



# SOUTHWEST BALTIMORE

CHARTER SCHOOL

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- Oct. 1**      **Sowebo 5K race**  
**Oct. 2-6**    **8<sup>th</sup> Grade to Outward Bound**  
**Oct. 3-5**    **7<sup>th</sup> Grade to Chesapeake  
Wilderness Institute**  
**Oct. 12**    **3<sup>rd</sup> Grade to Patapsco State Park**  
**Oct. 13**    **School-Wide Meeting, 9AM**  
**Oct. 13**    **Middle Grades Cookout**  
**Oct. 13**    **PTO Movie Night**  
**Oct. 19-20** **School Closed to Students for  
Staff Professional Development**  
**Oct. 25**    **Family Tech Talk Night for  
Parents, 6PM**

## FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear SBCS Families,

October is an exciting time at SBCS. The cooler weather is welcomed and students and staff begin to feel more settled into the school year.

As we leave the first month of school behind, procedures and daily activities of your child's classroom should be familiar and comfortable to them. Routines at school and at home are critical to establish in these early months, and being clear with students as we set expectations for the school year is equally important. In September, we talked with our students about building their independence and responsibility at school through the introduction of our schoolwide norms. Be Productive, Be Safe, Be Kind. We don't just want to grow strong learners. Our goal is to grow strong people!

If your child is experiencing anxiety or you have any other concerns, please contact your child's teacher. You are welcome to also include me on those types of communications. We will be happy to visit with you on the phone or to schedule a meeting to talk together regarding ideas to help your child or the situation. Please don't ever hesitate to contact us – we want to help.

I also enjoyed the opportunity to visit with many of you at our recent Back-To-School Nights. I know your children are more important than anything in your lives, but it is always a good reminder for me to see children with their families – to see the smiles and the love and the care. I left school those evenings with a renewed sense of the great importance of the work we do with and for children.

Throughout the school year, if you need anything or have any clarifying questions, you are welcome to contact the school through our Main Office at [443-984-3385](tel:443-984-3385).

I wish you and yours a beautiful Fall season and an October filled with a little bit of candy, some good books, warm fires and memories to treasure.

Yours in education,  
*Iffeisha Gordon-Toppin*  
Principal

## FROM THE ACADEMIC DIRECTOR

### APP-orama! SBCS goes high-tech!

*How can SBCS parents support their students' academic growth? Answering that question just got easier!*

At SBCS we have decided to use three important online tools for kids to practice literacy and math skills at their own pace, with built in videos and extra practice for skills students need to relearn.

Each of these tools is ready to put on your tablet at home, or even on your phone! And each of them lets teachers (and parents) track how much time kids are spending practicing, and what skills they have learned. Students will use them at school, too - the more time they put in, the bigger their brains will grow!

**Headspout:** This is a Kids A-Z app to practice phonics and reading comprehension skills for students up to 5th grade reading level. Kids earn

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cool stuff for their rocket ship or robot while they learn important literacy skills. You can download the "Kids A-Z" app and then ask your child's teacher for their username to find your class.

**Khan Academy:** This amazing, free program uses short videos and practice problems to work on math skills at your child's level (Middle grades may also do some grammar work). Teachers will place your child at the appropriate level, or use a placement test, and then students can move as quickly as they choose through the lessons, earning badges as they go! Download the "Khan Academy" app on your tablet or phone and then ask for your teacher's email address to select them as a coach (or wait for the teacher's invitation). Khan Academy is great for grown-ups who want to learn new things too - anything from Art History to Economics to Organic Chemistry!

**Envision Practice Buddy:** Our math curriculum, EnVision2.0, has a math practice app that parents can access from home to support students. Ask your teacher for log-in information.

**For the Kindergarten crowd:** The apps listed above may not be as exciting as apps designed especially for little ones. We recommend **Moose Math** for math and **Starfall ABCs** for learning letter sounds in preparation for reading and for beginning phonics games. These apps don't communicate with your child's teacher, but they still provide great practice while having lots of fun!

