

SUSTAINABILITY ACADEMY BUZZ - MID-OCTOBER 2023

Dear SA Families,

It's beginning to feel more like fall! Perfect timing for our annual Harvest Run, happening this Sunday, October 15 at the Intervale. I look forward to seeing many SA families there.

Today at our October Community Meeting we introduced SA's Community Council. We identified 3 small groups based on the change ideas students wrote about in their applications. The groups are:

- **The Lunchables** - focused on improving lunch at SA, including reducing food waste.
- **The Saplings** - focused on SA's physical environment and enrichment opportunities for students. Some of their ideas include expanding lunch clubs and adding more plants to our indoor environment.
- **SSPO (Student Safety and Peace Organization)** - focused on ensuring safety and peace for all in the SA community.

Look for more updates in the weeks related to the work of SA Community Council!

With gratitude,

Nina

Nina Oropeza (she/her)

Principal, Sustainability Academy

UPCOMING EVENTS



Save the Dates:

- **October 14** - Solar Eclipse (glasses sent home in Friday Folders)
- **October 15** - Harvest Run at the Intervale
- **October 22** - Family Contra Dance - 1:30 - 3:00pm
- **October 25** - Early Release 11:30 am - Professional Learning for Staff
- **October 28** - Harvest Dance, 1:00-2:30 pm
- **November 6** - PTO Meeting, 6:00 - 7:30 pm
- **November 10** - Community Meeting, 8:10 am
- **November 20 & 21** - Family Conferences, No School
- **November 22-24** - Thanksgiving Break - No School

SA IN PICTURES!



First graders worked in the garden with Ms. Kestrel to help harvest seeds and prepare the beds for winter.



On Friday, the 5th Graders walked to the Intervale to meet with Farmer and former SA parent Andy Jones. They heard about how the flood this summer impacted his farm and got a chance to pick some beets.

UPDATES & RESOURCES

Volunteering at Sustainability Academy

Donna is now able to help any family member or interested volunteer to complete the necessary paperwork to volunteer at SA! If you are interested in volunteering you can call the office or stop by and talk with Donna. [Link for volunteering procedures.](#)

Harvest Dance - October 28, 1:00 - 2:30PM

Please join us in the back field from 1-2:30 p.m. on Saturday, October 28 for our PTO-Sponsored Harvest Dance. The dance is free to all K-5 students and costumes are optional. No scary masks or violent costumes, please. All children must be accompanied by an adult (no drop offs). Music and allergy-friendly snacks will be provided. Hope to see you there!

Halloween Reminders

In the Burlington School District and at SA we do not celebrate Halloween at school. Please leave any costumes or candy at home. We look forward to celebrating the changing of the seasons and the fall harvest, including at the **Harvest Dance** (a PTO event). Thank you for your understanding in our desire to foster an inclusive environment at SA.

Pork Returns to SA Menu

The BSD School Nutrition team let us know that pork will be returning to the SA lunch menu in the month of October, and specifically on Tuesday, October 16! Pork will be on rotation once every 6 weeks. This menu offering is aligned with all other BSD schools. A pork-free option will be offered on the day that pork is served. Pork is handled in BSD kitchens in the same way that food allergens are handled so as to avoid any chance of cross contact for those who do not consume pork. If you have any questions, please reach out to Laura La Vacca, Director of School Nutrition llavacca@bsdvt.org.

Solar Eclipse - Saturday

An annular solar eclipse will occur on Saturday, October 14, 2023. A solar eclipse occurs when the Moon passes between Earth and the Sun, thereby totally or partly obscuring the image of the Sun for a viewer on Earth. ECHO Leahy Center donated viewing glasses for every student and will be in their Friday folders.

Family Contra Dance - October 22 - 1:30 - 3:00PM

All dances will be taught. No experience necessary. Live music from Brian Perkins and Maeve Fairfax. Luke Donforth will call.

We'll be at a **NEW LOCATION**: the Integrated Arts Academy Gymnasium, 6 Archibald St in the Old North End of Burlington. Park on the street or in the lot, and enter on the east side of the building. We're suggesting a donation of \$8/dancer or \$20/family, but that's on a sliding scale as folks are able. We'd rather have you come and chip in less than not attend.

