

# Sousa Middle School Newsletter

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## From the desk of Principal Wilkerson

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### Term 1 Success for Cobra Ambassadors!

We successfully completed our first quarter! Ambassadors continue to move full STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math) ahead as they engage in our challenging and exciting classes. SY17/18 welcomed new staff members, new classes, and new opportunities for scholars to succeed and we are super proud of our immediate success!

This year, we introduced a variety of new electives, such as Nutrition, Fitness, Journalism, Engineering, and Computer Science. As part of our STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math) integration, we offer engaging classes that connect mathematics with music, social studies with visual art, and dance with English language arts. We also offer students opportunities to participate in competitive performance classes such as Dance, Advanced Band, and Digital Arts. All of this is in addition to our current School Enrichment Model (SEM), athletic, and afterschool programs.

Sousa staff is dedicated to improving relationships and communication with our families. As a first step, we are partnered with a non-profit organization, called Flamboyant, to provide staff opportunities to meet each Cobra Ambassador's family in their home. The purpose is to get to know and partner with families to promote scholarly success. So far, forty percent of our families received a home visit from their Ambassador's advisory teacher. As a result, we have more parents committed to establishing our PTO!

Please read and enjoy our Term 2 newsletter. It is filled with important dates, events, and information to ensure your family is prepared for success at Sousa STEAM Middle School.

Principal Wilkerson

#### Save The Dates

- 11/20 HS Fair
- 12/6 Shadow Day
- 12/6 Ed Fest
- 12/8 Dance Company Fundraiser
- 12/11 Dc Lottery Opens
- 12/14 Sousa Open House & Showcase
- 1/12 MLK Parade
- 1/25 STEAM Open House & Numeracy Night

## Dear Parents

### You Still Have a Large Part to Play in Your Child's School Success

You may be wondering how involved you need to be with your child's education now that they are in middle school. Can you really make a difference? The answer is yes!

Studies show that parents have a big effect on their children's academic achievement when they stay involved throughout their school years. Parent engagement leads to better test scores, higher graduation rates, and lower levels of drug and alcohol abuse.

#### **To play an active role:**

Ask your child about what he/she's learning. Show your interest. Ask them to teach you about the aftermath of the Civil War, or how to find the slope in a math problem. Make a point of giving them your undivided attention when they talk about school.

Set high, realistic expectations. Your Sousa Ambassadors are more likely to believe in themselves if they know you believe in them. Talk to your Sousa Ambassador about their goals, and cheer them on as they strive to reach them.

Be a role model. Inspire your child to keep trying by displaying perseverance yourself. When solving a problem, discuss a variety of ways to do it.

Get involved at school. Join the Parent-Teacher Organization. Ask how you can help. Connecting with teachers and other involved parents can help you find resources and take action that will help your child.

#### **Offer tools that make organizing easier**

Your child now has more classes, more teachers, and probably more homework than they did in elementary school. To manage, they'll have to get and stay organized. Encourage your

child to use these useful tools:

Sticky notes. Your child can write reminders and stick them on books and binders that they need to bring home to do homework.

To-do lists. Have your child write down everything they need to do each day.

A calendar. Writing down their homework time, due dates, and activities lets your child see how much time they really have available.

Schedules. Schedules help children get things done. Have your child make one every day.

For example:

- 6:30 a.m. Wake up
- 7:30 a.m. Leave for school
- 8:00 a.m. Arrive to school
- 8:30 a.m. Eat Breakfast
- 8:45 a.m. 1st Period Class

### Three steps to improve nonfiction reading skills

When your child reads academic material, they are reading to remember. Share three steps to help them get the most from this kind of reading:

1. Scan the text. They should pay attention to graphics, headlines and boldface text.
2. Read it again slowly. Your child should take notes and write down words or concepts they don't understand.
3. Review the reading. Going through it again can improve their comprehension.

*“Inspire your child to keep trying by displaying perseverance yourself. When solving a problem, discuss a variety of ways to do it.”*

## Cobra News

### Cobra Clubs

Sousa Middle School Cobra Clubs inspire and enable our Sousa Ambassadors, especially those who need us most, to realize their full potential as productive, responsible, healthy, and caring citizens.

Cobra Club is not just a safe place for our Ambassadors to go after school. We provide diverse activities that meet the interests of our Ambassadors, all of which promote healthy development and education that help kids grow into positive and caring adults.

### Check out our clubs:

Archery with Mr. Boney

Art Club with Ms. McCoy

B.U.G Tutoring club with Mrs. Jones

Band with Mrs. Foster

Baseball with Ms. Whitmire

Girls' Basketball with Coach Cousar

Boys' Basketball with Coach Baldwin

Cheerleading with Ms. Edmonds

Creative Writing with Ms. Flowers

Chemistry Club with Mr. Menakaya and Ms. Tolbert

Fitness Club with Mr. Baldwin

Girls on the Run with Ms. Roberson

Cobra Dynasty Modeling Club with Ms. Gross

Flag Club with Ms. Butler

Football with Coach Cousar

LGBTQ Club with Ms. Banks

Saturday Day School with Ms. Whren

## PBIS

### PBIS Continues

PBIS stands for Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports. Sousa Middle School is a PBIS school. PBIS is a school wide research-based, behavior program. The purpose is to encourage positive behavior while reducing negative behavior.

We are in our second year using this program. The three elements of PBIS are systems that support staff behavior, practices that support positive student behavior, and systems that support proper decision making.

Our PBIS support system is based on the

### Partners and Programs:

During Quarter 1, we welcomed the following community partners. We are excited for continued programming for Quarter 2. Look out for monthly announcements.

- Anacostia Waters Shed
- Black Swan
- Communities and Schools
- Earth Conservation corps
- I belong Here Initiative
- Thomas Landscaping
- Whole foods
- Smithsonian Anacostia Museum
- SNEAKERS

acronym, **C.O.B.R.A.S.** :

- **C** - Commitment to Caring Community
- **O** - Organized and Prepared
- **B** - Brave and Beautiful
- **R** - Respectful and Responsible
- **A** - Ambassadors for Activism
- **S** - Safe and Orderly

We are excited to be continuing our Sousa PBIS Program to support our Sousa Ambassadors!

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“Excellence is  
the Standard”