Weekly Update | September 30, 2026

VOL. 9, ISSUE 5

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A Message From Angie

Now, at the end of September, the work of teaching and learning is well underway, and students are settling into the routines of the school year. Nowhere is this more evident than in our early childhood classrooms, where instruction is focused on the evidence-based practices that support children as they become readers.

In June, Governor Healey signed the Right to Read Act, establishing statewide expectations for how children in kindergarten through third grade are taught to read. The law calls for instruction grounded in research, including explicit teaching of phonemic awareness and phonics, as well as regular literacy assessment to identify students who may need additional support.

For families at South Shore Charter Public School, much of this will sound familiar. Evidence-based reading programs and practices grounded in the science of reading have guided our approach to literacy instruction long before they became a statewide requirement. SSCPS began screening students in grades K–6 using **DIBELS**, an assessment of foundational literacy skills, during the 2009–2010 school year. Teachers collect this data three times each year and use the results to inform classroom instruction and identify students who may benefit from additional support. This year, we have expanded this work to include all students in grades K–8.

The SSCPS literacy curriculum is based on the **Massachusetts English Language Arts and Literacy Framework** and is designed to provide students with systematic learning opportunities in print concepts, phonological awareness, phonics and word recognition, fluency, spelling, writing, vocabulary, and comprehension.

Phonological awareness, the ability to hear and work with the sounds in spoken words, is an essential building block for learning to read. In alphabetic languages such as English, students learn to break words apart into individual sounds, recognize and manipulate those sounds, and blend them together. These skills prepare children to understand how

sounds are represented by letters in print. Our teachers provide systematic and explicit instruction in phonological and phonemic awareness through the **Heggerty Phonemic Awareness Curriculum**. Short, daily, auditory lessons help students hear, identify, blend, segment, and manipulate the sounds in spoken words.

Phonics instruction helps children understand how letters and sounds work together. Students learn the “code” that connects written words to spoken language, allowing them to look at letters and patterns on a page and translate them into sounds and words. As decoding becomes increasingly accurate and automatic, students can devote more of their attention to understanding, thinking about, and enjoying what they read.

The **Appleseeds** foundational skills curriculum serves as our core K–2 program, with supplemental resources available for students who need additional explicit instruction and practice. Appleseeds uses a structured literacy approach to develop phonics, decoding, encoding, fluency, and other foundational reading and writing skills through systematic, explicit instruction. The goal is to ensure that students develop the strong foundation they need to become increasingly fluent, confident, and independent readers.

Learning to read is about more than decoding words. Strong readers also need to understand, discuss, and think deeply about what they read and hear. Using the Wonders 2023 program, students at SSCPS read or listen to shared texts and participate in teacher-guided discussions that bring stories and informational texts to life. During these lessons, teachers model comprehension strategies such as asking questions, noticing how a text is organized, making connections, and using evidence to develop ideas.

A strong curriculum is only as effective as the teaching behind it. With this in mind, SSCPS has made a significant and sustained investment not only in high-quality instructional materials, but also in the professional learning and coaching that help teachers use those materials effectively.

In spring 2024, SSCPS received the first of three grants totaling $298,799 to support implementation of the Appleseeds curriculum. While a portion of this funding has supported instructional materials, the majority has been invested in ongoing professional learning for our K–2 educators focused specifically on foundational literacy skills.

This work goes well beyond one-time training. Teachers participate in ongoing professional learning throughout the year and receive coaching and support from the literacy leadership team. Learning walks conducted three times each year, along with regular classroom observations, provide opportunities to identify strengths, examine patterns across classrooms, and determine areas for continued professional growth.

Professional learning includes whole-group sessions focused on effective curriculum implementation, strengthening instructional routines, using assessment data to guide instruction, and meeting the needs of all learners, including multilingual students. The work also includes targeted professional learning for school and literacy leaders so they can analyze data, identify instructional trends, provide meaningful feedback, and effectively coach teachers.