### **PTO UPDATE**

The PTO would like to thank all the parents and staff that came out for our first Chick-Fil-A night of the year!

We have two events planned for October. On October 13<sup>th</sup>, we will be hosting our first Family Movie Night at the school. There will be a flyer sent home with more information. October is Anti-Bullying month and we will be hosting a Family Tech Talk Night focusing on cyberbullying and social media safety on October 25<sup>th</sup> at 6PM. This month kicks off our first big competition for Box Tops collection. The class that brings in the most Box Tops before October 30<sup>th</sup> will receive a

prize and the student that brings in the most Box Tops overall will win a prize. When sending in your Box Tops please make sure to have your scholar's name and teacher's name on the bag or envelope. Thank you for all your support.

Please remember to fill out and send back your PTO surveys (handed out at Back to School Night) before October 5<sup>th</sup> so that your student can receive their Out Of Uniform coupon. If you did not receive a survey, please stop by the PTO office before or after school.

### **CULTURAL ARTS UPDATES**

In the Middle Grades art studio all grades have begun their art investigation unit. By mid-October we'll be well into our investigation and learning the content necessary for the creation of our final products. By the end of October most grades will be in the drafting stages of their final products.  
*Ms. Sanders, Middle Grades Art Teacher*

Students have been learning games that are great to play at recess such as Switch, Hoop Ball, Land-Sea-Air, and Fruit Tag. While working on these games, students have been identifying class norms they are having success meeting and others they are still working to meet. Ask your student what his/her favorite part of Fun Fit is in Fitness & Adventure  
*Coach Hunter, Elementary Grades Fitness and Adventure*

Our 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders are preparing for their week in the Natural World. This will be the 8<sup>th</sup> year sending our 8<sup>th</sup> graders on an Outward Bound expedition. This year our 8<sup>th</sup> graders will be canoeing 20-30 miles of the Potomac River in Western Maryland. Our 7<sup>th</sup> graders will be traveling to North East, Maryland to navigate the Chesapeake Bay and study this beautiful water way. These adventures strip away many comforts of home so our students can stretch their comfort zones and rely on one another while facing the challenges of living in the natural world.  
*Mr. Jeremy, Middle Grades Fitness and Adventure*

Hellllooooo students and parents!  
We are having a blast in elementary art classes!

The kindergarteners are exploring different types of line and learning how to paint with good craftsmanship! By the end they will make a LINE MONSTER!!!!

1st grad is exploring tools and inventions! We explored the tools in the art room and saw which ones work best on certain paper. We then looked at different handmade painting tools and went outside to find our own materials. After drawing a design of our tool, the students used art materials and the ones they found outside to build their own tool!

2nd grade is focusing on community. We asked what they wanted to fix about their community and created a whole list! We also talked about what it meant to be a hero! The students then designed their own super hero symbol. They talked about what a powerful pose looked like and then started their own super hero self portrait painting. They will use the symbol they created to put a painting on their chest--like a real super hero!

3rd grade is focusing on using their bodies to communicate. We learned about adjectives by acting them out with our bodies behind a piece of paper and creating a shadow. We asked "What does it look like to be excited? Or angry?" Then we used our bodies to act it out. Students also visited the dance room to practice gesture drawing dancers!

4th grade hasn't visited me yet! But I can't wait to see them next trimester!



*Ms. Jes, Elementary Grades Art*

So far in music class we've learned a ton! 4th grade is gearing up their drum skills to perform Funga Alafia along with 1st Grade and Kindergarten who will be singing. This is a collaborative performance with our middle school dancers. Our musicians have also learned a series of songs and will begin playing the glockenspiel and recorders in the upcoming months!

*Ms. Smith, Elementary Grades Music*

### **1<sup>ST</sup> GRADE UPDATE**

First grade is diving into our expedition about Tools and Work! We'll first be exploring and learning about types of tools, so please let us know if you have an interesting tool you'd like to come share with us. We've also begun our study of shapes in math, and are beginning our work with short vowels in literacy skills. Thank you to parents who attended Back to School Night! If you weren't able to join us and would like a copy of the information shared, please let your scholar's teacher know. Be on the lookout for information coming home soon about extra practice apps!

