

# Side by Side's Monthly News

February 28, 2018

Issue 155

## FROM THE DIRECTOR:

Dear SBS Families,

We hope you enjoyed your long President's Weekend. Our teachers had a great opportunity for professional development last week as they worked at the Aldrich Museum and learned how to integrate science, technology, engineering, arts, and math into their classrooms.

Recently, the CT State Department of Education released the 2016-17 Accountability index scores for all schools and districts. We are happy to share that Side by Side's Index continues to improve. Our 2017 index is 77.2 compared to 75.9 from 2016. These results indicate progress made by our students, and show that we continue to outperform nearly every other comparable charter school in CT and many of the schools in our area! We will soon be announcing plans to hold a special community forum regarding our "Accountability" report so that we can discuss in more detail what these scores mean and how we can focus these results on school improvement. We would like a full school community audience for this forum including students, teachers, parents and Board members. Stay tuned!

Congratulations to 5th grader Shirley Ordonez. She is the lucky winner of the "Principal for a Day" contest. I look forward to visiting classrooms, making morning announcements, hosting All-School Meeting and providing lunch for Shirley on Wednesday, 2/28!

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, March 2** – Dress down day for students and staff  
**Monday, March 5 through Friday, March 9** – Scholastic Book fair  
**Friday, March 9** – End of the second marking period  
**Friday, March 9** – PTCO meeting at 4:00 P.M.  
**Thursday, March 15** – Early dismissal at 2:00 P.M.  
Conference night from 4:00 to 7:30 P.M.  
**Thursday, March 22** – Pump it up fundraiser at 5 P.M.  
**Friday, March 30** – School closed in observance of Good Friday  
**Friday, April 6** – Annual Side by Side by Side talent show  
**Monday, April 9 through Friday, April 13** – Spring recess, no school for students and staff  
**Friday, April 27** - SBS Annual Gala at Shorehaven Country Club

## Announcements:

The supervisor of Norwalk Central Kitchen has advised SBS that a significant number of families have negative balances in their student lunch accounts. Kindly send payment to school if you know you owe lunch balances. As noted in the student handbook, overdue, unpaid lunch balances may result in the withholding of report cards, letters of recommendation, transcripts, report cards and other student records. Thank you in advance for your anticipated cooperation.

The Fourth Grade class is fundraising for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society (LLS.) Please use the link below to donate to our school total. <http://events.ils.org/pages/ctwhv/SideBySideCharterSchool-2018>  
The deadline to contribute is Wednesday, March 28 for online donations. This is also the last day to return collection boxes to school.

Mr. Seferian and the students in Physical Education classes are participating in Hoops for Heart, an American Heart Association fundraiser during the week of February 26 through March 2. Please see the information packets sent home last week for details about how to give. The last day for donations is Friday, March 9.

The fourth annual talent/variety show will take place on Friday, April 6. Each student received a letter of encouragement with an attached sign-up sheet, which is due back by Friday, March 2. A copy is attached for your convenience.

**Side by Side Open House Dates and Times: 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.

## Classroom News:

**PK 103 (Teachers, Judie and Kim)** – At this time of the school year, we begin to see how our preschoolers have grown socially and formed a caring, supportive class community. During a recent meeting discussion about friendship, some children shared their thoughts about friends:

*"I like that they (friends) stand up for me.*

*They cheer for you when you try new things.*

*They share with me.*

*They give me presents.*

*They care about me.*

*They give me books.*

*I like hugging and sharing.*

*I like when they say they will be my best friend."*

There has also been great collaboration among the children as they work with different materials and share their ideas, such as duplo (big lego) structures, connecting tubes and unifix cubes. One morning, the children wanted to find out how many cubes could span the length of

the classroom, from block shelf to closet door. They almost had enough to make it to the closet door using every cube in the box, 499! **PK 104** (Teachers, Jen and Carmen) – PK 104 is getting excited about our field trip to Ambler farm this Friday to learn about maple syrup. Parents, please remember to send your children to school wearing warm clothing and rain/snow boots. During our next study, we will be learning about and performing nursery rhymes. Stay tuned for more information.

