

Weekly Update | December 10, 2025

VOL. 12, ISSUE 2

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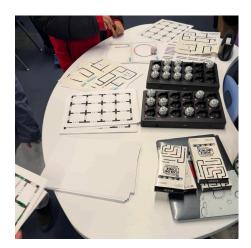
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A Message from Jamie

This past Monday night, SSCPS proudly kicked off Computer Science Education Week (CSEdWeek: December 8-14, 2025) with our first annual "Night of Code", and the energy in the building was incredible. We welcomed over 150 members of our school community, filling our classrooms and hallways with curiosity, collaboration, and creativity. This night would not have been possible without the dedicated team of educators and student volunteers who ran a spectacular evening of hands-on computer science enrichment. A heartfelt thank-you goes to Jenna Brink, Zach Johnston, Aidan Gallagher, Angie Williamson, John Oliva, Angela Laenen, Liz Flett, Sy DuFresne, and our tech gurus Joe and Rio, whose hard work and thoughtful planning made this event possible for our students and families. Their commitment to their dedication to our school and in expanding computer science opportunities for all learners truly shines through events like this.

Families rotated through hands-on stations, giving students the chance to explore a wide range of computer science concepts. They coded Micro:Bits to flash lights and play sounds, guided Ozobots along color-coded paths, and built and programmed LEGO Spike Prime robots. Many enjoyed learning to decode and create messages in Binary while coding their initials or names using beads and crafting bracelets, while others dove into website design using Google Sites and Gemini. We also offered unplugged activities, which are paper-based programming, sequencing games, and internet safety challenges that introduced computer science fundamentals without the need for a computer. High school students supported our younger students, assisting them in exploring platforms such as code.org and Scratch, and introducing them to coding languages like Java and

Python, and many participants stopped by our AI in Education session to learn how artificial intelligence is transforming classrooms and careers.





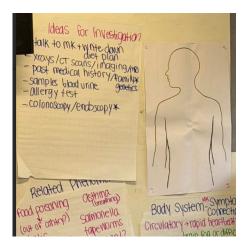
CSEd Week also highlights the Hour of Code®, along with this year's evolution: the Hour of AI. Both initiatives make coding and computational thinking accessible to everyone, an activity with no experience required. Families can easily participate at home through the free activities on code.org and csforall.org, exploring coding puzzles, AI tools, creative design challenges, and cross-disciplinary projects that build essential 21st-century skills such as problem-solving, communication, digital literacy, and responsible technology use. Engaging in these activities together reinforces that computer science isn't just a subject, but rather it's a creative, collaborative way of thinking that touches every field and is an essential part of our ever-evolving world.



The success of the "Night of Code" reflects the strength of our community and our continued commitment to preparing students for the future. Thank you to everyone who attended, supported, and celebrated this exciting launch to CSEdWeek.

Our science team continues to ensure that students learn science by doing, anchoring instruction in the Science and Engineering Practices. Whether students are posing questions, analyzing data, constructing CER explanations, or designing and conducting hands-on investigations, they are building authentic scientific habits of mind. Across grade levels, our classrooms emphasize the scientific method and the engineering design process, allowing students to test ideas, iterate, and apply their understanding to real-world problems. This experiential approach aligns with our mission and strengthens students' confidence as thinkers, creators, and problem-solvers.







This year, we also continued to expand real-world STEM opportunities beyond the classroom. Through our partnership with Bridgewater State University's CASE Labs, students participated in biotechnology programming at CityLab, explored land use and water quality through the Watershed Access Lab, and—for the first time—visited BSU's Cyber Range, an immersive experience in cybersecurity for both middle and high school students. These field trips are provided at no cost to SSCPS, and they have been instrumental in deepening students' scientific understanding through authentic, hands-on, industry-aligned learning experiences. Each opportunity helps our students see themselves as capable contributors to the STEM fields that shape our world.





In November, we also celebrated ArcGIS Day, highlighting the work of students who participated in the summer CSCR research program and are now enrolled in our GIS credential course, where successful completion will earn them recognition as GIS Proficient. These students—Jack Maloney, Grace Quilty-Diaz, and Malak Almadi—used ArcGIS tools to analyze real-world environmental data and tell meaningful stories about our local ecosystems. Their leadership in spatial thinking and environmental science showcases the powerful intersection of STEM learning, community research, and real-world application.





