



SOUTHWEST BALTIMORE

CHARTER SCHOOL

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Mar. 1 (and every Friday) Futsal for 3rd-5th graders, 1:00-2:00 PM**
- Mar. 1 PTO Dance, Grades Pre-K-5, 3:00-5:00 PM**
Grades 6-8, 6:00-8:00 PM
- Mar. 5 3rd Grade to the Aquarium**
- Mar. 7 Just for Moms (and Female Guardians), 5:30-7:30 PM**
- Mar. 9 Play Date for Pre-K students and prospective Pre-K and K students 10:00 AM-12:00 PM**
- Mar. 12 SBCS Inc. Board Meeting, 6:30 PM**
- Mar. 21 PTO Meeting, 5:30 PM**
- Mar. 27-29 Vision and Hearing Screenings**
- Mar. 28 Just for Moms (and Female Guardians), 5:30-7:30 PM**

PLEASE NOTE: SBCS does **not** follow the BCPSS schedule regarding half day Wednesdays. We are in session for full days every Wednesday.

SCHOOL SURVEY!

We need all families to complete the yearly school survey. Your answers affect our evaluation and our charter renewal. You will receive a paper survey but if you prefer to complete it online, you can scan this QR code below which will take you to the survey or you can click on this link:

<https://survey.k12insight.com/r/SchoolSurveyParentSY1819>.

Thank you!



CAN YOU DONATE TO SBCS?

We are in need of paper towels, tissues, and hand sanitizer. If you can donate any of these, please bring them to the front office. Thank you!

FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Parents/Guardians,
Looking at the school calendar, March is a busy month, but one of my favorites for two reasons. Daylight savings time (Sunday, March 10th) and Spring begin. I am looking forward to longer hours of daylight and warmer days!
In reflecting on our year to date, I marvel at how much our kids have grown since the beginning of the year. I'm not just talking height-wise, but also in areas like academics, responsibility, and maturity. It's one of the great joys of my job to be able to witness this each year. Thanks for all you do to support our efforts to help your children excel!

Speaking of growth, this year we launched our "*Trail Guides Program*" geared at celebrating students who excel at one or more of our Habits of Scholarship. To be named a *Trail Guide*, a student must be nominated, recommended and then voted for by all members of staff. So far, we have had two successful nominees, Kambira Landu and Tyler Shelton. Please congratulate them whenever you see them.

As you continue to support our efforts to help your children excel, please be reminded that parental involvement is more than volunteering at school. In fact, research shows that supporting your child at home is even more important. Having conversations with your child about school will not only keep you informed about what your child is doing but will give you some special time together in the evening after school. Asking your child what he/she did at school will likely result in the classic response, "Nothing." Here are some questions/suggestions that will result in a more engaging conversation and opportunities for activities that you can do together.

- Tell me what you learned today that you'd like to know more about. (This could lead

March, 2019

to a trip to the library to do some research or a visit to a museum.)

- Describe a book you enjoyed today. (Use this interest to build a daily reading habit. Encourage reading and listening skills by reading aloud and letting your child read to you.)
- What's the coolest thing that happened? What wasn't cool?
- What was the most creative thing you did?

(Adapted from Home & School

Connections: Working Together for School Success.)

Thank you for your continued support and all you do to make SBCS the great school that it is. Please don't hesitate to contact me at 443-984-3385 or igordon@bcps.k12.md.us with any feedback, questions or concerns.

Yours in education,
Iffeisha Gordon-Toppin
Principal

PRE-K UPDATE

Pre-K is really progressing through the school year. Many of our friends are doing a great job play planning with beginning sounds, and some are even working on ending sounds! We are also working hard to make groups of items in math. Some of us are working on 0-5 and some of us are working on 6-10. Be on the lookout through the next month for a new field trip. Also, please make sure you are sending and checking your child's folder every day. Friendly reminder: in case of an accident, please make sure that your child has a change of clothes in their backpack at all times.

1ST GRADE UPDATE

1st graders are continuing our study of the sun, moon and stars. We are focusing on the patterns and movement of the sun and moon, and what the sun looks like at different times of day. Students will learn about what makes daytime and nighttime. Our fieldwork will allow them to observe the sun rising and setting in action. In literacy, we are moving into identifying open and closed syllables in words and long vowel patterns. In math, we are focusing on counting by 10s/1s to 120 and will move into place value next!

