

# Seven Hills Charter Public School

**Save the Date:**

- Dec 12-13: ELA and Math SBA testing grades 4-8
- Dec 14: Holiday Bazaar-snow date 12/15/11
- Dec 16: \$1.00 Parent Guild DDD, JA Black and White Dance (Buy your tickets now for only \$6)

Dear Families,

Last week, we held our first Model Citizen Assemblies of the year. We were pleased to recognize more students than ever for academic gains and model citizenship. However, we still have two more terms to go and there is much work to be done! Here are a few tips:

1. If you haven't already done so, closely review your child's SLC (student learning contract) and MCAS results. Please note that the SLC is fully aligned with the MA Curriculum Frameworks and standards that are measured on the MCAS test. The SLC reports on "broad" topics under each of the subject areas. However, by logging on to your child's Powerschool account, you can see how s/he performed on each of the standards that comprised the overall grade.

2. Contact your child's teacher right away if you have questions or concerns. Our goal is to, by the end of the year, have all students scoring threes or fours on each of the math and ELA power standards. If you notice an area of concern, in addition to working with the teachers to motivate your child to focus on those areas of need, you can also have your child log on to Study Island for twenty minutes per night for extra practice on the identified standards. If you need help, please contact the school's tech team.

3. Use the information and strategies outlined by the heads of school in the weekly newsletter to help reinforce our school-wide focus points in poetry and geometry. The students have been doing some amazing work and are eager to share their products soon!

4. Psych your child up for their SBA (standards based assessment) that will take place for students in grades 4-8 on December 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>. This mid-year "mock MCAS" will help us get a dipstick on student performance to determine appropriate next steps, goals and action plans for each child. Watch for more information in next week's newsletter!

Each term, we conduct surveys of students, staff and parents about their school experience. Our aim is to use this feedback to guide our continual improvement. Thank you to all of you who took the time to respond. Here is a summary of key results, on a four point scale:

1 = strongly disagree    2 = disagree    3=agree    4=strongly agree

Survey Focus	Average Score (Based on Combined Input from All Stakeholders: stu- dents, staff and parents)	Question Receiving Highest Satis- faction Rating	Question Receiving Lowest Satis- faction Rating
Performance of School Leaders	3.40	I feel welcome in the school. (3.9) I know what my child is learning in school. (3.9)	I know how my child did on MCAS. (2.6)
Performance of Teachers	3.40	I feel welcome in this class. (3.8)	Class time is well utilized. (3.0)
New School Model	2.82	The scholarship program is serving as an incentive for students to do their best. (3.1)	The new school calendar allows for more continuity of learning. (2.6)

Full results are viewable on the school website or in hard copy form through the main office.



The Seven Hills teachers and administrators value this feedback and are working to implement strategies to ensure that all students achieve due not only to student efforts but also by having families who support the learning process, employees who perform at optimal levels and a program that takes full advantage of the new school model by using the block scheduling and team teaching to create and implement meaningful, cross-curricular hands on and interactive learning experiences.

Please continue to work with your child and the school so that students can be well prepared for success as students, workers and citizens. Your ongoing involvement and feedback is greatly appreciated.

Our goal is to see them through from kindergarten, to college, career and beyond!

Sincerely,

Krista Piazza, Superintendent

**Primary Academy-Ms. Ambroise:** Poetry comes in many different forms. Poetry is a kind of writing, usually in verse. Poetry verse is set out in short lines with words put together in rhythm or rhyme or both. Poetry is about a writer sharing with the reader an experience or strong feelings. Poems are written with words chosen for their sounds and beauty as well as their meaning. This month, as we focus on poetry, spend time reading poetry to your child and discussing poetic elements.

Acrostic poems are poems that use the letters of the title to begin each line. Look at the sample below.

**Sun**  
**Shining in my eyes**  
**Until it begins to get dark**  
**Nice and warm outside**

Now, try writing an acrostic poem with your child. Use the template below or a separate piece of paper.

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Each month our Model Citizen Celebration recognizes student achievement. Please remember, students must complete homework, class work, and demonstrate the Core Values and Code of Conduct each day to earn a celebration invitation. Let's encourage students to be responsible and to become Model Citizens.

Congratulations! Last week's Primary Academy Weekly Question Winner was **Jose Rodriguez!**

Primary Academy Weekly Question:

Answer the following question, cut it out, and return it to the envelope located outside of Ms. Ambroise's office. Students who correctly answer the weekly question will be entered into a weekly drawing!

Barb wrote the pattern shown below.

71, 67, 63, 59, 55

Which of these could be the rule for Barb's pattern?

