



# Looking Forward

December 21, 2023

## From the Vice Principal

Dear SLA Family,

It is officially that time of year when we get to spend time with our families! Some of you may say that you are already with your families, but have you noticed that when Christmas Eve and Day come, the time we spend with them is even more special? I found a saying that states the Christmas season as the perfect time to express affection for your families, to forgive those who failed you, and to forget past mistakes.

That is important, because as we all know, the only reason for the season is because of the One who came to His earthly family - to grow up and show what love truly means, even when others turned their backs on Him and killed Him. Yet while dying, He forgave all OUR mistakes - past, present, and future ones! That is a very humbling thought!

So, enjoy your families! Enjoy your presents, laughter, tears of joy, good food, and nap time! And may you truly embrace the beauty, love, and forgiveness that comes with this season and carry it into the New Year to help make next year a blessing!

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Shalom,

Ollyce Gardner  
Vice Principal, Registrar



View on stage of grades K-2 at the Elementary Christmas Concert on Dec 8th

## Upcoming Dates

- Dec 22-Jan 1 - Christmas Break - No School
- Jan 2 - School Resumes
- Jan 9 - Ski Season Begins
- Jan 12 - End of 2nd Quarter/1st Semester
- Jan 15 - Martin Luther King Jr. Day - NO School
- Jan 16 - Books & Beyond Begins
- Jan 22 - Feb 2 - MAP Testing
- Jan 26 - Elem Sports Spirit Day

# Nursing Home Visit

The 4th grade class visited the Sterling Nursing Home on Friday, December 15th. They sang Christmas Carols, and did a skit about the legend of the candy cane. Then class passed out candy canes and Christmas cards to the residents.



# Recess Fun

Even the cold can't keep the kids' spirits down - and puddles are always fun!



# Christmas Concerts

You can rewatch the concerts on the College Church's YouTube Page

P-6 Concert: <https://www.youtube.com/live/g8XfzOUPOGs?feature=shared>

7-12 Concert: <https://www.youtube.com/live/jIz4vjDOjDw?feature=shared>



# Mirabel Weston performs at the Boston Celtics Game!

The Boston Celtics invited Mirabel Weston, a second grader at SLA, to sing the National Anthem this past Sunday, December 17 at their game against the Orlando Magic. A total of 26 SLA students and staff bought tickets to the game so they could be there to support Mirabel. Mirabel's performance was spectacular! Since the National Anthem performances are not broadcast on tv for basketball games, mom has shared this link to the video of her performance so we can all see it as well:

<https://youtu.be/32HkUH83XFg?si=NOrMpU38QjJv6Wzi>

Congratulations on this amazing opportunity Mirabel!!!



## Dress Warmly!!!

Elementary parents, please send your child to school with sufficiently warm clothing (more than just a sweater). Children go outside for recess unless it's raining or the temperature or wind chill is 20 degrees or lower.



# Ski Club!

Ski Program Registration still open for experienced skiers only.  
Beginner Lessons are **SOLD OUT**, so beginner skiers can no longer register.  
Last chance to sign up!



South Lancaster Academy Ski Program Online codes \*\*\* SLASC \*\*\*

[www.wachusett.com/schoolgroups](http://www.wachusett.com/schoolgroups) 



Please call Linda Oetman, Coordinator with any questions: 617-834-8797 or email at:  
[loetman@mysla.org](mailto:loetman@mysla.org)

## Children's Church Singers Needed!

S.L.A. presents Children's Church - Who was Jesus?

When: January 13th, 2024, 3-5 pm

Where: S.L.A. Chapel

Enjoy an interactive service where we will dive into who Jesus was as a baby, a child, and an adult. Games, crafts, and a light supper will be included!



Ms. Renzi and her squad of high school helpers are busily preparing for it already! **If your elementary child would like to help lead out in song service at this next Children's Church, please let Ms. Renzi know at: [nrenzi@mysla.org](mailto:nrenzi@mysla.org) and fill out and return a permission slip to the elementary office.**

## Crusaders Snack Shack!

This year Laurie Collins has very graciously taken on the task of running the Crusaders Snack Shack. Laurie is stocking, setting up, training volunteers how to run everything, and cleaning up the Snack Shack, but she needs help actually running it during home games! Volunteers are needed just to show up and sell! High school students who would like work study credit need to sign up, as only the 2 names signed up will get the credit.