As we head into the holiday season and look forward to a new year, Night of Code reminds us of the joy and curiosity that come from learning together. Our students thrive when they are encouraged to ask questions, explore ideas, and see themselves as innovators—and we are grateful to partner with families and educators who make that possible every day. Thank you for your continued support, and we look forward to embracing even more hands-on discovery, creativity, and meaningful science learning with our students in the year ahead. We look forward to hosting our Pi Day Eve celebration this spring—a family STEM night that continues our commitment to building a vibrant, engaging, and inclusive STEM community.

Jamie Allen Science Curriculum Coordinator



School Calendar & Announcements



Weekly Calendar



Click here for the complete SSCPS Events & Athletics Calendar

SSCPS Events & Athletics Calendar

Important Announcements

Take the Transportation Family Survey

SSCPS Families: Please take a moment to fill out our **Transportation Family Survey!** Feedback from our SSCPS family members is essential to help all of our programs and services run smoothly, especially with the SSCPS regional transportation program now in its third year. Data from this survey will guide discussions during two upcoming regional transportation family focus groups: **Wednesday, January 14 at 9:00 am**, and **Wednesday, January 28 at 6:30 pm**.

Please take this opportunity to identify the strengths and areas of growth of the regional transportation program. We rely on your responses to inform our efforts to meet the needs of all families in our school community. The survey should take approximately 5 minutes to complete. Respondent names are not required. Responses will be shared with our school community and at the Board of Trustees' open meetings. **Survey responses are due by January 7, 2026.**

TRANSPORTATION SURVEY

From the Food Services Department

SSCPS Families,

The South Shore Charter Public School offers free nutritious lunch and breakfast at school every school day for all students. Please visit our Food Services webpage to learn more about our FREE NSLP breakfast and lunch programs and to place an order for your child. If you haven't already, you are able to order your child's meals online. All families must register each child in Arbiter. Please visit the SSCPS Familyld Programs webpage to register your child. When registering your child for meals please be sure to input their grade. Their student ID and homeroom teacher are not required fields. If you do know their homeroom teacher it would be helpful but that information can always be entered at a later time. To learn more on how to register your child click here to watch a quick video. If you need any assistance with FamilyID registration, please call 1-800-311-4060 or email support@arbitersports.com. All meal orders will be made directly through this online system. If you need further assistance, please contact Charlene Salamone at csalamone@sscps.org or by calling 781-982-4202x156.

If your family needs additional support please visit <u>Project Bread's FoodSource Hotline</u>. FoodSource hotline counselors, in 180 languages, can help families find food assistance through other sources such as the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Program and local food pantries.

Thank you,

Charlene Salamone Food Services Coordinator





Update from the Health Office

Please be advised that per our school policy, if your student has a fever, vomiting, diarrhea, or a contagious illness, they must remain out of school until symptoms have resolved for 24 hours without medication or they have been on antibiotics for a full 24 hours. If your student will be absent from school, please email attendance@sscps.org as well as your student's teacher.

This is also a reminder that over-the-counter medications (including, but not limited to, eye drops, allergy medications, cough medications, vitamins, and nasal sprays) may not be brought into school by students. All medication within the school system is considered prescription and requires a doctor's prescription medication form. Before any medication is brought to school, it must be discussed with the school nurse and must be accompanied by the required prescription medication form. If a student is found to have any medication on them, it will be brought to the health office and a parent will need to pick it up or it will be disposed of.

Please also be advised that we will be beginning state-required vision, hearing, height, and weight screenings, based on your student's grade. If you would like to opt your student out of part or all of these screenings, please email your student's school nurse.

Please make sure all students are dressed appropriately for the weather. Students go outside for recess daily, except in inclement weather or when the wind chill temperature drops below 20 degrees. Students in grades K through 2nd should have a spare set of weather appropriate clothing in their backpacks/classrooms.

Contacts:

Grades K-8: Jaime Kjelgaard (jkjelgaard@sscps.org) & Erlin Martinez

(emartinez2@sscps.org)

Grades 7-12: Barbara Folan - bfolan@sscps.org

Important Drop Off & Pick Up Reminders

Protocol for absences, tardiness and dismissing students early:

When your child is absent and leaving a message, please be sure to leave the **first and last name as well as the grade of your child**. Any changes can be sent to attendance@sscps.org.

Drop off in the morning by 8:10am.

Please try to arrive by or before 8:10am so that teachers can take attendance and students can prepare for classes that start at 8:20am. At 8:15am the doors will close and students will be marked as tardy.

