15, 2022. [Guidance](#) and a [press release](#) are available online.

REGARDING SCHOOL PICTURE ORDERS:

Parents who have any questions about their school picture orders (such as order forms; late orders; missing orders & refunds etc.) should contact our dedicated Lifeguards:

By phone:

1-800-632-2323 ext '0'

By email:

Lifeguards@coffeepond.com

By US Mail:

Lifeguards Coffee Pond Photography
3 Speen Street, Suite 200
Framingham, MA 01701

The second time's a charm!



If you are dissatisfied with your child's student portrait and would like another try, you have the opportunity for a retake on: 11/18/21

Please return the undamaged portrait package to the photographer on Retake Day. If your school has class photos, please keep it and just return the individual portraits. If you have any specific instructions for the photographer, please jot them down so they show through the envelope window and can be easily spotted.

Retake packages will be distributed at the school approximately 3-5 weeks following Retake Day.

For refund information, please visit www.coffeepond.com
Email us at lifeguards@coffeepond.com
Call us in Eastern MA at (508) 907-6633 ext. 0
or outside Eastern MA at (800) 632-2323 ext. 0

From the Yearbook Committee:

The 2022 yearbook is coming - now is your chance to order yours! The normal yearbook price is \$40, but if you order before January 1st, you can get yours for **\$37!**

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

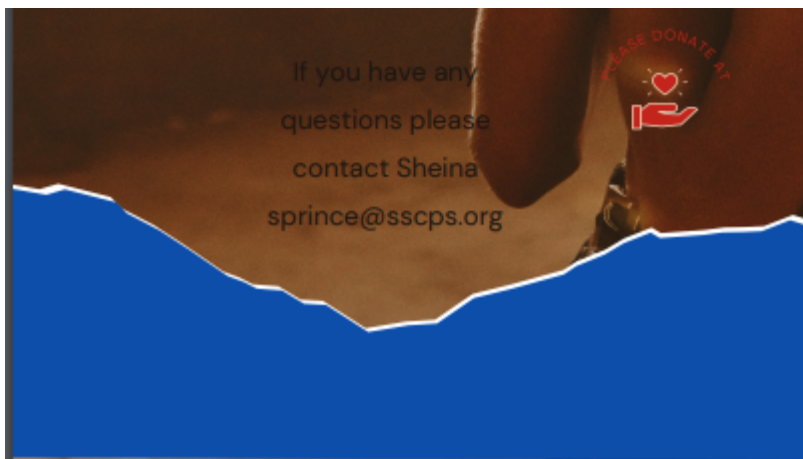
THE RECENT EARTHQUAKE AND HURRICANE HAS LEFT HAITI DEVASTATED.

So many people urgently need our help.

Now that pathways are clearing we are hoping to be able to send supplies to the people of South Haiti still struggling to survive.

- HYGIENIC SUPPLIES
- CLOTHES
- WATER
- MEDICAL SUPPLIES
- BLANKETS
- SHELTER

Boxes will be located in the Great Room of each level.



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

November 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

There are two vacant positions on the PA: Treasurer and Level 3 Rep.

The deadline for contacting the PA regarding these positions has now closed.

Elections will take place at the next PA meeting today, November 17, 2021. The meeting will begin at 6:30pm - you can watch it [here via Zoom](#), and view the meeting's [agenda here](#).



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

COMMUNITY INTEREST



Elks National Hoop Shoot® Free-Throw Contest

Compete. Connect. Succeed

Contests Location: Weymouth High School Gym – 1 Wildcat Way, Weymouth, 02190

Date: November 20, 2021 - **Start Time:** 9:30 **Registration – Contest at, 10AM to 12:00PM**

Hosted By Elks Lodge: Weymouth/Braintree Lodge for local Community Towns

Lodge Hoop Shoot Director: John MacDonald, 617-827-0889

Fast Facts:

- The Elks Hoop Shoot is free to boys and girls who will be between ages of 8-13 on April 1, 2022. All Kids from our local South Shore Community Towns are welcome to participate.
- Winners advance through District, State and Regional Hoop Shoot contests
- Regional winners qualify for a free trip to compete at the Hoop Shoot National Finals held April 30, 2022, in Chicago, IL
- National Champions will have their names permanently inscribed on a plaque in the Basketball Hall of Fame

Learn more at www.elks.org/hoopshoot

This Week | Up and Coming

Wednesday	11/17	Parents Association Meeting via Zoom	6:30pm
Thursday	11/18	Picture Retake Day	
Thursday	11/18	School Council via Zoom	4:30pm
Thursday	11/18	Board of Trustees Governance Committee Finance Committee Personnel Committee All meetings will be held at 700 Longwater Drive and via Zoom	7:30pm 6:00pm 6:30pm 7:00pm
Wednesday	11/24	Early Release – Dismissal at 12:00pm	12:00pm
Thurs/Fri	11/25-	Thanksgiving Break – No School	

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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