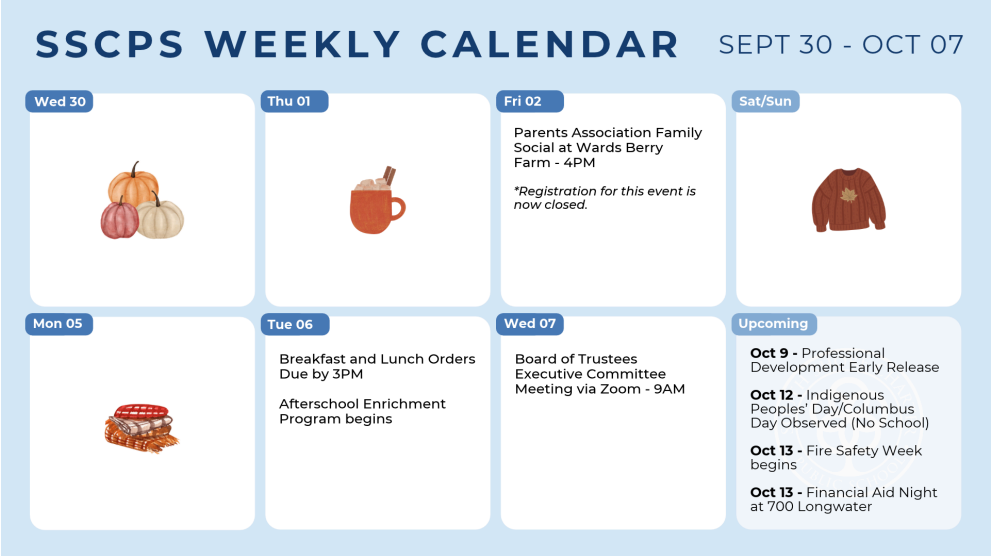
We are excited to share that SSCPS has been awarded an additional $50,000 grant for the 2026–2027 school year to continue this work. This funding allows us to build on the progress already underway, deepen teacher expertise, strengthen coaching and instructional support, and ensure that students across classrooms receive strong, consistent, evidence-based literacy instruction.

Families play an important role simply by making language, stories, and books part of everyday life. Reading and talking together, in English or in a family’s home language, builds vocabulary, background knowledge, comprehension, and a love of reading. The work of becoming a reader extends beyond the school day and we welcome your partnership.

On a different literacy related note I hope to see many of our K-5 families at our **Literacy Lane** event next month. As always, please do not hesitate to reach out with questions or concerns.

Sincerely,
Angie Pepin
Director of Teaching and Learning

School Calendar & Announcements



Click here for the complete SSCPS Events & Athletics Calendar

SSCPS Events & Athletics Calendar

New Phone Number for 700 Longwater Drive

We now have a direct phone line to 700 Longwater Drive. Parents and students may now use the phone number **781-561-9866** to reach 700 Longwater directly.

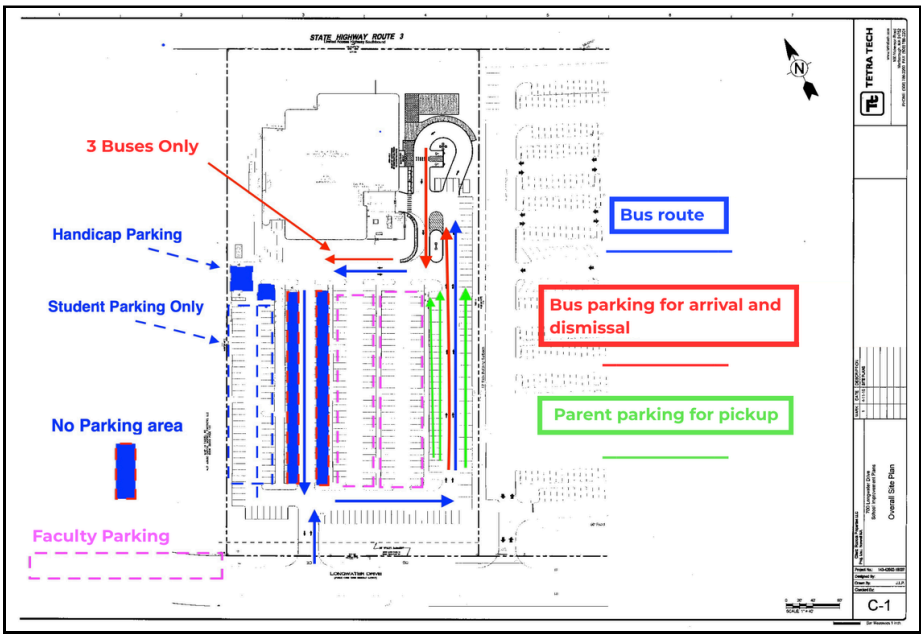
The existing phone number for 100 Longwater Circle **(781-982-4202)** is still in use and can be called to reach 100 Longwater directly.

