

Side by Side's Monthly News

January 31, 2018

Issue 154

FROM THE DIRECTOR:

Dear SBS Families,

Other than a few sporadic make-ups, we have completed our mid-year round of MAP testing (Measures of Academic Progress). Teachers use assessment results to monitor the progress of all students. A report indicating your child's performance on this assessment will be available with the second marking-period report cards and reviewed during parent/teacher conferences.

The Norwalk Public Schools' decision to pilot the addition of thirty instructional minutes to the school day will affect a limited number of elementary schools in the district for the 2018-19 school year. As a result, the initial phase of this plan will not affect the scheduled bus times for Side by Side.

Winter recess, which includes the President's day holiday, is from Thursday, 2/15 through Monday, 2/19. On Thursday, Side by Side teachers will participate in a professional development day (no students) at the Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art, our partner and co-recipient of a National Endowment for the Arts grant. K-8 teachers will collaborate in a STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) program, exploring the interconnectedness of art and design, science, technology, engineering, and math.

Thank you,

Mr. Nittoly

ANY QUESTIONS?

Main Number	857-0306
Fax Number	838-2666
Director	Matt, x133
Nurse	Maria, x118
Social Worker.....	Marlene, x126
Assistant to the Director.....	Lilly, x132
Parent Coordinator.....	Evelyn, x130
Family Resource Center	Beatriz, x146

SAVE THE DATES:

Friday, February 2nd – Dress down day for students and staff

Friday, February 2nd – Upper school dance from 7:00 – 9:30 P.M. SBS students may choose to bring a maximum of two middle school age guests. The admission fee is \$3 per person.

Wednesday, February 7 – Brien McMahon H.S. Academic Fair from 6:00 P.M. – 8:00 P.M. (Snow date: February 8)

Thursday, February 8 – P.T.C.O. meeting at 4:00 P.M.

Thursday, February 15 – No school for students, teachers will meet at school for professional development/training.

Friday, February 16 – Monday, February 19 – Presidents Day recess
No school for students or staff

Tuesday, February 27 – Board of Directors meeting at 5:15 P.M.

Monday, March 5 through Friday, March 9 – Scholastic Book fair

Friday, March 9 – End of the second marking period

Thursday, March 15 – Early dismissal at 2:00 P.M.

Conference night from 4:00 to 7:30 P.M.

Friday, April 6 – Annual Side by Side by Side talent show

Friday, April 27 - SBS Annual Gala at Shorehaven Country Club

Announcements:

Side by Side Open House Dates and Times: Wednesday, February 21 at 10:30 A.M., Thursday, March 22 at 5:00 P.M., and Wednesday, April 4 at 5:00 P.M. The Side by Side Lottery will take place on Wed., April 25 at 5:00 P.M.

Please share this information with relatives, friends, co-workers and neighbors interested in learning more about Side by Side. Applicants should call the office to reserve a spot for one of the open house tours. The application deadline is Friday, April 6 at 4:00 P.M.

P2P SOUPer Bowl 2018

Side by Side by Side Charter School will participate in a friendly competition between students in our area high schools to alleviate hunger in our community. Please see the flyer requesting donations of canned soup and other non-perishables, which will be donated to the P2P Food Pantry in Norwalk.

Upper School Advisory students will be participating in **Start With Hello Week**, which was created by parent founders of the Sandy Hook Promise, a program which reaches out to schools and youth organizations throughout the country to bring awareness about the importance of a culture of inclusion and connectedness among young people. Please stay tuned for further information.

Classroom News:

PK 103 (Teachers, Judie and Kim) – This month we had several parents join us here in the classroom to read a favorite book, share a tasty recipe or try a new art activity. The highlight of the month was a family potluck dinner to celebrate families. As usual, it was a wonderful evening of family fun and delicious food!

