



SOUTHBRIDGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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PIONEER NEWS

September 2017

MISSION

*In the Southbridge Public Schools, **ALL** students will experience a world-class education, and will graduate as engaged citizens who demonstrate the essential skills required for success in college and career.*

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Surveys – September 11-21
- Receiver Community Conversation, Charlton Street School, 6:00-7:30 PM—September 20
- Receiver Community Conversation, Jacob Edwards Library, 11:00 AM-12:30 PM—September 21
- Professional Development Day (no school for students)—September 29
- School Committee meeting—October 3
- Columbus Day (no school)—October 9
- Professional Development Day (no school for students)—October 20

A NOTE FROM RUSSELL JOHNSTON, INTERIM RECEIVER

Welcome back, students, teachers, and staff! The 2017-18 school year is off to a fantastic start. This newsletter is the one of the many ways we intend to share our good news with everyone in our Southbridge Public Schools family. Community engagement continues to be a top priority in making our schools world-class learning environments for all our students.

The national search to find a new Receiver for Southbridge Public Schools is underway. We have launched a series of opportunities to hear from the Southbridge community about the values, the experiences, and the vision that you believe the new leader of Southbridge Public Schools should have, including focus groups of educators, students, and families (see Upcoming Events), and community-wide surveys (see below). This important feedback will be summarized and shared with the Acting Commissioner of Education, Jeff Wulfson.

I look forward to sharing our progress with you throughout the school year. Thank you for reading!

HIGHLIGHTS

- **New teacher induction** was held August 14-16. Southbridge welcomed over 30 new teachers to our schools, including many experienced educators. Participants worked on instructional best practices and experienced “[Southbridge 101](#),” a day out in our community learning the history of our town and more about the lives of our students and families.
- From September 11-21, all Southbridge Public Schools families, staff, and students (grades 2-12) will be invited to participate in a **fall survey** about their school. We value the voices of all members of our school community! Families of currently enrolled students can access the survey, in English or in Spanish, at: southbridgepublic.org/familysurvey

*Access the **Turnaround Plan** and read more District News on our website, southbridgepublic.org*

MORE HIGHLIGHTS



SHS teachers and staff welcome students on August 28.

- Southbridge Public Schools won a **\$2 million, four-year grant to transform our students' experience in middle and high school.**
- Our **Dual Language program** is up and running at Eastford Road School! Ninety-eight students enrolled in two Kindergarten and two Grade 1 classrooms are taught grade-level content in English for half of the day and in Spanish for the other half of the day. The goals of Dual Language education include cross-cultural communication skills, a sense of global citizenship, high achievement, and bilingual pride.
- The **Superintendent's Roundtable** will resume meeting this fall. Members include district and school leaders, teachers, community partners, and high school students. The group is charged with identifying shared core values to be the foundation for cultural improvement, monitoring the benchmarks of the Turnaround Plan, and making recommendations for continued success.

DID YOU KNOW?

206

students in grades 1-8 participated in summer programming at West Street School. Southbridge students read all kinds of books in *Lit Camp* and even got to take home their own library of titles. Our English Learner students worked through several model curriculum units and our Special Education students learned about life cycles, building cities, and creating sensory tools. All students took a trip to Old Sturbridge Village and enjoyed an active Field Day together.

84%

of attempted summer school credit recovery courses were passed by Southbridge students in grades 6-12! Students were encouraged to work at their own pace using EdMentum, an online series of courses.

- 130 students participated in summer credit recovery, taking one or two courses
- 167 courses were completed and passed (70% or higher final grade)