As a reminder, to notify us of any attendance changes like absences, tardies, etc. please email **attendance@sscps.org**. To notify us of any bus-related changes, please email **transportation@sscps.org**.

Bus Transportation Reminders

This map highlights the 700 Longwater Drive parking lot, bus route, and parent pick up line for the 2026-2027 school year. Please use the button below to view all current bus transportation information.

BUS TRANSPORTATION INFO



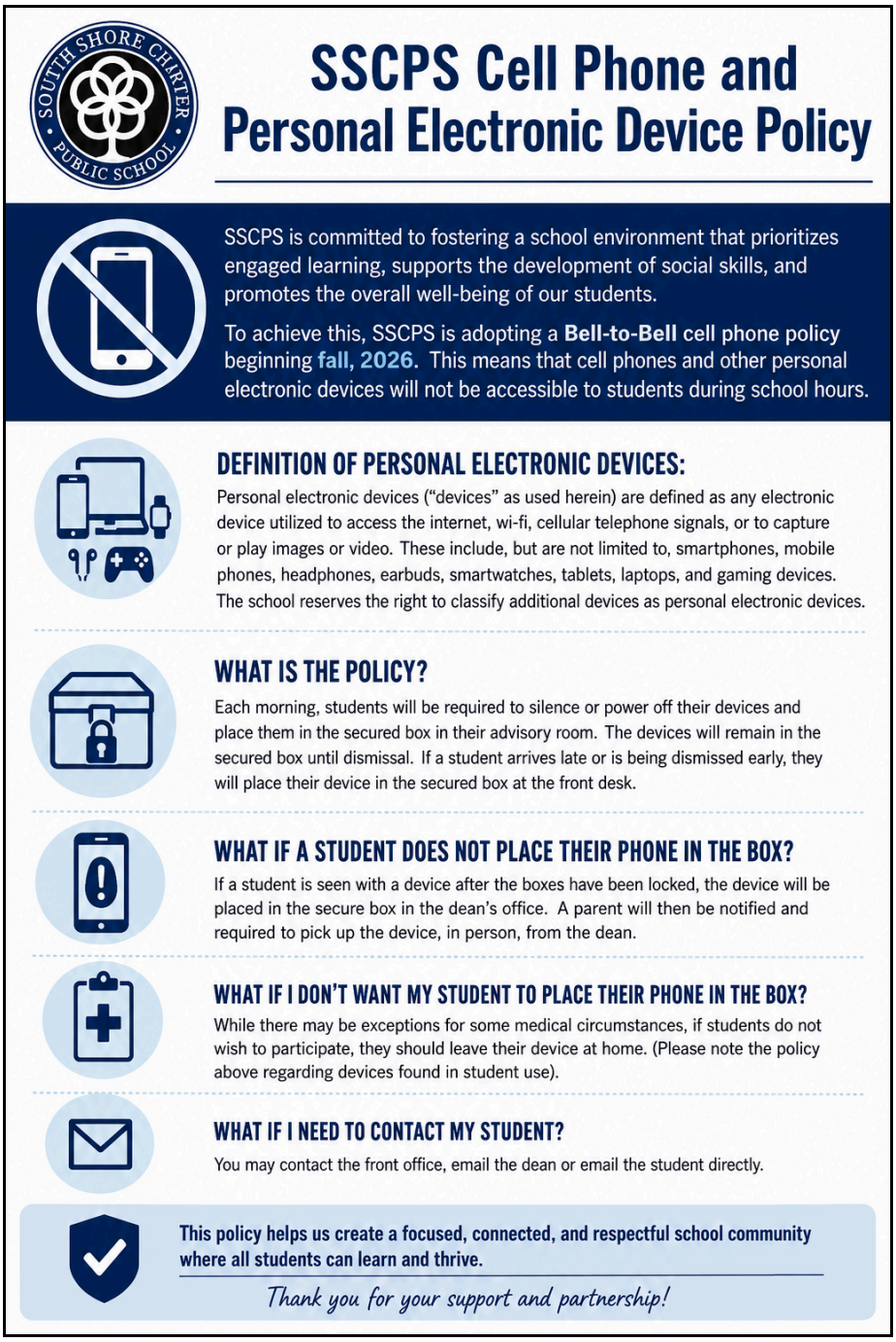
School Policy Survey Reminder

2026-2027 SSCPS Cell Phone Policy Survey

Thank you to all parents who participated in our Cell Phone Policy Focus Group! If you were unable to attend, please view the Cell Phone Policy flyer for the 2026-2027 school year below.

We are asking all SSCPS families to take the Cell Phone Policy Survey by TODAY: September 30th, 2026. Please use the button below to complete the survey.

TAKE THE SURVEY



From the Health Office

Health Office Reminders

Screening Opt-Out
As part of our school health program, the school will be conducting state-required student health screenings, which include:

- Height and weight measurements
- Vision screening
- Hearing screening

These screenings are conducted to help identify potential health concerns that may benefit from further evaluation.

Parents and guardians have the option to opt their child out of these screenings. If you do not wish for your child to participate, please notify the Health Office by email at **jkjelgaard@sscps.org** no later than October 15, 2026.

If an opt-out request is not received by October 15, your child will participate in the scheduled screenings.

Illness
As a reminder, please do not send your child to school if they are experiencing diarrhea, vomiting, or a fever. Students must be symptom-free for at least 24 hours without the use of medication before returning to school.

Students who have been diagnosed with an infectious illness should remain home and may return to school after they have been on antibiotics for at least 24 hours, when antibiotics are prescribed for that illness.

Keeping sick children home helps protect your child, classmates, staff, and the broader school community from the spread of illness. Thank you for your cooperation in helping us maintain a healthy school environment.

