



## Summer Updates | August 12, 2026

VOL. 8, ISSUE 1

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### A Message from Alicia

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Summer greetings to all of our South Shore Charter students and families. I hope these days are providing you with some relaxation, summer reading, and time with family and friends. Whether you are a new family or one that has been with us for many years, we know the new school year brings excitement, and we look forward to the first day of school on September 2 with hopeful anticipation.

Here at South Shore Charter, we have been busy getting ready for September. As many of you know, our school is entering year two of enrollment growth and campus renovation. The significant construction project at 700 Longwater Drive has been our ongoing focus throughout the summer. Although the end is not yet in sight, construction has progressed, and the second-floor renovations are nearing completion. We are happy to report that the Health Office on the first floor of 700 has been renovated and expanded and is ready for the upcoming school year. The first floor of 700 Longwater is ready for our middle school students; we look forward to welcoming our sixth graders to the building. The upstairs classrooms are nearing completion; most are ready now, and a few will be ready later this fall. The temporary classrooms on the first floor will continue to be used until the second floor is completed. Construction on the music rooms, black box theatre, physical education classroom, reception area, conference room, and first-floor offices will begin once the second-floor classrooms are complete.

This summer has truly been one of the busiest times in our school's history. In addition to our ongoing construction, we held three comprehensive summer programs for our students in July. The English Language Learner department has once again held an exciting summer program that promotes language acquisition through classroom learning and field trip experiences; this year's theme was art and culminated with a fantastic art show. The Learning Services team ran a wonderful program throughout July. And the science department once again ran the Oceans of Opportunity program, which, in collaboration with the Cohasset Center for Student Coastal Research, allows our students to study ecology and marine biology and conduct hands-on research in the marshes, harbors, and ocean. I would like to thank the South Shore Charter Educational

Foundation for providing the grant to make this program again a reality. You can read more about Oceans of Opportunity below. One thousand thanks to our faculty and staff who worked so hard bringing all three great summer programs to our students.

There will be some exciting staffing updates coming to you over the next few days and weeks, as well as back-to-school information, transportation updates, and some upcoming family focus groups regarding student cellphone use in school. As always, please do not hesitate to reach out to us if you have any questions.

Thank you for joining us as we look forward to another great year.

**Alicia Savage**  
**Executive Director**

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## Back to School Contact Information

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### **Elementary School K-5 | 100 Longwater Circle**

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### **Middle School 6-8 | 700 Longwater Drive**

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### **High School 9-12 | 700 Longwater Drive**

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## School Calendar & Announcements

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[Click here for the complete SSCPS Events & Athletics Calendar](#)

## SSCPS WEEKLY CALENDAR

AUG 12 - AUG 19

|                                                                                                    |                                                                                                    |                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Wed 12</b><br>On-Call Substitute Recruitment Open House at 100 Longwater - 10AM - 12PM          | <b>Thu 13</b><br> | <b>Fri 14</b><br> | <b>Sat/Sun</b><br><b>Sat 15</b> - Kindergarten Playgroup - 9AM                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Mon 17</b><br> | <b>Tue 18</b><br>Parent Focus Group - New Cell Phone Policy (via Zoom) - 5:30PM                    | <b>Wed 19</b><br> | <b>Upcoming</b><br><b>Aug 28:</b> Kindergarten Open House<br><b>Aug 31:</b> New Middle School Student Open House<br><b>Sept 1:</b> Kindergarten Orientation<br><b>Sept 1:</b> Middle School Open House<br><b>Sept 2:</b> First Day of School |

SSCPS Events & Athletics Calendar

## Summer Updates

### CSCR Oceans of Opportunity Summer Program

Our 2026 *Oceans of Opportunity* Summer Program turned out to be an incredible four weeks! Students wasted no time becoming marine scientists as they explored the diverse coastal ecosystems surrounding the Cohasset shoreline. Each week, the program provided students with meaningful opportunities to think and work like scientists, engineers, and environmental stewards. Through field investigations, engineering challenges, and ecological exploration, students continued building a deeper understanding of how local actions influence the health of our watersheds and ultimately the ocean.

As we close out the *Oceans of Opportunity* Summer Program for this year, we want to take a moment to reflect on an incredible month of exploration, scientific inquiry, and hands-on learning. Throughout the program, students strengthened their understanding of coastal ecosystems while developing the skills of scientists through authentic field investigations and research experiences.

Continue reading for an overview and photos from each week of the program courtesy of Jamie Allen!