**Kindergarten** (Teachers, Esther and Nikkia) – In Kindergarten we are learning about bread and bakeries. Some of the looming questions are, "Why does bread have holes in it?" "How do they make the crust?" and "How do the seeds stick on the top?" Last week we enjoyed a snack of bread and jam after reading the classic story, Bread and Jam for Frances. We also made Oven-baked French Toast and White Bread. Everybody observed the making of the dough from just five ingredients --flour, sugar, salt, milk, and yeast and we all observed the dough rise and get bigger. We then put the dough in a loaf pan and placed it in the oven to bake. After eating our delicious bread with homemade butter, one of our students, Isabella suggested that the heat in the oven caused the crust, but many of the kindergarteners remain skeptical. Some think that the yeast had something to do with it. We are only at the beginning of our study –we have a lot more to explore and discover! Stay tuned.

**1st Grade** – The First Graders just finished a study of fables and other traditional tales. We talked about the elements of fictional stories, like characters, setting, and kick-off, and then the children used what they learned to write their own retells of a favorite story. Be sure to stop by the first grade bulletin board to read them. They did a fabulous job!

**2nd Grade** –The second grade students are working in full force. In Math, students are finishing a place value unit. They are working on adding and subtracting numbers up to 1,000. We have all concluded that subtraction is harder! We will be tackling multiplication soon. In Literacy, we are learning about "people who fought for a cause in American history." Some of these people include Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King, Jr., Cesar Chavez, and Susan B. Anthony. In Science and Social Studies, we are learning about the watershed and how to keep our water clean! We are also learning how pollution affects our water. We are working hard, and getting excited for the warm months to come.

**3rd Grade** – The third graders have completed their book club studies of India, Iraq and Italy. They have been recognizing customs and traditions in each country. We have finished our math unit on area and have moved on to fractions. We also officially finished our read aloud book, Wonder! Finally, in science we are continuing our exploration of the transformation of matter. We recently discovered exactly how paint adheres to a surface, and we made paper out of recycled newspaper.

**4th Grade** –Fourth grader students have been busy drafting historical narratives based on their expert trades. In Math, students have been finding equivalent fractions using area models, multiplication and division. We are leading the Leukemia/Lymphoma Society fundraiser this year during the month of March. Each student in our school will bring home a small box to collect donations. There will also be classroom collection boxes as well. Finally, we have an online giving page <http://events.ils.org/pages/ctwhv/SideBySideCharterSchool-2018> as well. Please donate in any way that you can! The fundraiser ends Wednesday, March 28. Thank you for your anticipated support.

**5th Grade** - The fifth grade has been working hard. We just finished a unit on biodiversity of rainforests around the world. The students were able to work on narrative field journals while incorporating facts from their research on a specific species. They have come a long way from the beginning of the unit and their work will be on display on our bulletin board soon. Our next focus will be the impact of sports in American culture. In this unit, the students will look at sports through multiple lenses. Students will analyze Jackie Robinson as a specific example of an athlete who served as a leader who broke barriers in

society. They will also begin to study argumentative writing, analyzing how the author, Sharon Robinson, provides evidence to support her opinions. At the end of the unit, the students will write their own argumentative writing piece to justify publishing a book about an important figure in sports. In Math, we have begun to explore the concept of multiplication of fractions as well as decimals. We will be moving to division of fractions very soon! Lastly, the students have begun analyzing the Declaration of Independence. We will then look at revolutions around the world (past and present) and identify common themes to help us gain a better understanding of conflict and resolution.

#### **Upper School Humanities**

**Sixth grade** students are learning about the gold rush in California through the historical fiction text "Dragon Wings."

The **Seventh grade** class is studying the social changes that occurred with the rise of textile mills in Lowell Massachusetts, especially with regard to workers' rights and poor environmental conditions in the context of the historical fiction novel "Lyddie," which they are reading as a class.