Dismissal/Pickup Procedures

Grades K-6 100 Longwater Circle	Grades 7-12 700 Longwater Drive
Bus Dismissal 1 Buses 1-8	Bus Dismissal 1 Buses 9-17
Carline Dismissal Begins	
Bus Dismissal 2 Buses 9-17	Bus Dismissal 2 Buses 1-8
	Carline Dismissal Begins

100 Longwater Drive (Grades K-6): Dismissal will begin for buses (1-8)

700 Longwater Drive (Grades 7-12): Dismissal will begin for buses (9-17)

After the buses are loaded, buses 1-8 will depart for 700, and buses 9-17 will depart for 100 to pick up the remaining students.

Carline dismissal will begin for 100 after the first round of buses (1-8) depart.

Carline dismissal will begin at 700 after the second round of buses depart.

<u>Procedure for 700 Longwater Drive (Grades 7-12) Dismissal</u> (See Map)

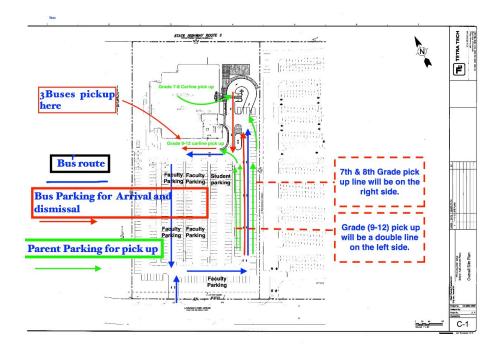
There will be 3 carlines at 700 Longwater:

- The far right (green arrow) will be for Grades 7-8
- The double green arrow is for Grades 9-12

After the buses have completed pickup, cars for grades 7-8 will pick up around the traffic circle to the right of the building and exit, following the blue arrows.

After the buses have completed pick up, cars for grades 9-12 will pick up in front of the building, along the sidewalk.

If you are picking up students in both grades 7-8 and 9-12, pick up your 7-8th grade student first, then continue to the grade 9-12 pickup.



School Picture Reminders

Order your school pictures today!

Use the code **F25100FF** for 10% off your order. Code expires July 31, 2026.

ORDER HERE

Don't forget to order your FREE Digital SmileSafe card!

More about the SmileSafe program here.

SSCPS Volunteer Information

We know that many parents and guardians are eager to complete volunteer requirements so that they are able to begin volunteering. Please find the list of volunteer requirements below. Links to the required documents are available on the wolunteering_page on our website. Copies of the paperwork will be available prior to the Back-to-School Nights.

Anyone who is working with children or within our SSCPS buildings must be officially registered as a volunteer. This policy is in place to protect our students. Volunteers must register each school year. In order to register as a volunteer, you must complete all of the requirements listed below.

- Complete a CORI form. This requirement must be met annually. The CORI form should be returned to the school to the attention of Pam Algera with a copy of a photo ID.
- Complete Identogo Fingerprinting. This task must be completed every three
 years. Fingerprinting is completed off site and has a cost. SSCPS will reimburse
 parent/guardian volunteers for this cost.
- 3. Complete Volunteer Training and agree to the Confidentiality Policy. This requirement must be completed every three years. The training is available on the volunteering page on our website.

If you have any questions please reach out to Angie Pepin at apepin@sscps.org.

From the Dean's Desk

Over the past two weeks, we've been talking at school about online communication and how quickly digital spaces can create conflict or confusion for young people. Today, I want to widen that conversation and address something we are seeing more often: the risks that come with online gaming.

Many of our students spend time on platforms like Roblox and other games that allow ingame chat or friend requests from people they don't know. These spaces can seem harmless, but they often create opportunities for strangers to message children, guide them into private servers, or pressure them into interactions that are not safe.

We are not sharing this to alarm families, but to remind all of us how important it is to stay alert. Children do not always understand the difference between a "friendly player" and someone with harmful intentions. They also don't always tell adults when they encounter something that feels off.

Our request is simple:

Please take time this week to look closely at the online games your child is using. Review their friend lists, chat histories, and the ways players can communicate inside the game. Ask them what they are seeing. Ask them who they are talking to. These small steps make a real difference.

Here at Charter, we are teaching students how to recognize unsafe situations and how to ask for help. But they need support at home too. Online safety is a shared responsibility, and your vigilance helps protect not just your child, but our whole community.

