

Danbury Elementary Newsletter



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Ann Holloran, Principal

Principal's Office

Dear Parents and Guardians,

As a student, did you ever get sent to the principal's office? Do you remember any details of his/her room? Was the administrative assistant in the main office welcoming?

I do vaguely remember the offices of my elementary school and junior high. One was more welcoming than the other. I recall my elementary principal having this large wooden desk that seemed to take up a large part of his office. During my junior year of high school, instead of going to study hall first block, I worked in the "Yellow/White Office." I helped the administrative assistant by checking in late students, sorting mail and putting it in teachers' mailboxes, and just hanging behind the counter in this office.

As many of you know, I have a twin sister. Although we attended Nashua High, there were a few classes we had together. Biology class was one of them. One day in class, I became argumentative with the teacher. Our discussion turned to the point in which she said, "Ann, if you continue, you will be sent to Mr. Cote's office." (He was the assistant principal in charge of my part of the alphabet.) With my father having taught/worked with Mr. Cote, and knowing my sister would share at the dinner table my fate, I chose to stop arguing.

I decided to share this story because I know when parents receive a phone call from me or the call from Trish saying that Ms. Holloran would like to set up a meeting, the majority of the time the first reaction is not a pleasant one. This week, I had a parent meeting and the mom shared that her child was nervous that she was going to get yelled at by the principal. At the end of the meeting, I brought the student into my office to sit with us as I reassured him/her that I didn't yell and I summarized what was talked about at the meeting. We all left the office with smiles. It is one of my goals to try to make all families feel welcomed into our school community and into my office. I try to remember that for some adults, school wasn't always a great experience. I try to be an active listener. I focus on allowing people the opportunity to share. Lastly, we sit together around a round table instead of me being behind a large wooden desk. It is my ultimate hope that parents' and students' memories of my office are ones of getting books, a place of listening to all sides, walls of colorful art and inspiring quotes, an area of learning, and where we fix our mistakes.

I know that often the last sentence of my written correspondence ends with "please don't hesitate to reach out or call." I hope this article helps to reassure you that "we are in the journey of educating your child together" and I hope the principal's office is a little less intimidating.

Have a great weekend!

Finally in Fifth!

It's hard to believe we're already a third of the way through the school year! Last week, fifth graders kindly helped make Thanksgiving cards and centerpieces to brighten the tables of a retirement home. Students also responded to a writing prompt about Thanksgiving when the turkey was still frozen just hours before guests would arrive. As you read in last week's newsletter, they also took time to think about what they were thankful for.

This week, we finished our second literacy unit. We focused on author's purpose, visualization, inferring, helping verbs, and subject-verb agreement. Students have been writing a fantasy narrative, focusing on story structure. We used *Somebody... Wanted... But... So... Then...* to help plan our stories, then added details and more information as we started writing. Some students were surprised to have two pages in just a few days! Next, we will look at the revising and editing phases of writing.

We began a new module in Eureka Math. Many students knew the "trick" to multiplying numbers like 40×60 . (Multiply 4×6 , then attach two 0s to get 2,400), but they learned *why* that "trick" works using the commutative and associative properties of multiplication. We also learned about the distributive property and how that can be a helpful strategy for solving problems mentally. Next, students will apply what they know about multi-digit whole number multiplication to multiplication with multi-digit decimals.

Our outline has been growing quite a bit in social studies. Students are learning how to read and create an outline as we learn about early American civilizations such as the Olmecs, Aztecs, and Hopewell. Students were surprised to learn some early civilizations had paved roads over 3,000 years ago!



Lunch Menu Dec 5-9, 2016



Monday

Chicken Nuggets
Bread Stick
Garden Salad
Fresh Fruit

Tuesday

Meatball Sub
Broccoli Florets
Garden Salad
Fresh Fruit

Wednesday

Tacos
Refried Beans
Garden Salad
Fresh Fruit

Thursday

Chicken Burger
Peas
Garden Salad
Fresh Fruit

Friday

Pizza
Carrot Sticks
Garden Salad
Fresh Fruit

Breakfast \$1.25 (reduced \$.30)

Lunch \$2.75 (reduced \$.40)

Milk \$.35

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From The Guidance Corner

The Holiday season is here...in fact we are right in the middle of it! Many of us look forward to the season, music, decorations, celebrating with our loved ones, and the change in the everyday routine. For others, the holidays are quite stressful...particularly for parents. We want to give our kids the gifts they are excited about, some cost more than we are able to pay, and others don't really seem suited to their age. Yet we all want to see them smile. This is tough.

Over the past several weeks, I have worked on getting a better understanding of the video games kids are playing. It is such a popular item of interest amongst all ages and my 15 year old son had just saved enough money to buy a PS4. I had also had several conversations with students about games they were playing that sounded quite frightening. So, as a guidance counselor and a Mom, I was extra curious!

First, I was quick to learn that many children well under 10 years old are playing games that are designed for mature adults. It was no wonder that they were using vocabulary that was harsh, used violent terms for ordinary situations, and, for many, sharing that they were having scary dreams. I found reviews at the following website very helpful in providing a meaningful review (<https://www.common sense media.org/game-reviews>).

I had already spoken to my son about some of the games he had considered buying and had played at friends' houses. I pointed out how I was really uncomfortable with violence becoming an ordinary part of any persons day and questioned its value. With a 15 year old it was tricky, but I quickly learned that the reasons he played them had to do with convenience and playing what others were playing.

As you might guess, I pushed for the thrilling sport games and soon learned they were also on the more expensive side. We can't win as parents! At this point, my son's personal funds are not high, so as he saves money so do I. I decided I'd rather help him buy the more expensive game than have him play the violent and horror driven games. And also while waiting to purchase a new game, I consoled myself with the understanding that he has so many other fun and healthy things to do with friends or on his own.

As parents, we can share our ideas and not feel isolated about choosing the gift less purchased. And in the process, teach our kids how interesting the world is and how very many things there are to do that are fun, exciting, cheap, meaningful, and so very worth doing! To name a few: art supplies; head lamp to walk in the yard at night, play flashlight tag, read a book in bed; balloons and super balls to play balloon pong, models to build and decorate, books to read, board games to play, and, of course, family with whom to spend time. I know family time is cliché and certainly hard to wrap in a package under the tree, but it really is the best! I wish you all wonderful holiday season!

Winter Weather



Winter is here! Please make sure your child is sent to school with winter coat, hat, snow pants, boots, gloves, scarf, etc...We will have outside recess daily unless the temperature drops below 10 degrees. If you are in need of winter coats or snow pants, please let the office know.

If school is cancelled or delayed due to weather, parents will be notified by the automatic system from the school district. Please make sure your information is updated with the school office so you can be contacted.

Our Lost & Found box is filled from the fall. Is it yours?! Come see!