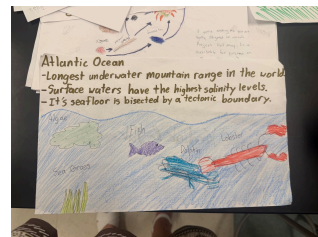
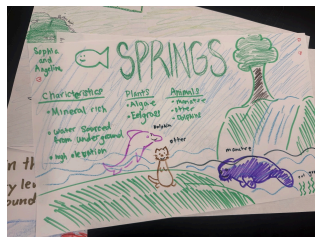
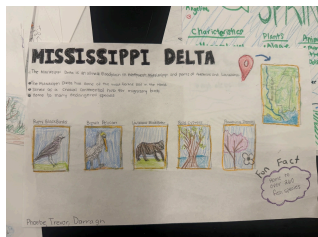
#### Week 1 Overview:

Our first field experiences brought students onto the mud flats, where they made careful observations of the habitat while collecting and identifying a variety of marine species. Students learned proper clamming techniques and gained a firsthand understanding of the organisms that call these tidal environments home. They also explored the salt marsh, where they investigated the important role of marsh ecosystems and examined eelgrass beds. Students collected eelgrass samples and learned about the critical

ecological services these underwater meadows provide, including habitat for marine life, shoreline protection, and improvements to water quality.

Students also had the opportunity to head out by boat to explore the local coastal waters from a new perspective. While on the water, they conducted sampling activities and observed how different habitats are connected within a larger marine ecosystem. These experiences allowed students to apply scientific observation skills while gaining a deeper appreciation for the rich biodiversity found right in our local environment.

Back in the classroom, students built upon their field experiences by exploring ecosystem interactions. Through discussions and collaborative activities, they investigated food chains and food webs, examining how energy flows through an ecosystem and how organisms depend on one another for survival. Students also considered the various pressures that can impact these relationships, including pollution, habitat loss, invasive species, and climate change and discussed how disruptions to one part of an ecosystem can create ripple effects throughout the entire food web.







### Week 2 Overview:

On Monday, students divided into two groups, alternating between a land-based exploration and a boat-based field experience. During the boating excursion, students participated in an authentic eelgrass restoration project, designing and testing different methods for planting eelgrass on the ocean floor. Teams engineered a variety of solutions using burlap nets, ropes, and even clams to anchor the eelgrass with the goal of encouraging successful growth and habitat restoration. Students observed how each design functioned while snorkelers monitored the effectiveness of the different planting methods beneath the water's surface. This hands-on experience introduced students to the challenges scientists and conservationists face when restoring critical marine habitats and highlighted the important role eelgrass plays in supporting healthy coastal ecosystems.

Meanwhile, the land-based group explored the concept of watersheds through a series of engaging activities. Students first created model landscapes by crumpling paper into mountain-like formations before mapping high and low elevations with markers. As water was poured over their models, they observed how rainfall naturally follows the contours of the land, forming streams, rivers, and ultimately flowing toward larger bodies of water. Students then hiked toward the historic lightkeeper's house, where they viewed the surrounding coastline and river systems from above, allowing them to visualize how local watersheds connect to the ocean. The day concluded with a visit to the local lobster shed, where students met with working lobstermen who shared insights into Massachusetts' lobster industry, sustainable fisheries, and the importance of healthy marine food webs.

On Wednesday, classroom learning expanded upon Monday's field experiences as students investigated watersheds in greater depth. Through demonstrations and videos, students explored how water moves across landscapes, how watershed boundaries are identified and mapped, and why every community is part of a watershed. Using clips from David Attenborough's *Planet Earth*, students examined ecosystems from around the world and discussed how these systems are interconnected. They then applied this understanding by investigating how human activities and environmental changes within their own local ecosystem can impact the health of their watershed and, ultimately, the ocean.

The week concluded on Friday with an engineering design challenge at Bassing Beach. Working collaboratively in small teams, students designed and constructed coastal structures intended to withstand incoming tides while protecting a fragile shell. The activity challenged students to think critically about erosion, wave action, stability, and coastal resilience while testing and refining their designs through multiple iterations. Back in the classroom, students reflected on the week's experiences, writing about what they had learned and making connections among watersheds, ecosystems, habitat restoration, engineering design, and the importance of protecting our coastal environments.







### Week 3 Overview:

This week, students continued exploring the connections between our local watershed, coastal ecosystems, and the health of our surrounding marine environment. Building on previous investigations of marshes, eelgrass, and watershed dynamics, students examined how water moves through the landscape and how those connections influence the resilience of our coastline. Through a combination of classroom discussions, field experiences, and observations, students strengthened their understanding that what happens on land ultimately impacts the health of our coastal waters.