A) subtract 4

B) add 6

C) subtract 14

D) add 16

**Elementary Academy -Mrs. Nelson:** Our academic focus for December is poetry. Seven Hills has been hosting Poets in Residence. These guest teachers are presenting poetry workshops through January as a way to expose our students to the rich language and wide variety of this unique form of writing. In late January or early February we'll be working with our Poets in Residence and classroom teachers to host a poetry showcase. Be on the lookout for more information after the Winter Break! Among other things, students will be learning about the various types of poems. Here's a sample to help you get into the spirit of things!

Haiku poetry began almost 1000 years ago in Japan. Haiku poetry does not have to rhyme but it does have to follow a certain pattern for the number of lines and syllables. A Haiku poem has three lines and 17 syllables: line 1 has five syllables, line 2 has seven syllables, and line 3 has five syllables. Titles are subtle, but the poem always describes something about nature. Sensory details are very important. A haiku poem must be written in present tense.

Winter  
by Karleen O'Connor

An icy wind blows  
The tree is lonely and cold  
Its branches are bare.

To learn more about haiku and other types of poetry along with your child, visit the following web site:  
<http://www.squidoo.com/k12interactivepoetry#module11976502>

**Junior Academy -Ms. Wright:** The 8<sup>th</sup> grade trip is booked and deposits have been sent in. I am looking forward to this experience with the students at the end of the year. It should be an amazing time had by all. We recognize that it is an expensive trip, so please participate in all fundraisers that are send home, as this will relieve some of the cost of the trip for you. Obviously, the more you fundraise, the less you will have to pay in the end. Please be on the look out for our first fundraiser in January 2012. You're encouraged to visit their website at [www.rockinghorseranch.com](http://www.rockinghorseranch.com).

**Word of the Week:** Last week's word of the week was falter. The winner and person who best used this word in a sentence was **Kennedy Godwin**. His sentence was: *The Red Sox fans expected them to go to the finals, but in the end, they faltered.* As you can see, Kennedy used the word in past tense form by adding -ed to the end, but this did not change its meaning. Kennedy, you are also the monthly winner for the month of November. I will deliver your prize to your homeroom. Keep up the great work! This week's word is **furtive**. Please research the definition and use this word in the most creative sentence possible, and place your responses in the envelope outside my office.

JA Masquerade Ball! The next 8<sup>th</sup> grade dance will be on December 16th, from 6:30-8:30pm. Tickets cost \$6 in advance and \$7 at the door. When you purchase your ticket from the main office, you will receive a mask to decorate and be eligible to win a prize for the best mask. Be as creative as possible. This is a black and/or white event. Best dressed prizes will be given out, one male and one female. Food and drinks will be sold at the event.

Remember to always be kind, safe and responsible!

Seasons Greetings,

I hope that the beginning of the holiday season finds you well. I am pleased to announce the beginning of our Career Speaker series that began Wednesday Nov. 30, 2011. The goal of the speaker series is to develop our students potential to find their career goals, and focus on the educational steps that it requires to attain those careers. We have began the year with the focus of college and continuing to encourage the students to see collegiate studies as the next step after high school, and now we want to have them see the career's that can result from earning their degree.

Our first speaker was Ms. Samantha Coy (Attorney at Law & Willis Center). She is going to work with the students on the designed interview questions, and speak about the educational steps that it took for her to reach her current career. The hope is students who aspire to become attorneys, will have the ability to learn the exact steps to reach that goal.

The second speaker that day was Mr. Chirag Parikh who is a System Engineer. Mr. Parikh is also a member of the Seven Hills board of trustees and works in a field that students have expressed interest in. A few of our students have expressed that they want to be computer engineers and are not sure of how to pursue that goal.

The speaker series will continue throughout the year and we intend to have a variety of speakers that will equip our students with the knowledge that they need to reach their educational and professional goals.

Our goal is to discuss the career's of each presenter and the educational steps needed to reach that career. The questions range from what do you do in your job daily, to how many years of education is required to reach your current job.

We are going to compile a portfolio that has information from each presenter and information about each career as a resource for students to know about different career opportunities. These files will be kept in the library and my office as a tool for all students in the Seven Hills community. If students have questions about how to reach a specific career they can use their portfolio to see the number of years of school it takes to reach their desired job, and more information on each career.

We look forward to enriching the students and equipping them with the knowledge to reach their goals of "Kindergarten to College Careers and Beyond".

Have a great holiday season,  
Korey Lee

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**Be on the look out!** for *A WORLD OF WISHES THROUGH MUSIC*, our Show Choir will be singing, "Light the Candles" to start the chain for ePals. This will be a featured project for an entire year and put it on the ePals website as a "Spotlight Project".

**Volunteers:** We are always looking for parent and community volunteers to help in our school. If you are interested please come in and complete a CORI form or call our business office at 508-799-7500 x1066.



*Be kind.  
Be safe.  
Be responsible.*