Sign up to help in the Snack Bar:

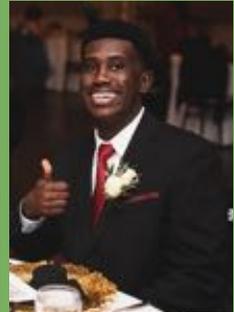
[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1AaFns8qR173kdm\\_bGpQQ05De3qVxeZ058HxQQIOS2yJtE/edit#gid=0](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1AaFns8qR173kdm_bGpQQ05De3qVxeZ058HxQQIOS2yJtE/edit#gid=0)



# SA Winter Banquet



The SA Winter Banquet took place on Thursday, November 30th, at the Chocksett Inn in Sterling. Here are some highlights of the night!



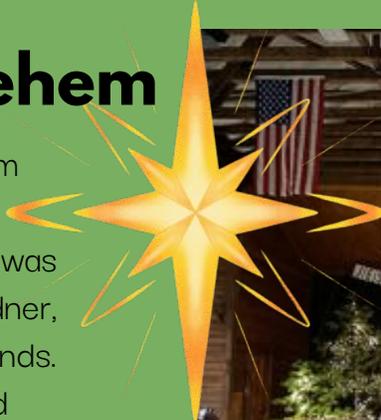
# Journey to Bethlehem

On Saturday, December 16, from 6-9pm there was an event called Journey to Bethlehem. This was a live Nativity that was organized by our very own, Ollyce Gardner, and took place at the SNEC Campgrounds. Over 700 people went back in time and visited Bethlehem on the night of Jesus' birth. It was a chilly night, but the firepits throughout the campgrounds helped visitors keep warm as they traveled.

Visitors began their journeys with a short stop in the pavilion where they enjoyed live music until their group was called for a tour of Bethlehem. Groups were led by a guide who took a group of his "cousins" to visit various stations throughout the campground loop.

The cousins visited the Wise Men's tent, then had a quick stop at the gates of Bethlehem where the tour guide had to plead with the Centurian guards to let him and his cousins enter the town. A walk through the marketplace was next, where tourists could haggle with shopkeepers, and snack on some bread from the baker's tent. After that the cousins learned that there was no more room in the inn. After that the tour guide had to pay taxes to the Roman soldiers before moving on to where the shepherds were watching their sheep, and angels arrived to announce the birth of Jesus. The tour wrapped up with a stop at the stable, and finally a visit to Jesus' cross on the hill.

Once the tour of Bethlehem was done, the visitors were encouraged to stop by Bailey Hall for refreshments before heading home for the night. Thank you Ollyce for all your hard work for this event!



# Christmas Celebration for Preschool and First Grade!

Preschoolers and 1st graders had a Christmas party this week, where they ate pancakes and made Christmas crafts!



## Hot Lunch Change!



NEW MEAL!!! The people have voted and the results are in! Grilled Cheese Sandwiches will NOT be available on Wednesdays anymore. The new option for Wednesdays will be Pasta with Marinara Sauce, with a snack and water.

## What's for Lunch?

- Monday - Vegetarian Hotdogs
- Tuesday - Cheese Pizza
- Wednesday - Pasta with Sauce
- Thursday - Cheese Pizza
- Friday
  - 2 Cheese Empanadas
  - OR 2 Pizza Empanadas



# Grades 2 & 3 Visit Norcross Wildlife Center



On Wednesday, December 13th, the second and third grade classes attended a presentation by Norcross Wildlife Center on ecosystems, learning about the water cycle, consumers, and producers. Then they made their own "mini ecosystems" to take home. Everyone had a great time.



## The Latest on Pumpkin Jack



The kindergarten class is learning about decomposition and regeneration with the help of Pumpkin Jack, who has now been inside of this jar for two months. There is no visible evidence that a pumpkin once filled this jar!



# LOST & FOUND



**Lost hoodies, sweaters and winter coats** are starting to pile up! Please stop by and look through the Lost and Found collections, or inquire at the offices. There are water bottles as well.

Elementary Lost & Found is in the hallway to the right, by the library and bathrooms.