2ND GRADE UPDATE

Second grade just finished their Black Leaders mini-expedition. Keep an eye out for your child's report and portrait on the bulletin boards. We are now starting our Plants and Pollinators expedition. In Math, students will begin learning about money and time. Practice counting change with your child at home. As always, please read with your child each night and make sure they turn in their weekly homework.

3RD GRADE UPDATE

Third grade is excited for snow days to finally stop! It is more important now than ever to send your students to school on time every day, as we have a lot of catching up to do. In literacy, we are continuing to hone in on our skills at differentiated levels. We are working on spelling, reading fluency, comprehension questions, and grammar skills at our own levels. Support us by reading a lot of good fit books at home, and then talking or writing about them together. In math, we are finishing our units on multi-digit addition and subtraction and estimating by rounding to the nearest ten or hundred. Next, we will dive into a unit extending our multiplication skills to multiplying numbers by multiples of ten. Make sure your student completes their homework every night and checks [pearsonrealize.com](https://www.pearsonrealize.com) if they need to watch a video for extra support. In Expedition, we will finish wrapping up our study on frogs, ending with an essay to compare and contrast two different species of frogs and their adaptations. This will be a two-paragraph essay, so continue practicing writing skills at home!

4TH GRADE UPDATE

Fourth graders are enjoying learning! In math, they are about to start a big dive into fractions! They will be working with equivalent fractions, and learning to add, subtract and multiply fractions. In ELA, they are conducting scientific experiments! Ask them what they have learned about simple machines. Expedition is wrapping up their unit on immigration. They have interviewed immigrants and are telling the story of what they learned!

5TH GRADE UPDATE

Fifth grade is very excited to explore many different topics this month. In Math, we will be studying fractions.

In ELA, we are studying African American inventors and also researching Women in Hip Hop for Women's History Month. In Science, we are working on Electricity and Magnetism. The MISA (state science test) is this month. Students will be testing from March 11th to 14th. Please send your students to school on time on these dates!

6TH GRADE UPDATE

In the first half of this second unit, students continue to explore the topic of "rules to live by" as they closely read the poem "If" by Rudyard Kipling. Students determine themes of the poem, consider what "rules to live by" Rudyard Kipling is communicating, and analyze how individual stanzas contribute to the poem's overall meaning. They compare the experience of reading the poem and listening to it read aloud, noticing the importance of pacing and intonation. Finally, students compare and contrast approaches to theme between the poem and the novel. In the mid-unit assessment, students will read a new excerpt of "If," analyze how that stanza contributes to the overall meaning of the poem, determine a theme communicated in that stanza, and compare and contrast how that theme is communicated in *Bud, Not Buddy*. In the second half of Unit 2, students return to a close reading of the novel as they prepare to write a literary argument essay about the nature of "Bud's Rules." Throughout the unit, as students read *Bud, Not Buddy*, they continue to pay close attention and keep track of how the plot unfolds as Bud responds to each new experience and person he encounters on his journey. Specifically, they continue to think, talk, and write about the nature of his rules. For the end of unit assessment, students write a literary argument essay in which they establish a claim about how Bud uses his rules: to *survive* or to *thrive*. Students substantiate their claim using specific text-based evidence.

7TH AND 8TH GRADES UPDATE

5 Reasons I Love School - *Written in the style of Kwame Alexander*

5. The things I love about school are: my friends, learning new things, and going on camping trips.

4. It makes me feel good to show growth and do good work.

3. No one loves school like me,

2. I am giving my *all* every day!

But

mostly because,

1. ever since I came to school

I fell in love

with the people

and the environment.

I will often remember going to art class

with Ms. Siobhan

and I know that

she will always be

the best teacher in my life.

