

SMITH TIMES

Friday, October 4, 2013

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The Principal's Corner



When I served as a student teacher at C.P. Smith School more than thirty years ago, English was the only language spoken by our students. Now, it is exciting to report that Maay, Maay, Bosnian, Nepali, Spanish, Somali, Lingala, Vietnamese, Kinyarwanda, Albanian, Kirundi, Chinese, and Arabic are also spoken by our students and their families. In addition to the United States, our families come from Albania, Bosnia, China, Iraq, Kenya, Mexico, Nepal, Rwanda, Somalia, Tanzania, and Vietnam. Our diversity is indeed our strength, and as I talk with families of all backgrounds, cultures, religions, and traditions, it is interesting to note that when it comes right down to it, parents all seem to want the same thing for their children: a safe, supportive, joyous, and academically-rigorous learning environment.

As of Monday, October 7th, we will be changing our morning routines to allow for more recess time for children before school as part of our efforts to promote wellness. A number of teachers have come forward to offer to supervise before-school recesses for children, either using the orchard walking path for lower grades or the intermediate playground for the upper grades. Children who arrive at school at 7:45 a.m. will still be served breakfast, and then grown-ups will escort students outside to their respective recess areas shortly thereafter. Children who arrive between 7:45-8:10 a.m. may join the recess for their grade-level or wait in a supervised line outside the building for some fresh air before they begin their classroom time. At 8:10 a.m., classroom teachers will come outside to escort their students to their classrooms, with the primary grades coming through the front door of the school and the intermediate grades using the back door. Students who arrive after 8:10 a.m. should come through the front door of the school. If they arrive at or after 8:20 a.m., they will

need to sign in as tardy at the main office. The school operates a Homework Help Station in the library every Tuesday through Friday morning from 7:45-8:10 a.m. for students in Grades 3-5 who need extra time to complete their homework. Students may enter the building for that purpose or to eat breakfast, otherwise we hope they enjoy their extra wellness time outdoors.

Students in Grades 3-5 are taking their NECAP (New England Common Assessment Program) tests in Reading and Math (and Writing for Grade 5). You may find helpful the information about standardized tests that is included in this newsletter.

Our Parent-Teacher Conferences will be held on Thursday, October 17th in the afternoon and all day on Friday, October 18th. School will be dismissed at 11:30 a.m. on that Thursday (lunch will be served as a “grab and go” for students), and there will be no school on the following day, so that conferences may be scheduled throughout the day. Mrs. Tina Desautels, our Administrative Assistant, is working hard to prepare the conference schedule. If you have any questions about your scheduled appointment(s), please contact her at 864-8479 or tdesaute@bsdvt.org.

Our school is in need of additional substitutes for classroom teachers and para-educators. We hire all our substitutes through Kelly Services. Please contact Mrs. Desautels for more information about the application process for substitute teachers.

Thank you for all you do to make our school a community of respectful, responsible, and safe learners

Calendar of Events



- 10/7:** PTO Meeting (6:30-8:00 p.m.)
-- Library. (Note change of date from 10/9)
- 10/9:** Calendar 2.0 Community Engagement Meeting (6:30 p.m.) -- BHS
- 10/17:** Parent-Teacher Conferences (School will be dismissed at 11:30 a.m.)
- 10/18:** Parent-Teacher Conferences (No School)
- 10/21 – 10/25:** Book Fair
- 11/8:** First Trimester Marking Period Closes
- 11/15:** Report Cards Distributed to Students

News from the Guidance Office

We are coming to the end of our emotional regulation unit. This year I chose to talk about a variety of strong feelings (worry/fear, anger, sadness). In the past I had focused on one each year. Each week we explore one feeling and practice one self-settling technique. All students will have a chance to perfect belly breathing, studies have shown that belly breathing, even 3, can reduce the intensity of emotions and begin the process of calming down. With students in 3rd-5th we will spend some time talking about the influence our thoughts have over our feelings. They may refer to this as self-talk or changing the channel. My hope is that each student will create a personalized tool kit that can be used when strong feelings feel like they are taking over. After finishing these lessons we will be moving onto the Bullying & Harassment Unit.

PTO Halloween Costume Drop and Shop



Love Halloween, but hate spending lots of money on a costume your child will just use for a few hours? Do you have a collection of characters collecting dust in your closet? Make this a Green Halloween® by participating in the CP Smith PTO costume drop and shop! Join us to recycle your gently used Halloween costumes and choose low cost costumes to outfit your kids this year!

How it Works: Drop...

There will be a box in the lobby of CP Smith for costume donations starting **Monday, October 7th**. Drop off costumes you'd like to donate any weekday between 7:30 am and 5:30 pm up until Monday, October 21.

Guidelines:

- Kids costumes sizes 0-12 will be accepted.
- Sizes should be clearly marked.
- Costumes should be complete and must be clean, with no stains, rips or tears (unless part of the costume).
- Accessories are also welcome!

...and Shop!

This year the costume sale will be held the same night as the Scholastic Book Sale! Come to CP Smith on **Wednesday, October 23rd between 6-8 pm** to shop for gently used, low cost (\$3-5) costumes.

- All proceeds will benefit the CP Smith PTO.
- Due to limited dressing areas, please dress kids ready for public try-ons.
- Refreshments will also be available for sale.
- Leftover costumes will be donated to Goodwill.

Contact: Amy Livingston at amyliv22@gmail.com or 355-4514



Safe Routes to School Announcement

October 9 is International Walk to School Day. Schools and Kids from all over the world will be walking and biking to school. Join in the fun for a special day and prize when you arrive at school.

Raising Readers

Our annual Book Fair will be coming soon, and we're excited about this opportunity to put books in the hands of children. We thank our P.T.O. for organizing this event for us and coordinating all the details with Scholastic Books Inc.

We'd like to share the following information from Scholastic Books Inc. about how to turn children into avid, life-long readers, who read for both knowledge and enjoyment:

I Read to You (Parent to Child)

Find a special time and place to read to your child. Pick the best time for both of you to read together for 20 minutes every day.

Find a story that you and your child will love to read. Keep your child interested in the story by reading it with emotion.

Read the whole story first if it is a picture book. If you are reading a chapter book, decide how many chapters you will read each day.

When you begin to read a new story, look at the cover, read the title of the story, and show your child where the author's name is located.

Do a brief picture-walk through the story looking quickly at each of the pictures in the book. Ask your child, "What do you think this story is going to be about?"

Use your pointer finger to walk through the words as you read along.

You Read to Me (Child to Parent)

Although it's wonderful when your child is able to read on her/his own, continue to advocate for your child to read at least 20 minutes a day and read aloud together too.

You will need to know your child's independent reading level so she can choose "right-fit" books to read alone. You may ask your child's teacher to identify her/his independent reading level.

Easy books will continue to help your child read fluently, learn more about vocabulary words, and help her/him with comprehension strategies.

We Read Together

Find a comfortable place to read together for about 20 minutes every day. Try to find a consistent time to do the reading with your child. It will become a wonderful habit and family ritual.

Keep the read-together a fun experience for the whole family. You will know when your child gets tired and you need to take over.