

**SOUTH SHORE CHRISTIAN MIDDLE SCHOOL  
PARENT INFORMATION LETTER  
December, 2008**

*“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on His shoulders. And He will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”* *Isaiah 9:6*

Dear Parents:

We serve a Lord who is faithful to all His promises. Perhaps His greatest promise of all was made to Abraham way back in Old Testament times. Ever since the fall of man into sin, those people in the Old Testament had been looking forward to the Messianic hope. They looked forward to Christ's life and finished work even as we look back to what Christ has done for us. --- May our praise and thanksgiving go to God our Father as we celebrate the birth of Jesus during this Christmas season.

**IMPORTANT CALENDAR DATES** (for December and January)

December 1	First Day for Second Twelve Week (T2) Rotation Classes in Grades 6 and 7 Maroon Express at SSMS Parking Lot (2:30 – 4:00 PM)
December 3	Last Day for Middle School CHAMPS Coupon Book Sale
December 4	PR/SSMS Band & Orchestra Concert at HCHS Auditorium (6:30 PM/7:30 PM)
December 6	HC Paper Drive at HCHS Parking Lot (7:30 AM – Noon)
December 8	Parent/Student Laptop Information Meeting at SSMS Media Center (7:00 – 8:00 PM)
December 11	Second Quarter Progress Reports Go Home
December 12 (or 19)	First Ski Club Outing (weather permitting)
December 16	SSMS/NSMS Choir Concert at Holland Heights CRC (7:30 PM)
December 19	Last Day of School before Christmas Break
December 20 – January 4	Christmas Break
January 5	School Resumes
January 9	Ski Club Outing (weather permitting)
January 16	Last Day of First Semester – Full Day of School
January 19	First Day of Second Semester
January 23	Ski Club Outing (weather permitting) First Semester Report Cards Go Home
January 26	CHAMPS Fundraiser ---- Harlem Globetrotters at DeVos Fieldhouse (7:00 PM)
January 30	SSMS/NSMS 7 <sup>th</sup> /8 <sup>th</sup> Choirs Perform at Griffins Hockey Game (Van Andel Arena) Ski Club Outing (weather permitting)

The middle school **CHAMPS Coupon Book** sale continues through **December 3**. Each student was given a book at school to sell on November 12. At the end of the sales period, your child will need to return that book or submit payment of \$25. Extra books are also available in the school office. Students will receive \$2 for each book they sell. Thanks for your ongoing support of this annual program.

**SSMS parents and students** are invited to come to school with your child's laptop on **Monday, December 8**, for a laptop information and demonstration meeting. We will meet from 7:00 – 8:00 PM that night in the SSMS media center. The evening will include a brief review of PowerSchool communication functions, a look at Moodle and its applications at school as well as an opportunity for parents to see firsthand how their students are using this exciting tool for learning. Plan on coming for an hour that night with middle school student.

During the month of December, all middle school band, orchestra and choir groups have scheduled concerts. The first performance of the month is the **PR/SSMS Band & Orchestra Concert** scheduled for **Thursday, December 4**. This combination event is being held at the HCHS auditorium. The groups from Pine Ridge will be on stage first beginning at 6:30 PM. Following a brief intermission and stage change, the various band and orchestra groups from SSMS will perform beginning at 7:30 PM. --- All are invited and encouraged to attend as you are able to hear our groups perform on that particular evening.

Second quarter **midterm progress reports** will go home with students on Thursday, December 11. If you have any questions about the progress of your child in a class, please feel free to contact the teacher directly. --- For sixth and seventh grade students only, their first twelve-week (T1) rotation course grade will also be on this report. --- Using your parent login, you are also encouraged to continue to use the **PowerSchool** program on the Internet to access your student's academic record, attendance history and our daily school announcements. --- Have you been receiving **weekly academic grade reports** of your student's record in PowerSchool **via e-mail**? Using the school information e-mail address you provided to us for your family, our office has set you up to automatically receive this weekly grade report. You can still access PowerSchool at any time using either your parent login (provided to you at our August 26 student check-in day) or your student's personal login information. If you are having any difficulty receiving this e-mail or accessing the online information, please give us a call at school.