Change of Clothes
If you have a student in Kindergarten, 1st grade, or 2nd grade, please make sure they have a weather-appropriate change of clothes kept at school.

Young children may occasionally need a change of clothing during the school day due to spills, accidents, or other unexpected situations. The Health Office has a very limited supply of extra clothing, and we may not always have clothing available in the appropriate size.

Please send your child to school with a complete change of clothes, including:

- Underwear
- Socks
- Pants
- Shirt

Please make sure the clothing is appropriate for the current season. We also encourage you to replace or update the clothing as the seasons change and as your child grows.

Medication
If your student has a diagnosis of asthma or a food allergy, the Health Office is required to have emergency medication available at school as appropriate for your student's needs.

Please contact the appropriate Health Office to make arrangements for an adult to deliver the medication to school. Students are not permitted to transport medication on the school bus.

In order for medication to be kept and administered at school, we are required to have a current medication authorization form and/or an up-to-date Allergy or Asthma Action Plan on file. All forms must be dated after July 1, 2026, to remain valid for the entire 2026–2027 school year.

Middle and High School Students
If your middle or high school student plans to self-carry an inhaler or EpiPen, a current medication authorization form must still be on file with the Health Office. The form must include written authorization from the student's healthcare provider permitting the student to self-carry and self-administer the medication.

Health Office Contacts
K-12: Jaime Kjelggard (**jkjelgaard@sscps.org**)

K-5: Erilin Martinez (emartinez2@sscps.org)
6-12: Barbara Folan (bfolan@sscps.org)

SSCPS Health Office

From the Dean's Desk

The Ultimate Jaguar

Over the first few weeks of school, our faculty has spent a lot of time thinking about a pretty simple question: What do we want our students to be known for?

