

# **ANNUAL & CLASS FUND CAMPAIGN 2021-22**



# **Nurturing curious, creative, competent, and compassionate learners.**



# WELCOME TO THE 2021-22 SCHOOL YEAR!

Dear SCS Parents,

August 2021

Welcome to the 2021-22 school year! A year that marks the beginning of our return to our roots. Back to when our students received a wholesome education, combining academic rigor with a rich arts program and experiential, hands-on learning: a common aspiration voiced by an overwhelming majority of teachers and parents when surveyed back in December.

As much as a reawakening of our former essence and uniqueness, it is also a bold response to the unprecedented challenges our students will soon face, demanding skills beyond a solid foundation in math, science, and reading.

*Creativity, Complex Problem-Solving, Critical Thinking, Collaboration, Persuasive Communication, and Cultural Awareness...* these so-called 'soft skills' - developed by engaging and nurturing a child's whole being - are now essential to any human wishing to contribute and thrive in the 21st Century. We are thus excited to announce that the 2021-22 school year will mark the return of Music, Performing Arts, Athletics, Middle School Electives, Leadership, and our cherished overnight field trips, all of which disappeared when funding for public schools dwindled after the Great Recession of 2008.

Never again should these valuable and essential programs be subject to the boom-and-bust cycles which punctuate public school funding. We believe it's high time our community seize control of its own destiny and protect the type of wholesome education it aspires for its students.

To achieve this, we have created two (2) programs which allow parents to invest in these rich educational experiences for their children and ensure their continuity:

**THE ANNUAL FUND:** Supporting the arts, and all future initiatives that enrich the quality and breadth of SCS' educational programs and a student's whole learning.

**THE CLASS FUND:** Designed to cover the cost of overnight field trips, Middle School Electives and Leadership Program, Intramural Sports, and to provide each grade with funds for supplemental classroom materials and pay for daytime field trips.

None of these rich experiences receive direct funding from the state or federal governments. Therefore, it will be up to us to make them happen for our students. While we all can agree that public education should be free, an exemplary one just takes a little bit more.

Let's transform our common aspirations into reality with the same fighting spirit and care for our children's future which have defined our school community since day 1!

# THE ANNUAL FUND

The goal of the Annual Fund is to provide educational enrichment programs to your child and protect those programs from the instability inherent in public funding.

## PERFORMING ARTS, THEATER & DRAMA

Integrating performing arts into a student's learning experience helps him/her improve self-confidence, develop strong oral presentation skills, creativity, and empathy.

In 2021-22, our Arts Director, Julie Calhoun will assist teachers and students in Grades K-3 with staging class performances tied to their Language Arts curriculum. Grades 4-5 will work under the guidance of SCS' new Performing Arts Instructor, Krissy Marcus, on the production of a Cluster-2 play. Marcus will also lead middle school students in the 4 Reelz Program, a multidisciplinary exploration into mental health, cultural and Language Arts literacy. Utilizing rhythm, dance, theater and visual arts, students will demonstrate their understanding of what it means to be mentally, socially, and emotionally healthy coming out of the pandemic. They will find interconnections in their ELA curriculum as a structure to create content for their "Reelz." Each grade's stand-alone "Reel" will combine music, dance, theater, costume and set design to express their story. The last Reel will express a common thread and synthesize each grade's Reel into a transformational grand finale!

## MUSIC

In 2021-22, led by renowned percussionist Reggie Jones, students will participate in the *World Drumming and Percussion Course*, learning and performing styles of hand-drumming, percussion, and movement. Ensembles from African, African American, Caribbean, Latin American and Middle Eastern styles of drumming will be the main areas of focus. Beyond its pedagogical/artistic value, students will also learn to:

- Communicate better by having learned how to listen to others.
- Understand the value of **cooperative teamwork**.
- **Improvise** new drumming ensemble patterns.
- **Create** (with a small group of fellow students) new drum ensembles in the style of various drumming traditions.
- Understand and value the peoples and musical cultures of West Africa, The Middle East, Latin America, and the Caribbean.

## INVESTMENT

To meet the goals of the Annual Fund and make them sustainable, an ongoing contribution of \$150 per student per month is needed.

## HOW THE ARTS DEVELOP THE YOUNG BRAIN - DAVID A. SOUSA



Neuroscience is revealing the impressive impact of arts instruction on students' cognitive, social, and emotional development. Certain brain areas respond only to music while others are devoted to initiating and coordinating movement from intense running to the delicate sway of the arms. Drama provokes specialized networks that focus on spoken language and stimulate emotions.