The **Eighth grade** is studying the civil rights movement in the 1950's and the integration of segregated schools, such as Central High in Arkansas. Students are reading Mighty Long Way, a memoir written by Carlotta Walls, one of the original "Little Rock Nine," as the students came to be known.

#### **Upper School Math News**

**Eighth grade** is just finished working on finding the slope and equations of line. Students learned that the slope of a line describes the rate of change of a line. They looked at slope as rise/run and used that to determine the slope equation using two points on the line. Students then generated graphs of linear equations in two variables by completing a table of solutions, then by using information about slope and y-intercept. In the coming weeks, students will learn to solve systems of linear equations by using substitution and elimination.

**Seventh grade** students are continuing their work with geometry as they use equations and expressions to study area, perimeter, surface area, and volume. Students began by comparing the circumference of a circle to the diameter of a circle and discovered that when dividing the two, it results in the number, pi. With this understanding, students learned how to find both the circumference and area of a circle, and used that to discover the formula for both a semi-circle and quarter-circle. Students will build upon their previous knowledge of surface area to solve real-life and mathematical problems involving area of two-dimensional shapes and surface area and volume of prisms, focusing on problems that involve fractional values for length.

**Sixth grade** students have been transitioning from the number line model to representing points in the coordinate plane. Students have been using ordered pairs of rational numbers to name points on a grid, and then given a point's location, they identify the first number in the ordered pair as the first coordinate and the second number as the second coordinate. Students then learned how to construct the plane; identify the axes, quadrants, and origin; and graph points in the plane, using an appropriate scale on the axes. Students will recognize the relationship that exists between points whose coordinates differ only by signs (as reflections across one or both axes) and locate such points using the symmetry in the plane. From there, students will graph points in the coordinate plane and use absolute value to find the lengths of vertical and horizontal segments to solve real-world problems.

#### **Upper School Science News**

The **Sixth graders** are working on an ecology unit. They have been learning about the interconnectedness of organisms in an ecosystem by focusing in on food chains and webs. The students have identified various relationships: indirect/direct, predator/prey, consumer/producer. We will be focusing on a specific ecosystem to solve the mystery of the declining trout population in the Great Lakes.

The **Seventh graders** are advancing in their study of energy. They have been learning about various types of potential and kinetic energies and their transformations and transference. We are currently investigating chemical energy. Be sure to ask your seventh grader about the cupric chloride/aluminum chemical reaction.

The **Eighth graders** are concluding their study of plate tectonics. We have analyzed maps to identify plate movement direction and boundary type. Ask your eighth grader what geological features go with the different types of boundaries (divergent, convergent and transform.)

#### **Research and Portfolio Seminar**

**Sixth Grade** students interpreted charts and graphs to determine whether the information supported the claim that DDT was beneficial or had harmful consequences. They then had to incorporate the newly acquired information into their cascading consequence charts. The students are currently using the Fishbowl protocol to make their claim about DDT, using evidence from various articles, videos, charts and graphs. Students will now have to write a one to two page paper arguing whether DDT is beneficial or has harmful consequences that outweigh the benefits.

**Seventh Grade** students are working on their literary argument essays. They have to argue the question, "How does Bud use his "rules" to survive or to thrive?" They have been examining Bud's rules from the literary text Bud, Not Buddy. They have been forming evidence based claims and will be working on producing a "quote sandwich."

**Eighth Grade** students have been editing their research proposal paragraphs as well as researching their topics. Students are reading articles on their topics and taking notes, but one of the most important tasks is that they MUST keep track of their resources. Students will start making their outlines next.