### **2<sup>ND</sup> GRADE UPDATE**

Second grade would like to thank all the families who attended Back to School Night! We loved meeting all of you and are excited to continue our partnership throughout this year.

We have just recently started our expedition. We are learning about schools and why they are important. Make sure to look out for field work papers to come home. We will need chaperones. As soon as we have dates we will let you know! In math, we will continue to work through addition and subtraction. Continue to practice addition and subtraction facts at home so that your scholar can build fluency with the facts.

In literacy, we are working to become fluent readers. We are also working to better comprehend the text that we are reading. Remember to read every night! Ask your scholar questions as they read or after they read to check for understanding. If you need any extra resources please feel free to reach out to your child's teacher.

### **4<sup>TH</sup> GRADE UPDATE**

Fourth graders have begun their new units of study! In Math, the scholars are learning about place value, and will be using the skills they learn in that unit to move towards whole number operations. In ELA, the students have begun to study a unit on poetry, based on a wonderful book called Love That Dog. In Expedition, the students began their unit to learn about pre-colonial Africa.

## 5<sup>TH</sup> GRADE UPDATE

**Literacy:** We are in full swing in Literacy class. Students are diving into the Universal of Declaration of Human Rights articles, using various strategies to figure out the meaning of complex words, and collaborating daily to sharpen their minds and gain valuable assistance from their peers. We are just weeks away from reading our first novel, *Esperanza Rising*. Stay tuned for more updates and celebrations of learning! - *Mr. Albert*

**Math:** We are focusing on place value. I recommend that parents review fast facts with students at home. If you need assistance or clarity on this, please see me. Also, be sure to check those homework trackers. Students are now getting homework at least a couple days per week. Thanks! - *Mr. Hoffman*

## 7<sup>TH</sup>/8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE UPDATE

**Overall:** October is an exciting month for our 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students! The first week we will set off on our Adventure trips. In addition, this month we will begin assessing students on their Habits of Scholarship: Responsibility, Quality, Perseverance, Integrity, Autonomy, and Empathy. These are critical skills that students need to succeed: you will see these on Progress Reports under "Conduct Grade."

8<sup>th</sup> graders will soon begin the High School Choice process. Students are encouraged to learn more about schools they are interested in as well as find Open House days by visiting school websites at <http://www.baltimorecityschools.org/site/Default.aspx?PageID=24363>

**Humanities:** Humanities will shift focus from French Language to French History and Language. Our first topic will be the Middle Ages in Western Europe and the growth of Europe during this period from the Dark Ages towards the Renaissance. Along the way we will make connections from that era to our own.

**Literacy:** Please see weekly email from Mrs. Proctor for updates.

**Mathematics:** In 7th and 8th grade math, students are all set up on Pearson Realize and

Khan Academy. Students can access these resources at school and at home to practice math skills. Students will complete classwork and their grades will be made available immediately for parents to access. Students in 7th grade will be working on integers and rational numbers and students in the 8th grade will be working on the Real number system.

**Science:** In science, we are currently learning microscope skills as we gear up to dive into our Expedition focused on epidemiology. Students will discover how disease spreads and how to prevent illness. Quizzes will mostly take place on Thursdays, so students should be studying on Wednesday evenings. We will begin our first large experiment in October, followed by a typed lab report.

## SUPPORT SBCS

If you purchase items from Amazon, please start your search at our website, [www.sbcschool.org](http://www.sbcschool.org). On the 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 SBCS can earn cash through the Rewards Program. All you have to do is log on to [www.giantfood.com/aplus](http://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](http://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.

## EARLY DIMISSAL

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

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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 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month at 6:30 PM. They are open to the public. Please check the calendar in this newsletter or at [sbc school.org](http://sbc school.org) for applicable dates.