When budgets get tight, elementary art and music programs are among the first to be reduced or eliminated. Pressure from the No Child Left Behind Act is prompting elementary schools to trade off instruction in the arts for more classroom preparation for the mandatory, high stakes reading and math tests. Ironically, this is happening just when neuroscience is revealing the impressive impact that the arts have on the young brain's cognitive, social, and emotional development.

# THE CLASS FUND

*The goal of the Class Fund is to create an engaging, exciting, and fun learning environment by providing students experiential learning opportunities which, in 2021-22, will include:*

## "PASSPORT TO ADVENTURE!"

Kindergarteners and 1st Graders will benefit from a rich offering of learning experiences, including, Tolay Lake Fall Festival in Petaluma, Environmental Discovery Center in Santa Rosa, and Safari West.

2nd and 3rd Graders will explore the CA Academy of Sciences, the Exploratorium, and participate in the Bay Area Discovery Museum's STEM Workshops.

Starting in 4th grade, students will journey on multi-day learning adventures with direct connections to grade-specific curriculum, to discover and explore the natural world, and build camaraderie with their classmates. Planned destinations include:

- 4th Grade: Coloma Outdoor Discovery California Gold Rush History Program.
- 5th Grade: Slide Ranch, Sonoma Coast/Organic farming and exploration of coastal ecosystems.
- 6th/7th Grade: Marin Headlands/Environmental Science.
- 8th Grade: Ashland, Oregon/Shakespeare Festival.

## ATHLETICS

Students will have the opportunity to participate in lunchtime intramural sports leagues including basketball, flag football, and soccer, plus after-school teams that compete in the Middle School Sports League in flag football, volleyball, basketball, and track.

## MIDDLE SCHOOL ELECTIVES

Every student in Cluster-3 will participate in the following electives:

- Newsletter Writing (Creative and Persuasive Writing)
- 'Media Mythbusters' (Critical Thinking)
- Maker Lab (Creativity, Collaboration, Innovation)

## LEADERSHIP & COMMUNITY SERVICE

Middle school students will engage in projects that positively impact the school and outside community.

## INVESTMENT

To meet the goals of the Class Fund, a contribution of \$20 per student per month is needed. Collected funds will follow each class as it moves up the grades. The ending balance will be used to cover 8th grade graduation costs.

## MATCHING FUNDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

For 2021-22, SCS has secured funds to match parent contributions on a dollar-for-dollar basis and to cover the cost of overnight field trips for students with demonstrable financial need.



# THE VALUE OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Experiential learning is the process of learning through experience with the following benefits:

- Creates real-world relevance.
- Provides the opportunity for creativity by enabling students to seek their own unique solutions.
- Provides the opportunity for reflection and making personal connections with the material.
- Teaches the value of mistakes.
- Students start to discover and develop their skills, aptitudes, and passions.
- Teamwork: Most experiential learning activities are communal in nature, with students working in groups. Students learn to work more effectively together, developing a plan of action and capitalizing on the unique strengths of each team member. In turn, students learn how to lead, think critically, and adapt to changing circumstances.



## THE ROLE OF ART IN THE MAKING OF A GENIUS

It's little known that Einstein was an accomplished violinist, and even less known that had he not pursued science, he said he would have been a musician.

Einstein's second wife Elsa told the story of him one day appearing totally lost in thought, wandering to the piano, and playing for half an hour while intermittently jotting down notes. Disappearing into a room for two weeks (emerging for the odd piano session), he then surfaced with a working draft of the theory of general relativity.

*"Imagination is more important than knowledge.  
Knowledge is limited.  
Imagination encircles the world."* - Albert Einstein

Einstein confessed to thinking about science in terms of images and intuitions, often drawn directly from his experiences as a musician, only later converting these into logic, words, and mathematics. "I live my daydreams in music," he said. "I see my life in terms of music."

# **THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT AS A MEMBER OF THE SONOMA CHARTER SCHOOL COMMUNITY.**

SCS is very grateful to all of the families that have supported the school over the years, and we thank you in advance for considering giving to these important initiatives this school year.

If you have any additional questions or wish to discuss how best to support SCS, please do not hesitate to contact us at [jerkelens@scs.k12.ca.us](mailto:jerkelens@scs.k12.ca.us) or call (707) 935-4232.



*Para recibir una copia de esta información en español, póngase en contacto con [jerkelens@scs.k12.ca.us](mailto:jerkelens@scs.k12.ca.us) or (707) 935-4232.*