Dear South School Community,

As we start 2019 at South Elementary, we all want to wish all of you a happy, healthy, and peaceful new year! Thank you for all of your support, holiday wishes, and lovely treats to all of the staff. You were all so much “kinder than necessary” and we greatly appreciate all that you do for us! We are especially grateful to the special PTO gift that all staff received this week! What a great way to start off the new year!!!

Everyone at SES hit the ground running this week as we are getting close to the second half of the school year! The children came back VERY ready for school life after a great holiday break! There are so many exciting events to look forward to, and the curriculum is in full swing. It is so wonderful to see the great progress that all of our children have made so far. Thank you for continuing the strong support system which exists in all of your homes. Our village continues to thrive due to all of your efforts as well!

Quote of the week: Thank you for using the right words in the right way!( week two: using our words tool this week)

News for you…Just a reminder that new and still relevant items are bold italics. Old news items will also be bulleted but will not be bolded italics, but left on for reference:

* A huge thank you goes out to the PTO for providing us with a guest speaker at our monthly staff meeting. Maria Trozzi is the director of Joanna’s Place and a recognized expert on Social/Emotional Wellbeing.
* As you know, Ann Thompson, our long time Administrative Assistant, is retiring in early February. We will be honoring her long career in the HPS for the next month and especially the week of February 4th, her last week. We are so grateful for ALL she has done for the HPS and most especially, SES! We will miss her!
* I know you will all give our new Administrative Assistant, Pam Graham, a wonderful SES welcome. Pam will be starting soon so that she can work with Ann for a while before Ann leaves.
* The PTO Spirit Committee are inviting students to wear their favorite sports jersey to school on Friday, January 18th!
* Fifth grade parents are invited to a special program put on by the HMS PTO: A Survival Guide to Parenting Teens – Tuesday, January 15 from 7-9pm at HMS
* The next early release day is this coming Wednesday January 9th. This early release day is set aside as a Professional Development day for staff. Just a reminder that ALL early Releases are at noon with no lunch served this year! Please send in a substantial snack.https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/images/cleardot.gif
* Outerwear Recommendations: When the weather is cold, thank you for sending your children to school dressed properly and ready to go out to recess. We go out on any day that is above 25 degrees. Please also note that children will need snow pants and waterproof boots to play on the snow when it arrives this winter. This prevents them from having to sit in class in wet clothes and socks when they come back in. It might also be a good idea to send in a set of dry clothes/socks for the lockers just in case.

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See bottom of complete Office News to see Dates for Calendar

* Old/Still Relevant News:
* Arrival and dismissal:These can be very busy times in our office, and even more so in the winter. Thank you for understanding that we cannot take dismissal changes after 2:30 PM (except in case of an emergency). Thank you also for never making a double line in the driveway! We need to leave room for emergency vehicles and snowbanks make things even narrower.
* Hopefully we will never need the following information: Weather Cancellation Note: In the event that school needs to be cancelled due to weather, please tune in to channels : 4,5,7,25 or 56… radio stations: 1030 AM, 680AM, 90.9 FM. You may also sign up for text alerts from channels 4,5,7, and 25. Please do not call the police or fire stations to ask about cancellations as they can be very busy during storms. Thank you!
* Just a reminder that winter is here and when the snow falls, children need snow boots and waterproof pants to play on the playground. Thank you!
* MCAS 2.0: Students in grades three, four, and five will be participating in MCAS 2.0 testing during April and May of 2019. This year, students in grades 3-5 will once again take part in computer-based testing in both English Language Arts and Mathematics. Grade 5 students will also take Science, Technology and Engineering MCAS as well. Our testing schedule is in the dates’ section below.
* We are looking for substitutes of all types: teachers, nurses, paraeducators, bus drivers. If interested, contact us, and we will point you to the right person depending what you want to sub as.
* As a result of the HTSS Task Force which has met for two years to explore how we can further support the Social/Emotional well-being of our students, all of the teaching staff was trained this week in Essential Toolbox. It is a wonderful program that can be easily integrated into daily instruction. Children will be taught the twelve tools for learning and life: Breathing Tool, Quiet/Safe Place Tool, Listening Tool, Empathy Tool, Personal Space Tool, Using our Words Tool, Garbage Can Tool, Taking Time Tool, Please and Thank You Tool, Apology and Forgiveness Tool, Patience Tool, and Courage Tool. We know that you all already reinforce these life skills at home, but we wanted you to be aware that we will be talking about 2-3 tools a month as a school as the year progresses. We will also integrate this with our “Bee Kinder than Necessary” theme…and you will also see it reflected in Quotes of the Week.
* PLEASE DO NOT MAKE A DOUBLE LINE IN THE FRONT DRIVEWAY, WE NEED TO LEAVE A LANE FOR EMERGENCY VEHICLES…IF THE DRIVEWAY IS FULL, PASS BY, TURN AROUND AND MAKE YOUR WAY BACK. IT SHOULD BE PASSABLE BY THEN! Thanks!!!
* Please help us move dismissal at Special Dismissal and Liberty Pole Car Loop (only for those turning right in Liberty Pole) along smoothly:
  + Please come in single file at all times. If you cannot pull in, go down the street and turn around for another pass.
  + Please put a sign with your child’s name in the window so we can move the lines along more quickly.
  + It would also be helpful if you stay in your car and let us bring the children to you. Please do not use cell phones in lines!
* MCAS Dates for 2019 have been added to the end of the dates’ section at the bottom of this email.
* Dates to Remember:
* Wednesday, January 9- Noon release for Professional Development/ Lunch is not served
* Tuesday, January 15-Fifth Grade Parents Invited: HMS auditorium from 7-9: A Survival Guide to Parenting Teens
* Friday, January 18th – Wear your favorite Sports Jersey Day
* Friday, January 25- Buzz Assembly to honor Math Olympic Medal winners…wearing grade level rainbow colors
* Wednesday, February 6- Noon Release for Parent/ Guardian Conferences/ Lunch is not served
* Wednesday, March 6- Noon release for Professional Development/ Lunch is not served
* Wednesday, April 3- Noon Release for Parent/ Guardian Conferences/ Lunch is not served
* Wednesday, May 1- Noon release for Professional Development/ Lunch is not served
* Wednesday, May 1- Second Grade Poetry Festival @ 9:15
* Wednesday, May 1 – Spring Book Fair
* Wednesday, May 1- South School Shines Night
* Thursday, May 23 –Grade 4- China Trade Culmination @ 1 PM
* Wednesday, June 5- Noon release for Professional Development/ Lunch is not served

School Council Meetings 18-19:

* Wednesday, January 23- 3:15-4:00: School Council Meeting in the Conference Room
* Wednesday, February 27- 3:15-4:00: School Council Meeting in the Conference Room
* Wednesday, March 27- 3:15-4:00: 1st School Council Meeting in the Conference Room
* Wednesday, April 24- 3:15-4:00: 1st School Council Meeting in the Conference Room
* Wednesday, May 29- 3:15-4:00: 1st School Council Meeting in the Conference Room
* MCAS DATES 18-19:
* Grade 3 ELA: 4/1; 4/2
* Grade 5 ELA: 4/4; 4/5
* Grade 4 ELA: 4/8; 4/9
* Grade 5 Math: 5/6; 5/7
* Grade 3 Math: 5/8; 5/9
* Grade 4 Math: 5/13; 5/14
* Grade 5 STE: 5/16; 5/17