Reminder - Attendance Changes for this School Year

Starting this school year, BSD changed what counts as an excused absence. While this was communicated to families last Spring and in August, and is in our student handbook, now that we are into the school year, this

reminder may be useful to families and students. We ended the practice of accepting parental communication as the primary determinant of excusing absences and are using the guidance from the AOE regarding when an absence is considered excusable.

Excused Absences

From the AOE Website: [An absence is considered excusable when it is the result of:](#)

- Personal illness;
- Appointments with health professionals that cannot be made outside of the regular school day;
- Observance of recognized religious holidays when the observance is required during a regular school day;
- Emergency family situations such as a death in the family;
- Planned absences for personal or educational purposes which have been approved.
- Absences due to suspension or expulsion

All other absences will be marked as Absence Unexcused. This includes absences such as those that occur when a student needs more sleep, family is in town for a visit, the student is attending a non-AOE approved alternative programming, there is an event that the family wishes to attend with the student, participating in programs such as Crow's Path, Teresa Davis Art Studios, etc.

Planned Absences

In cases of planned absences, families must submit a [Planned Absence Request Form](#) alerting us to planned absences of three to nine days. If a planned absence will extend beyond nine consecutive days, a [10+ Days Planned Absence Request Form](#) must be filled out by the family and signed by the principal and teachers. Unless a planned absence of three to nine days falls under one of the six types of excusable absences listed above or is otherwise approved by the Superintendent, it will be considered an unexcused absence.

To read our entire attendance procedure, including a list of all of the attendance codes, please go [here](#) on the BSD website.

October Lunch Menu

[Link for Octobers Lunch Menu](#)

Library Corner

Books are coming home now! If you have not seen them yet, please note, all students are allowed to have books come home. K-1 has one book a week, but will have more this year later on. Grades 2 have 2, and grades 3 and up can have 3. Family accounts are available, please email me (jwislosk@bsdvt.org) if you are interested. Loans can go up to 12 books for family accounts, and an adult is held responsible. Library loans and book lending is explained in the following languages if you prefer to listen:

[English](#),

[Swahili](#),

[Burmese](#),

[Vietnamese](#),

[Kirundi](#),

[MaayMaay](#),

[Somali](#),

[Nepali](#),

[Karen](#),

[Kirundi](#). This week students in K-2 read *Creepy Carrots* and worked on sequencing, and discovered the “E is for Everyone” section. Grades 3-5 heard a story with Wabanaki roots and thought about the term “indigenous” while grade 5 learned about the actual island in what mapmakers called Lake Champlain!

PTO Corner

12th Annual Harvest Run for Sustainability

Don't miss out on Sustainability Academy's 12th Annual Harvest Run on **Sunday, October 15th** at the Intervale Center! Romp through farm fields and dirt roads on your way to completing a 5k run/relay or kids' fun run. Register today!

Registration is \$5/kid, \$15/adult, or \$30/family. Or your student can raise money for the Sustainability Academy for free entry.

Register here: <https://runsignup.com/Race/VT/Burlington/Burlington>

Be sure to share your registration with friends/family on social media!

Don't feel like running? That's okay! Join us for live music, food, and fun! Race Day Information and registration available here: <https://sa-pto.com/events/>.

Looking for City Market Member Hours? Register as a volunteer for the event at City Market or sign up at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050F4EA4A82DA5FB6-harvest#/>

Please reach out to Dan Ray (Daniel.Lewis.Ray@gmail.com) with any questions.

Come to the Harvest Dance!

Come to the back field at SA on Saturday, October 28th from 1 - 2:30 p.m. for the annual Harvest Dance! Get your groove on to the music of DJ Marky Mark. The dance is open to all SA students and costumes are optional. No scary masks or violent costumes please. All children must be accompanied by an adult (no drop offs). Hope to see you there!

Future Meetings and Events:

Meetings this year: **11/6, 12/4, 1/8, 2/5, 3/11, 4/1, 5/6, and 6/3**. A full calendar of events [can be found here](#).

Join the SA PTO Email List:

To be added to the email list, please send an email to sustainabilitypto@gmail.com. Once added, you can post to the email list by emailing barnes-pto@googlegroups.com.

Questions? Here's how to reach the 2023-2024 PTO Leadership Team:

Stephen Smith, President: stephen@mapsmith.net

Susan Cline Lucey, Vice President: susanclinelucey@gmail.com

Valerie Esposito, Secretary: valpoespo@gmail.com

Cayenne MacHarg, Treasurer: cayennem@gmail.com