Not just when they are sitting in their classroom with their teacher. In the hallway. At lunch. On the playground. When another student needs help. When something is difficult. Maybe most importantly, when nobody is watching.

Through our work together, we kept coming back to three words: Responsibility. Courage. Respect.

Together, our faculty have built these ideas into our Ultimate Jaguar framework for students in grades K–5. The words stay the same across the building, although what they look like naturally changes as children grow.

Responsibility might begin with a young child learning to take care of their things, their space, and themselves. By grades 3–5, we are asking students to do what they know they are supposed to do, even when nobody is watching.

Courage can be doing the right thing when it is hard. As students get older, it also means speaking up, trying something new, and having the courage to admit a mistake. Respect begins with treating people and places kindly. It grows into understanding that other people's bodies, voices, and belongings deserve to be honored.

None of this is particularly complicated. In fact, that's the point.

We don't need children carrying around a list of twenty rules in their heads. As a faculty, we want our students to begin recognizing these three ideas in the hundreds of small choices they make during a school week.

We also want to notice when they get it right.

Throughout the month, our teachers and staff will be looking for those moments. Some will be obvious. Plenty won't be. At the end of each month, teachers will nominate students who have truly demonstrated Responsibility, Courage, or Respect to be recognized as an Ultimate Jaguar.

And we intend to make a big deal about it.

Being named an Ultimate Jaguar should feel special. It is not an award we will hand out every week. It is a monthly recognition of students who have shown us, through their actions, what these three words actually look like. We will celebrate those students across our school, and we will work with their families so they can be part of the celebration too.

The specific choices matter.

Maybe an Ultimate Jaguar is a child who admitted to something when it would have been easier to stay quiet. Maybe they included someone who was standing alone. Maybe they struggled with something for twenty minutes and refused to give up. Maybe they took care of a mess they didn't make.

That's the stuff we want to catch.

Of course, our students will still make mistakes. Plenty of them. That's part of growing up. Responsibility, Courage, and Respect aren't standards children either meet or fail. They are things we practice.

The strength of this work will come from all of us using the same language. When our children see these three words in their classrooms, hallways, bathrooms, and shared spaces—and hear them from the different adults in their school—we hope something begins to stick.



Responsibility. Courage. Respect.
Three words.
A lot of growing up inside them.

Walter Duncan
Dean of Students K-5

Upcoming School & Community Events

Upcoming SSCPS Events

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



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

K-5 Literacy Lane

We're hosting another K-5 Literacy Lane on October 23rd — join us at 700 Longwater from 5-6PM for another great event! Use the button below to sign up today.

LITERACY LANE SIGN-UP



Athletic Department

Athletics Scoreboard

Boys Varsity Soccer

Results

9/11 vs. Carver High School (Loss 8-1)

9/16 @ New Heights (Win 3-2)

9/23 vs. Boston Prep Charter (Win 5-1)

Upcoming Games

9/30 vs. Argosy Collegiate (2:45 Union Point Sports Complex, Weymouth)
10/1 @ Brooke High School (4:00 Healy Field, Firth Road, Roslindale)
10/2 vs. Foxborough Regional (3:30 Union Point Sports Complex, Weymouth)
10/5 @ Roxbury Prep High School (6:00 Clifford Park,160 Norfolk Ave., Boston)

Girls Varsity Soccer

Results

9/16 @ Codman Academy (Win 3-1)
9/18 vs Brooke High School (Win 5-2)
9/22 @ Boston Collegiate (Loss 3-0)
9/29 @ Boston Collegiate (Loss 4-1)

Upcoming Games

10/1 @ New Heights (4:00, Brockton-O'Donnell Field)
10/2 vs. Foxborough Regional (3:30 Union Point Sports Complex, Weymouth)
10/5 @ Foxborough Regional (3:30 Payson Park, Foxboro)