To support families, we are including this link to Common Sense Media, a trusted resource that breaks down the risks, safety settings, and communication features in the most popular games: https://www.commonsensemedia.org

It's a clear and helpful place to start if you want to understand what your child may encounter online.

Thank you for working with us to keep our students safe in every space — not just in school, but online and in the games they love.

Warmly,

Walter Duncan
Dean of Students (K-6)



Upcoming School & Community Events

Upcoming SSCPS Events

Holiday Rooms, Winter Concerts, & Kwanzaa Night







K-6 Craft Day | Volunteers Needed!

We are looking for volunteers to help with this year's Craft Day event on **Friday**, **December 19th.** If you are interested in volunteering on Craft Day please sign up **here** or use the button below. We are asking volunteers to plan for a craft for about 50 students. **Due to the structure of the event, individuals may only register for one grade level.**

Anyone that volunteers at SSCPS must complete a CORI, complete volunteer training, take the volunteer quiz and be fingerprinted. Please plan ahead and get your paperwork completed as soon as possible if you plan to come in and volunteer on Craft Day. This sign up will close on Friday, December 12th to allow us time to plan.

Thank you for your consideration. We are all looking forward to this year's Craft Day!



Community Events & News

Essay Contest | Weymouth & Braintree Students

The Weymouth-Braintree Elks Americanism Essay Contest is accepting submissions until **January 6th, 2026**. This essay contest is available to Weymouth and Braintree students in grades 5-8. Use the button below for more details and instructions.

ESSAY INSTRUCTIONS

Holly Hill Farm December Programs



On the Levels

SSCPS Alumni Day

On November 26, the celebration of Alumni Day took over the cafe. We welcomed 40 alumni back to South Shore Charter for a morning of information and celebration. This event, now in its second year, is one of the most exciting for current seniors. It provides a great opportunity for seniors to hear from former classmates about university life and what the future holds. A tremendous thank you to our junior student board members who are assisting with the day, and to guidance counselors Ahminchie Estime and Mary Carter for their hard work!





















Four Corners Winter Festival











What's New in Projects & Workshops

Level III Community Service Project

The Level III Community Service Project is bringing Toys for Tots to SSCPS this year! If you are able, please send or bring in a new, unwrapped toy to donate by **today**, **December 10**. Collection boxes are located at the front desk of both buildings. Thank you for helping to make a child's holiday season a bit brighter!



Cultural Diversity Workshop



DONATE COATS Where: At the Front Desk NOW - JAN 10

Donate gently used, warm winter coats for **children and adults** at any Anton's Cleaners, Jordan's Furniture, or Rockland Trust location.









Coats only, please. All sizes welcome!

antons.com/cfk



Coats are professionally cleaned by Anton's and distributed to families in need through a network of over 90 local social service agencies, schools, and nonprofit organizations.

Arts & Music

Original Works Orders

It isn't too late to place an order with Original Works - the company that allows us to purchase a keepsake with student artwork on it. The extended ordering deadline is **12/16/25.** Orders placed from now on will not arrive before the December break. See below for instructions on how to order!





Afterschool Enrichment Program

Art Club Update

This week in Art Club, students dove into paper mâché projects, turning simple materials into creative 3D designs. They practiced patience, teamwork, and artistic problem - solving as their sculptures began to take shape. We can't wait to see the finished creations come to life in the coming weeks!









Session II Registration: Open Now!

Dear Families,

We are excited to announce that registration for Session II of our Afterschool Enrichment Program is now open for students in Grades 2 - 8! Please review our Club Descriptions here and complete the Registration using FamilyID.com. Registration is \$50 and will close on Friday, December 19th. We look forward to another great session of learning, adventure and fun! Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

Warm regards,

Nadeen Sullivan

Afterschool Enrichment Program Coordinator



From the Health Office

Important Reminders | 2025-2026

If your student takes prescription medication during the school day, including epipens or inhalers, the medication will need to be dropped off to the school nurse by an adult. Medication cannot be sent on the bus with students. All medication needs to be accompanied by a new prescription medication form each year. Your doctor may fill out their own medication form, an Asthma Action Plan, Allergy Action Plan, or the school's Prescription Drug Form. No medication can be accepted without the proper paperwork. Parents/guardians will also need to sign the form to give permission for medication to be administered in school. Students can not bring in over the counter medication. All

medication needed at school must be held in the Health Office and have the proper paperwork in order for it to be administered at school. Please check expiration dates of medication before sending it in. Medication that expires during the school year will need to be replaced before it expires. Please reach out to your school nurse if you have any questions about medications.