High School Lost & Found is just up the stairs to the right.

**Please LABEL SCHOOL SWEATERS!** Items that are not labeled might get taken by someone else, as nobody has any way of knowing who the rightful owner may be. If items are labeled, they can easily be returned to their rightful owners. **Names can be written on the labels inside the left hip, on the inside of the logo, or along the red and white stripes at the neck.**



## Fourth Grade Reading Partners



# Sports News

## Basketball Season is Here!!!



- **Crusader Gear Available for Sale**
  - \$15 per shirt
  - Sizes available: Youth Small - Adult Large
  - **Wear Crusaders' Gear to home games and get in for a discounted rate!**
  - Support the Crusaders in style!
- **Pre-Order "God Family Basketball" Hoodies NOW!** 
  - Use link: <https://forms.gle/kkmZnjGt1oNwMesU7>
  - **Or email [dargueta@mysla.org](mailto:dargueta@mysla.org)** with sizes and quantities
  - If you pre-order a hoodie, know that you will be contacted to pick up your hoodie once they arrive on site
  - **Payment will be expected at time of pick up**

- Games have begun! Stay up to date with all the game schedules on Arbiter Live. Find game dates, times, locations, and records of wins/losses on Arbiter Live:

<https://arbiterlive.com/Teams?entityId=21380> 

- **Players, be sure to stay on top of your grades so you can continue participating with your team! Student Athletes are not allowed to play games if good grades are not maintained.**



## Chris the Crusader

On Tuesday, December 12, at SLA's first varsity home game, SLA's new mascot was introduced following the singing of the national anthem. Chris the Crusader ran into the gym to laughter, disbelief, and thunderous applause. Chris greeted the SLA boy's basketball players and hyped up the crowd.

There is debate about whose idea it was to have a mascot. Some say Damon and Mr. Prather discussed the possibility last year, but it was Shawn Santana, the assistant coach for the boys' varsity team, that approached Mr. Branum about getting a mascot costume this year. Either way, once the idea was presented to SLA alumni, they jumped at the opportunity to support the cause. Chris the Crusader came to life that night. Chris ran, danced, pumped up the crowd and even high fived an official.



# Missing Uniform Sweaters!!!

Several parents have let me know that their child's **LABELED** uniform sweater or hoodie has gone missing.

**During Christmas Break, please check the tags and inside of uniform logos for names and labels. If you find that your child has brought home something that isn't theirs, please return it to the offices when school resumes on January 2nd.**

The lost and finds are overflowing with unlabeled clothing. If your child is missing anything, please stop by and take a look and see if you find any of their missing clothing.



## Global Studies

The 1st grade class learned about the 7 continents by coloring, cutting out, and glueing each of the world's continents in place.



# Sick? Stay Home!

If your child is exhibiting illness symptoms **PLEASE KEEP HIM/HER HOME.**

If your child has a fever/vomiting/diarrhea, he/she cannot return to school until 24 hours have passed without a fever/vomiting/diarrhea (without the aid of medication). Your cooperation helps keep kids and teachers healthy.



# Absences and Tardies

Phone calls **DO NOT** count towards excusing a tardy or absence, the excuse must be in writing, thank you.

Please Email:

Elementary: [dargueta@mysla.org](mailto:dargueta@mysla.org)

High School: [dvezl@mysla.org](mailto:dvezl@mysla.org)

We would like to thank all the parents that are complying with the illness guidelines in order to make our campus safe. Please continue to monitor your child if he/she shows signs of illness (runny nose, cough, fever, etc.)

# Christmas Ornaments

The 5th grade class worked hard to make these beautiful ornaments!



# Christmas Eve

Candlelit Service



The College  
Church  
337 Main Street  
So. Lancaster,  
MA  
December 24,  
7:00 PM

# Merry Christmas

and



## RAISE SOME DOUGH

*Help support us!*

20% of sales will benefit  
SOUTH LANCASTER ACADEMY

**January 7, 2024**  
**4:00 pm to 8:00 pm EDT**  
**100 Commercial Road, Leominster, MA**

In-Cafe • Drive-Thru • Pick-Up • Delivery  
Enter promo code FUND4U at online checkout.

**Panera**  
FUNDRAISING