A major focus of the week centered on coastal resilience and the ways communities can prepare for and adapt to environmental change. Students investigated how natural features, such as salt marshes, eelgrass beds, dunes, and barrier beaches, help protect coastlines by absorbing wave energy, reducing erosion, improving water quality, and providing critical habitat. These natural systems were compared to human-made structures, including seawalls and revetments, allowing students to discuss the benefits and limitations of each approach. Through these lessons, students considered how combining engineering solutions with healthy ecosystems can create more resilient coastlines capable of withstanding future storms and rising sea levels.

The week concluded with an exciting day on the water as students focused on water quality monitoring aboard the research vessel. Using a YSI multiparameter water quality instrument, students collected and analyzed data from several locations while learning how scientists monitor the health of coastal ecosystems. Students measured pH, dissolved oxygen, temperature, salinity, light availability, and water clarity, discussing how each parameter influences marine organisms and ecosystem function. By collecting and interpreting real-world scientific data, students experienced firsthand how environmental scientists assess water quality and use these measurements to better understand and protect our local marine environment.





#### **Week 4 Overview:**

During the last week of the program, students spent two days immersed in the field, continuing to build upon the knowledge and skills they have developed throughout the summer.

On Monday, students returned to the mudflats to conduct another field investigation using seine nets and hand nets to sample the diverse organisms that inhabit our local coastal waters. Students identified a wide variety of marine invertebrates and fish while discussing habitat preferences, biodiversity, food webs, and the ecological importance of these species within the greater coastal ecosystem. The experience reinforced how careful observation, sampling techniques, and data collection help scientists better understand the health of marine environments.

On Friday, students participated in a mini field expedition that highlighted the interconnected nature of our local watershed and coastal ecosystems. The group visited Minot Beach, a nearby salt marsh, and a freshwater pond before returning to CSCR. At each location, students made observations, compared environmental conditions, and discussed how freshwater and coastal habitats are connected. These experiences reinforced one of the central themes of the program: that every watershed ultimately connects to the ocean, and the health of our local environments directly influences the health of our coastal ecosystems.



On Wednesday, our final classroom session focused on reflection and looking ahead. Students completed a written reflection on their experiences throughout the program, considering how their understanding of marine science, watersheds, coastal resilience, and environmental stewardship has grown over the past four weeks. Students also began planning their capstone projects, which will showcase what they have learned while answering the program's essential question: **How am I connected to the ocean, and what responsibility do I have to protect it?**

These projects will continue to be developed during the coming weeks as students create scientific research posters, StoryMaps, or presentations that highlight their learning and communicate the importance of protecting our coastal environments.

We wrapped up Wednesday with a small pizza celebration to recognize the students' hard work, curiosity, and dedication throughout the program. It was a wonderful opportunity to celebrate everything they accomplished together over the past month.

Although the summer portion of the program has come to an end, the learning is not over. Students will continue meeting with us throughout the school year to develop their capstone projects and learn how to use ArcGIS StoryMaps to communicate their research. We look forward to sharing their work during a public dissemination event in late summer/early fall, where students will present their projects to families, community members, and program partners.







We would like to extend our sincere gratitude to Aidan, Luke, Elena, Zach, Rowena, Jack, Susan, and the entire CSCR staff for their outstanding partnership, mentorship, and commitment to providing our students with meaningful, authentic scientific learning experiences. Their passion for marine science and environmental stewardship has inspired our students and made this collaboration truly exceptional.

We would also like to thank our students and families for making this year's *Oceans of Opportunity* program such a success. Your enthusiasm, curiosity, teamwork, and willingness to explore the natural world made every field experience memorable. We look forward to seeing everyone again as we continue this work and celebrate your accomplishments at our upcoming dissemination event.



## ELE Summer Experience Program

The ELE Summer Experience Program at SSCPS is for English Learner students in grades 1-6 to provide additional support in language acquisition. This program meets three days a week during the month of July and combines classroom instruction with offsite field trips providing immersive experiences and extended practice in English language instruction. This year's program was another great success — keep reading for a weekly overview of the program courtesy of Laurie Hogan!

During Week 1, students designed their own summer 2026 t-shirts, dove into their summer reading books, started their art projects, and enjoyed a fabulous day at beautiful Nantasket Beach. Throughout Week 2, students painted rocks they collected at the beach, continued with their skills workbooks, summer reading books, and art projects, and learned about the real life of a studio artist. Students also visited the [Sandpaper Factory Studios in Rockland](#) to learn from two former SSCPS art teachers, [Christine Bodnar](#) and Pam Golden! They gave students a tour of the facility and their open studios, and Christine led a painting demonstration as well. A special thank you to Christine and Pam for sharing their time and talents with our students!

