

Danbury Elementary Newsletter

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Ann Holloran, Principal

Reflections While Being Sick

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Last week, I was under the weather and spent several days on my couch resting. In between naps and drinking tea, I read and watched some television. This time provided me an opportunity to rest, learn, and reflect. I enjoyed listening to all different sports reporters and both coaches as they prepared for the National Championship. I read some articles from ASCD (Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development) and different teaching blogs. I watched a few interviews and news programs around the ending of President Obama's presidency.

At our faculty and staff meetings this week, we discussed the following quotes:

- "The big picture of curriculum is thinking about how all the individual units form a cohesive whole and keeping that at the forefront of your curriculum design, process, rather than taking a unit-by-unit approach." --Angela DiMichele Lalor
- "When ordinary people get involved, get engaged, and come together in collective effort, things change for the better." --Barack Obama
- "Hold each other accountable—you can't do it by yourself." --Dabo Swinney
- Dennis Miranda said, "As you reflect upon where you would like to be at the end of this school year, what one word would you consider to shape that journey?" Some of our one words included: Nurturing, consistent, mindful, perseverance, juggle, dedicated, happiness, joy, compassionate and thoughtful.

My reflection from reading some teaching blogs consisted of our need to continue to model even basic skills to our students. For example, it is always a challenge at the elementary level to have our students in a timely fashion get dressed and undressed for winter recess. One suggestion from a teacher was for families to purchase a reusable grocery bag and students will always put their snow boots and snow pants in the bag at school. It was recommended that we take the time to model with students what is the right and wrong way to get dress for recess and undress after coming in from outside. We can make this fun by having the teacher try to put on their winter gear by putting their mittens on first and then trying to put on boots and snow pants. Lastly, we should teach our students a routine. In the younger grades, you can even make a checklist or picture poster for students. One teacher shared her routine that she teaches her students. It was put on: 1. Snow pants; 2. Boots (Sneakers/shoes) into recycle grocery bag; 3. Scarf; 4. Coat and zip; 5. Hat; 6. Mittens. The routine to get undressed was: 1. Mittens; 2. Hat and Mittens go in Hat; 3. Scarf; 4. Jacket; 5. Hat with Mittens and Scarf go into sleeve of Jacket; 6. Jacket on hook in cubbie/locker; 7. Snow pants into bag; 8. Boots in bag; 9. Sneakers on. For some of our students, the steps to accomplish going out to recess or coming in can be overwhelming or time consuming. So the more, as adults, we can help them with organization and practice, the more successful our students will be.

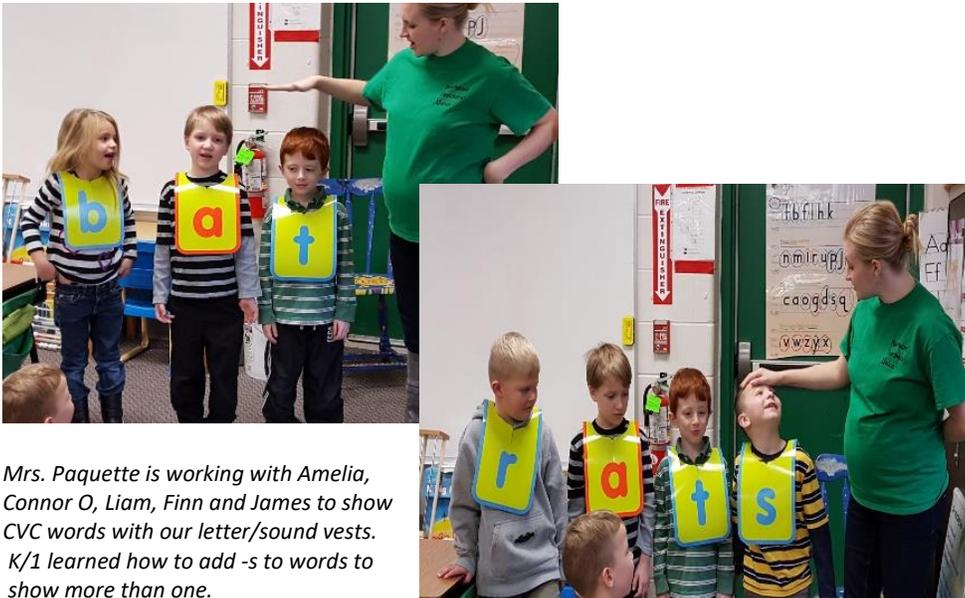
Have a great, long weekend!



Seavey's Superheroes

Prize Speaking! In Kindergarten, your child came home with a Nursery Rhyme in their Home Connection folder. Please practice with them daily so they can memorize their poem for 1/27/17, the Prize Speaking Preliminaries. Kindergarten will recite their poem in front of the school but they will not be a part of the judging process. This is a great public speaking opportunity and works on speaking and listening skills. First grade received their poems as well. The theme is Animals. Children should be working hard to memorize their poem at home and work on speaking loudly and clearly. This is their first year for being a part of the judging process. Finalists will be chosen to speak at Prize Speaking night on 1/31/17.