- Zion Stevenson

Students are at the center of every decision the 7th and 8th-grade team make. But we also know the importance of the environment, relationships and working with good colleagues. Zion couldn't have put it better in his poem; teachers make a difference and I just wanted to publicly shout out and celebrate the members of my team. Thank you to: Ms. Jessica (Science), Mr. Smith (Humanities), Ms. Aarons (Math), Ms. Shaw (SpEd), Ms. Jessi (Rockstar), Mr. Tee (Student Support Expert) and

March, 2019

Ms. Siobhan (Teacher-Coach) for giving Zion, and all our students the love, support, guidance, and education they need to prepare them for success. Mrs. Proctor

CULTURAL ARTS UPDATES

Middle Grades Fitness and Adventure: As our trimester draws to an end at the beginning of March, students are able to successfully play a highly-functioning volleyball game while following all the major rules of the sport. Middle grades fitness and adventure students progressed a great deal in their athletic abilities related to volleyball and have also amassed a great wealth of knowledge about the history and rules of the sport through their take home research assignment. It was an absolute pleasure serving all my students during the second trimester and I wish them all the best with their final trimester of the year. Coach Z

Elementary Grades Fitness and Adventure:

In class we spend time each day talking about evidence of growth in our work. At home you can help support this effort, and a growth mindset in your scholar, by inquiring how they know they are improving. Is your student able to hit the target more frequently, see that our score from the whole class game is going up, or able to identify more parts of high quality work? Fitness & Adventure is about each student making progress in their work so encourage your student to share their story about making progress with you. Thank you for your support and please continue to make every effort to help your scholar be active for 60 minutes each day of the week. Coach Hunter

Elementary Grades Art:

PreK is exploring their imagination and building skills!

Kindergarten is exploring the effects of weather over time on ONE art piece and using knowledge of clouds to create art!

First grade is learning the technique of crayon resist painting while exploring the differences of color depending on the time of day!

Second grade is learning the proportions of the

face and the physical characteristics of different famous heroes who they are writing about, in order to draw their portrait authentically.

Third grade is mastering the art of weaving and learning to be illustrators for Maya Angelou's poem "Life Doesn't Frighten Me".

Fourth grade is mastering their knowledge of simple machines by rendering a scene in which they are using one of the six simple machines. Ms. Jes

Middle Grades Art: The trimester is coming to a close. 5th through 8th grades are completing their observational drawing final products. Final still life drawings and portraits will be on display in the main hall way. In mid-March, we will be transitioning to new units for the third trimester. Ms. Sanders

PTO UPDATE

The PTO would like to thank all the parents that attended our February PTO/budget meeting. A lot of great information was shared on how we as parents can help get more funding for SBSCS. March 1st is the new date for the dance. The theme for this year's dance is Mardi Gras. Tickets are on sale now for \$5.00. Please see Mrs. King after school in the PTO Office. The Pre-K-5th grade dance is from 3PM- 5PM and the 6th grade - 8th grade dance is from 6PM - 8PM. We are in need of parents to help with concession stand, set up and clean up.

SUPPORT SBSCS

If you purchase items from Amazon, please start at our website, www.sbcschool.org. On the bottom right side of the homepage, click on the Amazon link. We will then receive funds equal to 0.5% of your purchase price!

If you shop at Giant Food, please register for A+ School Rewards so that SBSCS can earn cash through the Rewards Program. All you have to do is log on to www.giantfood.com/aplus to register online using your Giant Card. Our school ID is 05598. Thanks!

SOCIAL MEDIA

Connect with us on Facebook at Southwest Baltimore Charter School and follow us on Instagram at SbcSchool and keep up to date on SBCS news through our website at www.sbcschool.org.

REGULAR DISMISSAL

Elementary grade students who are picked up late will be taken to Trailblazer After School Program (TASP). You will be charged \$1/minute, up to \$30, until you arrive. Please look for a letter detailing dismissal procedures.

EARLY DISMISSAL

If you need to pick your child up for early dismissal, please send a written request with your child. Elementary Grades children will not be released between 2:30 and 3:00, and Middle Grades children will not be released between 3:00 and 3:30, unless they bring in a written request **that morning**. Teachers will not release your child to you if they do not have an Early Release Pass from the Main Office.

COUNSELING SERVICES

We have a variety of counseling services at the school. If you feel that your child needs social-emotional support, please contact the school at 443-984-3385.

SBCS INC. BOARD MEETINGS

SBCS, Inc. board meetings are held six times yearly, usually on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 6:30 PM. They are open to the public. Please check the calendar in this newsletter or at sbcschool.org for applicable dates.