Students spent Week 3 putting the finishing touches on their watercolor paintings. Our K–2 artists worked on "*The River*" while our students in Grades 3 & 4 completed "*Flowers*" — both compositions were inspired by a demonstration by Christine Bodnar at the Sandpaper Factory Studios. Our budding artists did an amazing job replicating the models while adding their own unique, personal touches. Alongside their art projects, students also continued working on their summer reading books and skills practice.

Over the weeks, there were shifts in our curriculum theme. In Week 1, students explored **Art on the Beach**, discovering how to create art from simple, natural objects like painted beach stones. Week 2 shifted to **Art in the Studio**, giving students a peek into the daily life of a working artist. In Week 3, students dove into **Art at the Museum**, where they explored world-class masterpieces at the Museum of Fine Arts (MFA) Boston.

During the final week of the program, students finished their paintings and transformed their classrooms into art galleries for a special walk-through art show before taking their artwork home. The program ended with our annual tradition of visiting Paragon Carousel & Creamery for carousel rides and ice cream!



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## Upcoming School & Community Events

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### 2026 SSCPS Annual Road Race



Join us on Saturday, October 17th at Wompatuck State Park for another SSCPS Annual Road Race! The road race is a beloved community-wide event that helps us all unite in the spirit of collaboration and togetherness, so join us with your friends and family for a morning of fun, exercise, and community. Use the buttons below for more information on this year's race, volunteer and sponsorship opportunities, and more!

[RUN THE RACE](#)[ROAD RACE INFO](#)A promotional banner for the 2026 SSCPS Annual Road Race. The background is a photograph of a woman in a white t-shirt taking a photo of a young boy in a blue shirt. The text is overlaid on a dark blue background. At the top left, it says 'South Shore Charter Public School'. In the center, a white box contains the text 'BECOME A SPONSOR!' followed by '2026 SSCPS ANNUAL ROAD RACE' in large blue letters. Below this, it says 'SUPPORT STUDENTS IN THE SOUTH SHORE' and 'OCT 17, 2026 | WOMPATUCK STATE PARK, HINGHAM MA'. At the bottom, there are three icons with text: a megaphone for 'Promote Your Business', a group of people for 'Connect With Community', and a graduation cap for 'Support Education'. The SSCPS logo is in the top right corner.

South Shore Charter Public School

**BECOME A SPONSOR!**  
**2026 SSCPS  
ANNUAL ROAD RACE**

**SUPPORT STUDENTS IN THE SOUTH SHORE**

OCT 17, 2026 | WOMPATUCK STATE PARK, HINGHAM MA

 Promote Your Business  Connect With Community  Support Education

At this year's road race, we're celebrating the continued enrollment expansion at South Shore Charter! This is an exciting opportunity to allow more students to become a part of our diverse, inclusive community, and there's no better way to celebrate than by coming together as a community for this beloved event — we hope to see you there!

There are lots of ways you can support our school and contribute to this event, from running the race, to volunteering your time, to sponsoring the race or a student runner, and more. Visit our website to learn more about the race and how you can be a part of our celebration and help us pave the **#SSCPSRoadToGrow!**

[SPONSOR THE RACE](#)



**SSCPS ROAD TO GROW 2026 ROAD RACE**

**#SSCPSRoadToGrow**

**\$35 ENTRY**

**SUGGESTED \$10 DONATION FOR STUDENTS**

**Starts at 9:00am  
Saturday, October 17th**

**Wompatuck State Park**  
204 Union St. Hingham, MA 02043

**FOOD - DRINK - MUSIC - PRIZES**  
**ALL WELCOME - VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

 SOUTH SHORE CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL | 100 LONGWATER CIRCLE, NORWELL, MA 02061

## Important Links

Weekly Updates are emailed and posted to our website - [subscribe here](#).

1. [Afterschool Enrichment Program](#)
2. [DESE Student Attendance Letter](#)  
Translated: ([Arabic](#), [Cape Verdean](#), [Creole](#), [Chinese](#), [Haitian](#), [Creole](#), [Portuguese](#), [Spanish](#), [Vietnamese](#))
3. [Back-to-School Information](#)
4. [Food Services](#)
5. [Health Office](#)

School Documents:

[2026-2027 School Calendar](#)

[Student and Family Handbook](#)

[Arrival and Dismissal Procedures](#)

[SSCPS By-Laws](#)

[2024-2025 SSCPS Annual Report](#)

[DESE Integrated Monitoring Review](#)



6. [Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance](#)
  7. [Community Service](#)
  8. [Parents Association Website](#)
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