We are Readers! It is that time of year in Kindergarten where your child is starting to put their letter/sound knowledge to work and they are blending and sounding out words! Remember Decodable readers are in their folders every week to practice as well as just-right DRA leveled books in their book buddy bags. Encourage them to show you tapping which is a tool we use with our Foundations program. Please read your weekly Foundations Newsletters to work on specific CVC (consonant-vowel-consonant) words to tap with your child. In addition, we are learning to form upper case letters. Please practice correct letter formation with your child.



Mrs. Paquette is working with Amelia, Connor O, Liam, Finn and James to show CVC words with our letter/sound vests. K/1 learned how to add -s to words to show more than one.

Sight Words! Every two weeks in Kindergarten we learn 2-3 new sight words to add to our pile. Every week in First we learn several new words. Thank you for all of your support with this! Our students are doing an amazing job with memorizing these high frequency words that are crucial to their reading development.

Math Facts! We are moving right along with our school goal of improving our math facts school wide. Kindergarten is responsible for 21 basic facts. Our class has done a phenomenal job working on these facts at RTI time and throughout the day. First grade has an incredible amount of facts (132) including addition and subtraction facts to 10.

Lunch Menu January 16-20, 2017

Monday
NO SCHOOL

Tuesday
Mozzarella Sticks
Broccoli Florets
Garden Salad
Fresh Fruit

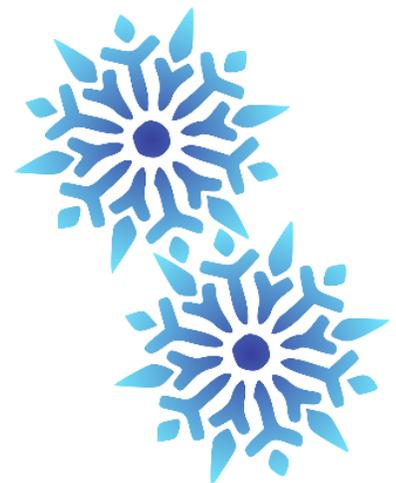
Wednesday
Chicken Fajitas
Baked Beans
Garden Salad
Fresh Fruit

Thursday
American Chop Suey
Bread Sticks
Garden Salad
Fresh Fruit

Friday
Homemade Pizza
Carrot Sticks
Garden Salad
Fresh Fruit

Breakfast \$1.25
(reduced \$.30)
Lunch \$2.75
(reduced \$.40)
Milk \$.35

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From Guidance: The Power of our Words and Gestures

It amazes me how much power there is in one small gesture and a few stated words. Your children are working on being effective communicators with a specific focus on observing and listening to all pieces of information. With finely tuned listening and observation skills, we learn how to better interpret all gestures/information that is shared with us, whether the person uses words, body language, emotions, or actions.

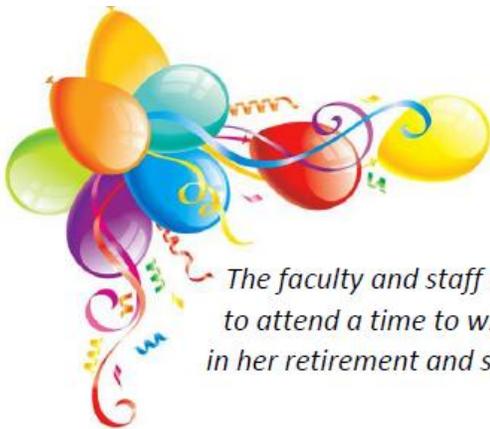
The children are gaining a better understanding of consistent messages. The students are starting to see how words alone are not a complete the message but that facial expression, tone of voice, accompanied actions, help us to better understand any one person's message to us. And that often the messages are communicated without words, but use facial expressions and actions are very challenging to accurately understand or interpret.

During our activities, several children interpreted messages with a negative or sad orientation. The observations have the power to make them doubt themselves and their value. I have seen how a grimace on an important person's face can be interpreted as an indicator of dislike and disregard; how a compliment accompanied by a negative tone of voice loses all positive meaning; and an emotionally sad scene as being connected to an extreme act of violence instead of a person simply having a hard day.

In addition to the above, the students are actively engaged with each other and working to understand and value each other's perspective; to slow down and consider how they themselves are sharing information, wanting to be accurately understood by others. The best part is how joyfully responsive all the students are to a huge smile (one that reaches the eyes) or a compliment slipped into the content of whatever is being discussed.

In one class the other day, I used the word beautiful in a very casual way, while asking kids to look at a student's face for more information. Well, one would have thought I had just given this student the Nobel Peace Prize or an Academy Award! I am bringing this up because with our focus on interpreting all information communicated with us and many kids tendency to interpret information with a negative perspective, I want to communicate even more carefully and use the power of my gestures (like an offhand compliment) to build joy in all of our kids.

The power we hold with what we communicate is strong and all of our messages are so very important to all.



The faculty and staff of NHCS invite you to attend a time to wish Katie good luck in her retirement and share a story or two.

Mrs. Katie Knott-Garon Retirement Gathering
Friday, January 20th
2:15-3:30pm
Small ceremony at 3:00pm
New Hampton Community School
Multi-Purpose Room
Food & refreshments provided



MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY -Jan 16, 2017
No School

