

Dear BHRA Members,

**Re: Support Public Schools, Bermuda – SPS.bm – Our Schools need PAPER**

Our SPS.bm team is inviting you to join our call to action to support our primary public schools in Bermuda in a small way by giving our teachers and students **PAPER.**

Our public schools are **excited** to have paper. Public primary school principals and teachers tell us:

*“We consider cases of paper like white gold.”*

“We use lots of paper during our Writer’s Workshop, when students are encouraged to publish their work and become authors”

*“To allow students to better express themselves as well as aid with math activities”*

*“So that students can create their own books during writing center”*

*“It will assist students with expressing emotions during counselling sessions”*

Help support future artists, authors and mathematicians! How?

1. Donate a box or two of printer paper that you already have which our team member Ashley Berkeley can collect at any time convenient to you (call her on 299-1869) or email her on aberkeley@afsmith.bm.
2. Purchase the paper through Ashley at A.F. Smith at the above contacts with a credit card over the phone or by way of bank transfer to A.F. Smith: HSBC 010-715613-001 or Butterfield Bank 20006 060 173876 100. Memo your name ref. SUP002 and we will choose the paper and school most in need (e.g. White Copy Paper; Coloured Copy Paper, White Cardstock; Colored Cardstock; Construction Paper etc.).
3. Recycle paper that would otherwise be shredded – any second-hand blank paper is welcomed! (have a summer student chop off the font off paper that would otherwise go in the shred box and we will collect the box when it is full).

Will you help us to help our public-school students? Please contact us at SPSteam@sps.bm or tel. 296-8444 and ask to speak with the SPS Team (Rachel or Jules) and read more on [www.SPS.bm](http://www.SPS.bm).

AND IF YOU WANT TO GIVE MORE THAN PAPER? READ ON.

SPS.bm was formed in June of 2018 to answer the call for community action to help improve public school education in Bermuda. Our goal is to spread educational wealth, equalize opportunity, and help bridge the gap in the quality of education between Bermuda’s private and public-school students. We link the public-school classrooms with individual supporters and the private sector for the purchase of educational, arts and sports supplies, technology, equipment and instruments and hygiene products for classrooms. SPS.bm provides a transparent and accountable way for the community to give to improve our schools. We work in consultation with the Ministry, the Principals, Teachers and PTAs to make sure the giving is targeted to specific needs.

The supplies are chosen by teachers (we focused on primary P2 and P3 teachers this year) who gave us their “wish lists” of needs for their classroom. Supporters then go on our website SPS.bm to choose a primary school(s) to support and purchase items that inspire them from our 2 suppliers, Phoenix Stores Limited and A.F. Smith Limited, who deliver the goods free of charge to the classrooms with SPS volunteers 3 x per year.

In our first 10 months, we have caused over $135,000 worth of school supplies and related equipment to be purchased for our 18 primary schools, plus we have caused to be gifted over 100 good quality second-hand computers, loads of second-hand good furniture, and about 60 boxes of printer paper donated by companies, not to mention loads of second-hand books, supplies, games and puzzles that we collect at yard sales. SPS.bm also coordinates sponsored theatrical and learning field trips, free of charge to public school students.

It’s all worth the effort when get thank you messages such as this:

 “*On behalf of the staff and students at Francis Patton, we would like to thank you for your generous donations of school supplies for our lower school students. Securing funding for our school is especially important this year, as many families face the daunting challenges of limited financial resources.**Your generous contribution is a great vote of confidence in our school’s mission go “Develop leaders, ONE child at a time”.**Contributions such as yours make an incredible difference in what is available to our students.**We look forward to synergizing with you for many years to come.” – Mr. Todd Fox, Principal.”*

Kindly note that SPS.bm is not a registered charity under the Charities Act – we are a community-action initiative. We do not solicit funds from the Bermuda public and we do not receive funding from the Bermuda Government or from Bermuda public sources. Supporters make direct purchase of school supplies and projects with the retail supplies, so we never see, receive or handle funds. That way 0% of dollars are spent on admin expenses and 100% are spent on supplies and projects for the students. However, if a company may only give to a registered charity, many of the schools’ PTAs are registered charities and will work with us to purchase supplies for their school through their charity and SPS. We will oversee the process to ensure transparency, accountability and recognition.

Join the Movement! we cannot be complacent about the need to improve public school education on our little beautiful Island. Let’s show our public-school Principals, teachers and students that we care, by all working together to answer the call to community action.

This idea is already successfully in place on a large scale in the United States through the charity DonorsChoose.org, founded in 2000 by Charles Best, a public-school teacher from the Bronx, and promoted by Oprah.  Over 3 million donors have chosen to fund over a million classroom projects, reaching the needs of over 27 million public school students.  SPS is reliving that dream in Bermuda.