#### **Music News**

I am pleased to announce that five Side by Side music students were chosen to participate in the Westport Community Band's "Play with the Band" program. Bella Cuartas, Will Socci, and Andy Betances have chosen to pursue this wonderful extension opportunity to rehearse and perform with the WCB and students from area schools. Students will be attending evening rehearsals during April and May in preparation for the culminating concert performance on May 18, at 8:00 P.M. at Bedford Middle School in Westport. The program will include one of my original compositions for wind ensemble, "Flying over Desert Sands." We are also in the midst of auditioning for the Fourth Annual Talent/Variety Show. All varieties of talent, not just musical, are encouraged in this non-competitive and fun celebration of student passions. These could include dance, drama, cooking, martial arts, science experiments, and magic, to name just a few possibilities. Group acts are preferred in order to facilitate maximum student participation in a reasonable length of time. Save the date of April 6, 2018, the Friday before April vacation. The Spring Concert will take place on Thursday, May 17 at 7:00 P.M. and will feature the Beginning Band, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Band, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Band, and the Show Choir. There will be choreography rehearsals for the Show Choir after school on Thursday, May 10 and Tuesday, May 15 from 3:30 P.M. until 5:00 P.M. Please put these dates in your calendar, as attendance for members of these groups is mandatory. If there are any scheduling conflicts, please let me know as soon as possible.

#### **Physical Education News**

HOOPS FOR HEART!

Hoops for Heart will be taking place during PE Class for all grades March 5-9<sup>th</sup>. This is our annual fundraiser for the American Heart Association. We will be playing numerous basketball activities while also learning about heart health. Packets/letters about the fundraiser will arrive home next week with all the details about how to give.

The Class that fundraises the most money will get an extra gym class or recess time!

The Student that fundraises the most money will get to be "Gym Teacher for a Day!"

#### **Art News**

In PK and Kindergarten class, students are making their own signature kente cloths. Students learned about the art of weaving and the history of the kente cloth. We watched a video on the children of Ghana and learned the different patterns of the kente cloth. The students then created their own design using paper strips, glue and scissors.

In the **first and second grade** classes, students are learning about Faith Ringgold. We read the book Tar Beach and talked about Faith Ringgold, an African American artist who grew up in New York City during the Great Depression. We then used collage methods to recreate a scene in the book where the main character flies over New York City. Students were involved in a discussion about the meaning of the book and ideas that Faith Ringgold wanted to project. In **third and fourth grade**, students competed their Greek and Roman vases by applying their original draft to a scratch paper, upon which they used a stylus to scratch off and create an image of their Roman and Greek inspired vases. In **fifth and sixth grade**, students are about to start their self-portraits. Students will learn about value and monochromatic colors as they create their own self-portrait using tempera paints. In **seventh and eighth grade**, students are just finishing their analogous colored hearts. Students learned what colors are next to each other on the color wheel and chose three colors to paint inside the polygons they created in their heart shaped design. They then chose the complementary color that goes along with these analogous colors for the background. This exercise is helps the students to understand the color wheel and color groups.

#### **Parent Community Coordinator News**

The PTCO group is making exciting spring plans. A family fun night is being planned for March 22 at Pump it Up. Flyers will go home soon. Another team of PTCO members is planning a Mother's Day/Father's Day fundraiser that will feature gift items that incorporate student artwork. Finally, exciting discussions about a spring fair are beginning to take shape. The date is not yet final but it looks like late April or early May is the most likely choice. Please look for more information in the weeks to come.

#### **Family Resource Center News**

CAFE Club - Cultural Awareness for Everyone

The CAFE Club, an open-minded discussion group with a focus on social justice issues, cultures from around the world, and other trending topics - from mental health to income inequality to racism and more, is a weekly forum to share documentaries, TED talks, funny videos, and other media relevant to each week's topic. In this environment, everyone has a voice, and no matter what your opinion, you have the right to share it. If you have something to say, CAFE Club is the place to say it. CAFE Club, moderated by Sushmita Narayan and hosted by the Norwalk Public Library, is for students in grades 8-11.

Where: NPL Teen Room

When: Wednesdays 7-8pm

February 28 Racism: Affirmative Actions

March 7 The Colors of Us

P.S. Refreshments will be served!