PK 104 (Teachers, Jen and Carmen) – The PK 104 class is beginning a family cookbook project, and we cannot wait to try all of the yummy foods that our families enjoy! We are also creating family trees using treasured family photos that students have been bringing to school. Our timelines are finished, and they look amazing. The

children really love looking at the photos of how they (and their friends) have grown and changed.

Kindergarten (Teachers, Esther and Nikkia) – The Kindergarteners are counting down the days until the 100th day of school. We will share our 100 collections on February 7th. We have been studying fabric in class. Fiber artist Jeannie Thomma will lead a felt-making workshop in our class next week and this week we brought a genuine spinning wheel to class and everyone took a turn pressing the treadle up and down to get the wheel spinning. We also read about the cotton plant and used cotton from a real cotton plant to twist into thread. Some of the children are making weavings while others are using needle and thread to sew beanbags and pouches. Next week, we'll try our hand at removing stains from fabric with plain water and detergent. If you visit school, check out our neighborhood bulletin board with people made from cardboard and fabric. We have also read many stories about Martin Luther King, Jr. Rosa Parks, and the Civil Rights movement. We talked about segregation and what people did (like boycott the buses and go on marches) to get the Jim Crow laws changed down south. We looked at pictures of the recent march in New York, Hartford, Washington, DC and other cities to see how people continue to raise their voices peacefully like Dr. King in order to change the things that are not fair. Kids shared personal stories about times they stood up for others who were being treated unfairly.

1st Grade – The First Grade had a great time on our library trip. We took a tour of the children's section and learned where to find all of our favorite books. We then used our library cards to take home two books. The library has a cool scanner which allows you to check books out yourself. We have also been reading folktales from different countries. Our favorite character so far is Anansi, the clever spider. The Anansi stories originated in Ghana and were first told by the Ashanti.

2nd Grade – The second graders are working hard in Literacy, reading 100 Book Challenge books and improving fluency and comprehension in order to move up a level. We just completed a Cycles in Nature study and will begin an investigation of the Long Island watershed. The students are brainstorming ways to keep our water clean and safe. In Math, we are starting to add and subtract numbers that add up to 1,000! We are learning so many exciting things this year.

3rd Grade – The students finished their study of ancient and modern Japan. They compared the two and discovered a lot of different customs and traditions. Currently, they have been working in book clubs on a Magic Tree House book and learning about one of three countries: India, Italy or Iraq. The students are learning more about customs and traditions and learning to compare and contrast their countries among their peers. We are also halfway done with our math unit on area and have been doing a great job on every strategy we have explored. Finally, in science we have conducted experiments that relate to the transformation of matter. We are excited to see what February brings to our classroom!

4th Grade – Fourth grade students are immersing themselves in their Expert Trade Group research in Literacy. They have been learning how to take notes and code them for later use. Mathematicians have been identifying an array of angles and finding angle measurements using protractors. Scientists have been investigating what happens to our trash, how living things get water, and discovering living things survive when water is scarce, by conducting a series of experiments.

Please remember to have your child dress appropriately for the weather.

5th Grade

The Fifth Grade students are creating field journals in literacy as they continue their study of the rainforest. They are learning how to write narratives while incorporating information gathered from multiple sources. I look forward to seeing the final products, which we will prominently display on our bulletin board. In Math, we are continuing to apply our understanding of adding and subtracting fractions with dissimilar denominators-they are getting tricky! With that said, please make sure you and your child attend "Math Night," which will be on Wednesday 1/31, from 5:30-6:15. The kids will get to show off what they have learned and it is always a fun time! In Social Science, we are still learning about the American Revolution and have begun reading the novel, "My Brother Sam Is Dead," which gives some local perspective of an exciting time in the history of our country. We will then begin to analyze the Declaration of Independence while looking at other revolutions around the world.

Upper School Humanities

Eighth grade students are studying the civil rights movement in the United States during the 1950's and throughout the 1960's.

The Seventh grade class is studying the period in the 1800's when factories sprung up in the United States to make cloth. Our focus has been to explore unfair working conditions, the exploitation of workers, and the environmental issues.