Our middle school **Ski Club** is being formed again this year with students from SSMS and NSMS. The students have already been given the opportunity to sign up and receive information at school. The first scheduled date if the weather is favorable for skiing is Friday, December 12 (or December 19). Other planned Friday night ski dates include January 9, 23 and 30. More ski trip information will be communicated to the students at school as winter conditions allow this season.

A **skim board making class** will be offered to all students in grades 6-8 on Tuesday afternoons after school starting in mid January. Look for registration forms to be available in our school office after the Thanksgiving holiday break.

You are cordially invited to attend our combined middle schools **choir concert** on Tuesday, December 16. The choral groups from both SSMS and NSMS will be performing at Holland Heights Christian Reformed Church that evening beginning at 7:30 PM. Your attendance at this concert is a great encouragement to the members of our school choirs.

The **last regular day** of school before the Christmas break is Friday, December 19. Following the annual break for the holidays, school will resume again on Monday, January 5. --- Since the Christmas vacation spans a significant amount of time away from school, this letter is intended to cover a two-month period of information for South Shore families. The second marking period (and first semester) ends on Friday, January 16. **Second semester** begins with a full day of school on Monday, January 19. **Report cards** from the second marking period will be issued directly to students on **Friday, January 23**. Please look for that report card to come home with your student that day.

The optional winter round of **MAP Testing** in grades 2-8 occurs during the three calendar weeks beginning January 19. Only school-identified students will be asked to participate in the mid-year testing sessions. All students will continue to participate in this testing program during the required fall (September/October) and spring (April/May) sessions.

If your child has a passionate interest in writing or mathematics and would enjoy accelerated instruction, you may wish to consider the **PATH Program** at Hope College. Contact Mrs. Sheryl Beerens, Director of GATES, for more information. She can be reached by school phone at 820-3520 or by e-mail at [sbeerens@hollandchristian.org](mailto:sbeerens@hollandchristian.org).

We are continuing to offer and encourage support services that include a **tutorial study time** before school, at noon hour and after school for students who may need or desire some extra help with homework or test preparation. This remains an unscheduled arrangement and any middle school student may utilize this valuable service on a drop-in basis. This study time is offered in **room 109**. --- On occasion, we do receive requests about the availability of paid tutors. A list of some tutors, including Hope College students, is available in our school office.

The middle school **Sports Hotline (820-3250)** is another valuable information tool for you to use each school day. Give that phone number a call each day to make certain that anticipated practice or game information matches your plans. You can also check the **Athletics link** on the SSMS school page on the Holland Christian website ([www.hollandchristian.org](http://www.hollandchristian.org)) for team schedules, directions to away site schools and assorted other information items.

At this time, our **early winter sports** have begun their respective seasons. Girls's swimming, competitive cheer and boys' basketball are presently underway. --- Near the end of January, girls' volleyball and boys' swimming will begin their practices for the **late winter season**. Sign-ups for these teams will be conducted in coming weeks at school. If you have any questions, please give our office or Mr. Lloyd Dozeman a call at 820-3205 or e-mail [lnozeman@hollandchristian.org](mailto:lnozeman@hollandchristian.org).

We again want to thank you for supporting our **Magazine Fundraising Sale** sponsored by QSP and Reader's Digest. Although the student sale is over, its still not too late to participate! This is a great opportunity for our school as we keep 40% of every magazine purchase and the funds we raise will be used to benefit our students! The Internet is a key part of any future purchase. And it only takes a minute! You can purchase a new magazine subscription or renew one of your favorites. Simply go to <http://www.qsp.com/Store/FallFundraiserB.aspx?FAccountId=425055252> and take advantage of great savings. We appreciate your continued support and participation ... and don't forget ... magazines make great gifts for everyone in the family.

Holiday Blessings,

Mark Van Dyke, Principal