Girls Varsity Volleyball

Results

9/14 @ Roxbury Prep High School (Win 3-1)
9/16 vs Codman Academy (Win 3-0)
9/23 @ Neighborhood House (Win 3-0)
9/25 vs. Academy of the Pacific Rim (Win 3-0)
9/28 @ Argosy Collegiate (Loss 1-3)

Upcoming Games

9/30 vs. Foxborough Regional (3:30 Starland SportsPlex, 637 Washington St., Hanover)
10/1 @ Norfolk County Agricultural (5:00, Norfolk County Agricultural HS, Walpole)
10/5 vs. New Heights (3:30 Starland SportsPlex, 637 Washington St., Hanover)
10/6 @ Boston Collegiate (5:00, Kroc Center, Dudley Street, Boston)

Stay tuned for updates from the Cross Country Teams and the Middle Soccer Team next week!

Arts and Music

After School Music Registration

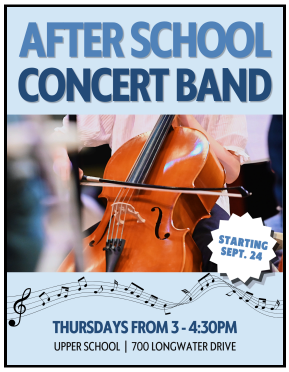
Click on the flyers below to sign up for one of this year's after school music programs! For any questions regarding our music programs, please contact Theron Leonard at **tleonard@sscps.org**.

**Please note that our music programs for Grades 4 & 5 are now open to Grade 3 students as well!*











From the Food Services Department

2026-2027 Meal Ordering Information

Welcome to the 2026-2027 school year! For those of you new to SSCPS, my name is Charlene Salamone and I am the Food Services Coordinator. My role at SSCPS is to ensure that our school provides our students with nutritious, healthy meals during the school day. Since SSCPS does not have cafeterias, we offer our students a “Grab and Go” hot meal, a salad, or a cold meal that complies with the nutritional guidelines set by the National School Lunch and Breakfast Program, as well as "Grab and Go" breakfast programs.

In order for your child to receive breakfast, lunch, or both, you will need to place a weekly or monthly order for meals. We utilize an online ordering system called Arbiter, and all families must register each child to order meals. Please visit the **SSCPS FamilyID Programs** webpage to register your child. Also, 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 know their homeroom teacher, that would be helpful, but that information can always be entered later. To learn more about 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.

Please review the menus carefully and order them accurately. **Orders are due on Tuesdays, no later than 3:00 pm, for the following week's meals.**

September 2026 Breakfast Menu

September 2026 Lunch Menu

Finally, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at 781-982-4202 ext. 156 or email me at **csalamone@sscps.org**.

Over the next month or so, we will be transitioning to a new point-of-sale (ordering) system, and we will be sending updated instructions on how to order meals using the new system to all families.

Charlene Salamone
Food Services Coordinator

Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)

The South Shore Charter Public School is approved to participate in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) of the National School Lunch Program. This special provision means that families are no longer required to complete a meal benefit application, and all our students have access to breakfast and lunch at no cost.

Fee waivers for athletics, enrichment, and other applicable student fees will be based on Direct Certification for the new school year.

Direct Certification is the process by which school districts certify students whose households receive assistance from SNAP, TANF/TAFDC, or FDPIR as eligible for free meals without further application. Direct Certification is based on information provided by the state agencies administering these benefit programs.

To apply for Direct Certification, please visit: **https://dtaconnect.eohhs.mass.gov/** and apply for benefits.

All families who are Direct Certified will receive notification of their status and a Community Eligibility (CEP) information-sharing form from the school in the coming weeks. To determine if a fee can be waived, all families must complete and return the CEP Information Sharing Form to Charlene Salamone, Food Services Coordinator. The Food Service Department cannot share your Direct Certification status with any other school department without a completed form on file.

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)**

School Documents:

FY27 School Calendar

2025-2026 School Calendar

Student and Family Handbook

Arrival and Dismissal Procedures
SSCPS By-Laws

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

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