Sixth grade is studying the period of gold mining in California and the influx of workers from China through the historical fiction novel "Dragonwings." The story is told from the perspective of a young Chinese boy and his family.

Upper School Math News

In **6th grade**, students are applying their understanding of a rational number's position on the number line to order rational numbers. Students understand that when using a conventional horizontal number line, the numbers increase as you move along the line to the right and decrease as you move to the left. Next, students will compare rational numbers using inequality symbols and words to state the relationship between two or more rational numbers. They will describe the relationship between rational numbers in real-world situations and with respect to numbers' positions on the number line. **7th grade** has been using linear equations and inequalities to solve problems; they are working with multi-step equations and inequalities containing rational numbers. Students have been solving problems involving consecutive numbers; total cost; age comparisons; distance, rate, and time; area and perimeter. Solving equations with a variable is all about numbers, and students must strive to find the number that makes the equation true. In the coming weeks, students will discover angle relationships and will use algebraic equations to solve for unknown angle measurements.

8th grade is currently working on linear equations; they are examining constant speed as a linear equation with two variables. Students will soon learn that the slope of a line describes the rate of change of a line. Students first encounter slope by interpreting the unit rate of a graph. They will next look at slope as rise/run and use that to determine the slope equation using two points on the line. Students derive $y = mx + b$ for linear equations by examining similar triangles. Students generate graphs of linear equations in two

variables first by completing a table of solutions, then by using information about slope and y -intercept. Following this, students graph equations using information about x - and y -intercepts. Next, students will learn some basic facts about lines and equations, such as why two lines with the same slope and a common point are the same line, how to write equations of lines given slope and a point, and how to write an equation given two points.

Upper School Science News

The **sixth graders** are continuing with their investigations in ecology. We have brainstormed which factors can cause population numbers to decrease and have narrowed it down to other organisms, food, reproduction, and their environment. We are preparing to solve a mystery of the population decline of the trout in the Great Lakes. We will keep you posted on our findings.

The **seventh graders** have been investigating various forms of energy. We have learned about the energy transformations that happen in different scenarios (i.e. bouncing balls, pendulums swinging) and are learning about how energy can transfer from one object to another. The **eighth graders** are continuing to learn about the structure of Earth. They have investigated convection cycles to learn about what happens in the mantle. We have also designed experiments to see how the behavior of Silly Putty changes in hot and cold environments. Students used Silly Putty to simulate the formation of metamorphic rock.

Research and Portfolio Seminar

Sixth grade students continue to read Frightful's Mountain and have learned about cascading consequence charts, which are graphic organizers that help students organize their research findings. The students analyzed the question "Should Sam interact with Frightful?" in a fishbowl discussion forum. For this, a small group of students forms an inner discussion circle. As students analyze a text and connect their responses to others, the observing group pays particular attention to aspects of group discussion that may not be obvious in classroom discussions. The main purpose of this strategy is to learn how to discuss effectively and support student claims with evidence from the text. Their cascading consequence charts for DDT pertain to the critical questions, "Is DDT beneficial" and "Does DDT have harmful consequences?"

Seventh grade students finished analyzing Steve Jobs speech. They are beginning to learn how to write a literary argument. They reviewed a sample literary argument paper based on this same speech by Steve Jobs, which determined the author's claim, backed by evidence from the text and a clear explanation.

Eighth grade students submitted research proposals and began conducting research on their chosen topics.

Music News

The only way to learn to play a musical instrument is actually to play a musical instrument. You cannot learn to play an instrument by reading about it, or watching someone else do it. This is why practice is so important in developing musical competence. Oddly enough, the thing I have found the most difficult about practicing (and yes, I still practice regularly) is *getting started!* Once I have started, I want to keep going. Your child will probably be the same way. After several days of practicing, it will become part of the routine. Once students' skills progress, practicing becomes an inherently rewarding experience. Unfortunately, there can be no progress without the

practicing. New skills are often difficult to acquire and struggling through them is an important skill lesson that applies to many aspects of life outside of learning how to play a musical instrument. By supporting your child to attend their instrumental lesson and in practicing at home, you will not only be supporting them in attaining musical competence, but also in developing resilience, self-confidence, and frustration tolerance; all important life skills.