K-6th Grade: Jaime Kjelgaard, RN jkjelgaard@sspcs.org 781-982-4202 x104 7th-12th Grade: Barbara Folan, RN bfolan@sscps.org 781-982-4201 x 182

If your student is planning on playing a school sport in the fall they must have a current physical dated within the past 13 months of the start of the sports season. Students who do not have a current physical will not be allowed to try out or participate in sports. You may submit health forms to:

K-6th: Jaime Kjelgaard, RN <u>Jkjelgaard@sscps.org</u> 781-982-4202 x 104 7th-12th: Barbara Folan, RN <u>Bfolan@sscps.org</u> 781-982-4202 x 182

Fax: 781-982-4201

Students entering Kindergarten, 4th, 7th, or 10th Grade must submit current physical forms and vaccine records.

The K through 6 school is a **peanut/nut free** building. Please make sure you do not send your child to school with any food that contains peanuts or nuts or the label reads "may contain nuts or traces of nuts". Caffeinated beverages are not allowed in the elementary school. Please send your student to school with a reusable water bottle as the school does not provide water bottles.

Please reach out to your school nurse and teacher if your student is sick. Students who have vomiting, diarrhea, or a fever of 100 or above need to remain out of school until the symptoms or fever have resolved for 24 hours. If your student has strep throat, conjunctivitis or any other contagious illness they will need to remain out until they have been on antibiotics for 24 hours. Students who develop any of these symptoms during the school day will need to be picked up from school promptly. Please make sure your contact information with the school is up to date. Absences can be reported to attendance@sscps.org.

Level I students should have a full change of weather appropriate clothes that is kept at school.

SSCPS Health Office

Community Service

Community Service Opportunities

Need help finding a community service opportunity? Below is a link to our regularly updated Community Service Table filled with CS opportunities around the South Shore. Descriptions of organizations, contact information, and more are included.

Community Service Table

Submit Community Service Hours

If you've started your Community Service for the **2025-2026** school year, it's not too early to start recording those hours today!

Use the links below to submit your community service hours. Please note that Levels III, IV, and High School students are required to enter their own community service hours using their school email. Family members of students on Levels I and II have been given direct access to the forms and do not need a school email.



Parents Association, SEPAC, & ELPAC

Parents Association Updates

Upcoming PA Meeting

Our December PA Meeting on 12/16 @7PM will be hybrid. The in-person meeting will be held immediately following the Holiday Rooms event in the Great Room at 700 Longwater Drive. We are hoping to have high school volunteers available to babysit children of attending parents - we will provide an update on this once confirmed. We will also be serving pizza as we realize that this is a late and potentially long evening. We are looking forward to seeing people in real life and hope you can attend, either in person or virtually!

ZOOM MEETING

Tuesday DECEMBER 16th @7PM



PA MEETING

HYBRID MEETING!

- In Person at 700 immediately following Holiday Rooms
- Virtually:

CLICK HERE!

General PA Info

Check out the PA website for meeting agendas/minutes, the new bulletin board and other handy info: https://sscpspa.weebly.com/

More updates from the Parents Association can be found on our Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/groups/SSCPSParentGuardianInfo

POD PARENT SIGN-UP



Volunteer as a Pod Parent!



- Need Volunteers for each classroom
- Pod Parents organize supply drives throughout the year for things like tissues, wipes, extra snacks, bottled water
- Pod Parents help with classroom communication and parents engagement
- Work with the teacher to plan special events like **pod** breakfasts, community service events, and end-of-year activities like field day
- Assist with anything else the teacher could use help with

Interested?? Please email: paatsscps@gmail.com

Important Links

Weekly Updates are emailed and posted to our website - <u>subscribe here</u>.

1. <u>Afterschool Enrichment</u> <u>Program</u>

2. DESE Student Attendance Letter Translated:(<u>Arabic</u>, <u>Cape</u>

<u>Verdean</u>

<u>Creole, Chinese, Haitian</u> <u>Creole, Portuguese, Spanish, Vietnamese</u>)

- 3. Back-to-School Information
- 4. Food Services
- 5. **Health Office**
- 6. <u>Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance</u>
- 7. Community Service
- 8. Parents Association Website

School Documents:

2025-2026 School Calendar

Student and Family Handbook

<u>Arrival and Dismissal Procedures</u> <u>SSCPS By-Laws</u>

2024-2025 SSCPS Annual Report

DESE Integrated Monitoring Review



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