The **5th through 8th Grade** students have completed their Guitar unit and have learned a number of basic chords that will enable them to play many songs. They now also have the ability to read Tab notation to be able to teach themselves new chords to play any song they want. We are moving to the Keyboard unit where we will be covering the basics of playing keyboards, with the same objective of having students be able to explore songs they like through learning the basics of theory and constructing chords, so they can read "lead sheets".

The Talent Show is coming up and is scheduled for the Friday before April break. Students should start thinking about what they would like to do now as we will start auditions in the month of February. Any student who would like some coaching with their act should feel free to contact me to work on developing their performance.

Physical Education News

PK-2nd

Students began a study of soccer unit earlier this month. We are practicing dribbling skills and learning how to use our feet. Everyone is doing a great job!

Grades 3-8

We started alternating our classes. Once a week students have a "Health" class with Mr. Seferian where we are learning about personal, social and emotional health, appropriate for their ages. For PE class, we are learning about Basketball. Both units are leading up to 'Hoops for Heart' week where classes will play full court basketball games!

Attention all Grades

HOOPS FOR HEART is coming up!

Feb 26-March 2nd

This is our annual fundraiser for the American Heart Association

- Class that raises the most money gets extra recess/gym class
- Student that raises the most money gets to be "Gym Teacher for a Day"

Art News

In **PK** and **Kindergarten** classes, students are painting hearts using oil pastels and liquid tempera paint. They are using a new technique called double loading where the students pick up multiple colors at a time.

In **1st** and **2nd grade**, students are finding inspiration from the book called Love Monster and drawing and painting their own love monsters using pencil, permanent marker and watercolor paint.

In **3rd** and **4th grade**, students are learning about the technique and history of mosaics. Students are making their own mosaic heart using scrap papers cut into geometric shapes and glued to a large heart. In upper school, students are learning about the color wheel, using analogous colors to make a polygon filled heart with watercolors and permanent marker. In addition, they continue to work on their

“background” assignment of drawing animals and landscapes using colored pencils.

Parent Community Coordinator News

Thank you to the many families who brought in supplies to help the eighth grade students raise funds for their Washington, D.C. field trip in May. Thanks also to the students and their families who purchased popcorn and lemonade.

Family Resource Center News

- **Free Tax Prep & Filing**

A VITA/AARP/IRS program open to all individual filers!

January 29, through April 17, 2018

Norwalk Public Library Locations, No appointment needed

Thursdays – Main Library

1 Belden Avenue - 2:30 pm - 8:00 pm

Saturdays - South Norwalk Branch

10 Washington Street - 9:00 am - 2:00 pm

Norwalk Community College – No appointment needed

Saturdays, January 27 through April 14

10 to 3:30 p.m., West Campus, Rooms W138 and W140

(Closed Feb. 17 and March 31 for holiday weekends.)

Tuesdays & Thursdays, January 30 through April 17

7 to 9:30 p.m., West Campus, Room W138

- **Saturday, February 3 – 10:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M.**

Online registration for Girls Who Code, an after school club for 6th-12th grade girls to explore coding in a fun & friendly environment. Located in the SoNo Friends of NPL Community Room.

- The Norwalk Health Department’s regular walk-in hours for flu shots are on Tuesdays from 1 – 3 P.M., while supplies last. Flu shots at the Health Department are free if you have Medicare Part B, Medicaid, Aetna, Anthem Blue Cross/Blue Shield, Cigna, ConnectiCare, and United. Please bring all your insurance cards with you. Otherwise, standard flu shots cost \$25 per person, and high-dose shots (an option for patients 65 and older) cost \$50. No one will be turned away, regardless of their ability to pay.