

SMITH TIMES

Friday, October 16, 2015

Volume 24, Number 7

The Principal's Corner

Greetings!

We welcome to our school community Mrs. Maureen Ketcham, who will be the substitute teacher for Ms. Chris Souliere during her absence. (She is undergoing knee replacement surgery and hopes to return in the winter or spring.) Mrs. Ketcham has an extensive background in teaching Physical Education, and we are delighted to have her with us.

Thank you so much for participating in conferences with your children's teachers. These sessions are vital for maintaining contact with each other on behalf of your children. If you ever have questions or concerns about your children's education or issues or situations taking place at school, please do not hesitate to contact your children's teachers and/or me. Telephone calls are fine, but our email addresses follow the pattern of the first letter of the person's first name followed by the first seven letters of his or her last name, followed by @bsdvt.org. (For example, my email address is tfleury@bsdvt.org and Mrs. Desautels' is tdesaute@bsdvt.org.)

Would you like a summary of the grade-level expectations for your children? If so, please help yourselves to copies of them from the information kiosk in the lobby. There is a separate document for each grade level.

During October, students will continue to receive one ticket for each book they read (or have read to them) and bring in to talk to me about. In order to encourage student visits to our wonderful city library, the Fletcher Free Library on College Street, students will receive two tickets for each book checked out from that library and read and brought to me. For more information about the Fletcher Free Library, please pick up a copy of their monthly newsletter/calendar from the kiosk in our lobby.

Our food pantry is open every Friday afternoon at dismissal time. (On weeks in which there is no school on Friday, it is open on the last school day of that week.) Parents/guardians are invited to take what they need from this table. Donations of nonperishable items to the food pantry may be dropped off at the main office at any time.

Our community partner, the Heineberg Community Center, is sponsoring a luncheon for grandparents (and great-grandparents!) and their grandchildren or great-grandchildren. The luncheon will take place on Thursday, October 29th at 11:45 a.m. at the center. Please pick up from the kiosk in the lobby a permission form if you would like your children to participate in this special event with their grandparents and/or great-grandparents. (Forms are also available at the H.C.C.) On October 21st, we will need to give the center the number of those who will be attending, so please return the completed form to school on or before that date. Grandparents/great-grandparents will be asked to pick up children at the school at 11:30 a.m., drive or walk together over to the center and then return to school after the luncheon is over. For more information about the luncheon, please contact the school at 864-8479. The lunch is free of charge for all participants.

Donations to the Bannurn School in Mae Chaem, Thailand are still being accepted, so that they may carry out much-needed repairs and renovations, including the installation of a girls' bathroom. If you would like to donate, please send a check to project organizer Bill Williams at this address: 248 Jedware Circle, Swanton, VT 05488. (You may also drop off donations at the main office, and I will mail them to Mr. Williams.) You may email him with questions at yunnanvt@comcast.net. Many thanks for your generosity.



On Saturday, volunteers from across the city (organized by the district's Food Service Department) will spruce up our orchard and Hunt School's gardens and prepare them for winter.

If you'd like to help, please stop by and join us. The crew will be here from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Thanks for all you are doing—and will do—to make our school community one of safety, respect, and responsibility for all who come through our doors.

Calendar of Events



10/17: Garden Volunteer Day
(10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.) -- Orchard

10/19: P.T.O. Meeting/Dinner
(5:30-7:00 p.m.) -- Library

10/29: Grandparent Luncheon at
the Heineberg Community Center
(Meet at Smith at 11:30 a.m.)

10/30: Community Connection Breakfast
(8:00 a.m.) -- Cafeteria/Tour of Building

10/30: Halloween Family Fun Night
(6:00-8:00 p.m.)

11/2: Book Fair Week Begins

11/4: Book Fair Family Night
(5:30-7:30 p.m.) -- Library

11/9: P.T.O. Meeting/Dinner
(5:30-7:00 p.m.) -- Library

11/20: First Trimester Report Cards Distributed
to Students

News from Around the School



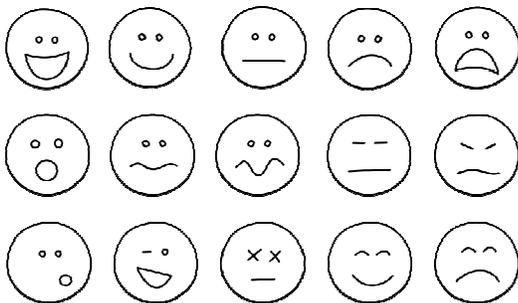
Mrs. Sharon Hayes, our school Librarian, is interested in building up our collection of magazines and other periodicals for student use. If you have copies of any of the following magazines in good, readable condition, please drop them off at the main office. We are looking for: Ranger Rick, National Geographic Kids, Zoo Books, Scooby Doo, Junior Baseball, Sports Illustrated, Dynamath, Your Big Backyard, and Discovery Girls. Many thanks for your generosity.

Our Grade 2 classes visited the Shelburne Museum this week. It is so good to have our students participate in programs at one of the finest museums in the area.

Our Grade 4 students recently visited the Sailing Center, learning a great deal about Science and our wonderful local treasure, Lake Champlain.

Our Grade 5 students are participating in the StarBase Program, sponsored by the Vermont Air National Guard. I have been fortunate to attend a few working sessions with students and am deeply impressed with the Science, Math, and collaborative skills embedded into this program.

The Burlington School District is piloting the Reading Plus program in Grades 4 and 5 classrooms across the district. Reading Plus is a research-based intervention for supporting students with effective silent reading strategies. It is already in place in our district high school and middle schools. All students in Grades 4 and 5 are being assessed and approximately half will use the program during part of their Literacy time. Once sufficient data has been gathered about the implementation, the district may decide to move toward full use of the program later in the school year.



News from the Guidance Office

As we settle into another year of learning, growing and connecting, students have been practicing mindfulness exercises to help bring focus and relaxation into their life. Over the past month we have been revisiting feelings, how to identify them in ourselves and others, where feelings come from and how to manage strong feelings. Daily lives are very busy for children and adults, we don't often take the time, or feel that we have time to just be present. We have practiced focusing attention on what is happening in the moment. This has been explored through different senses, listening, seeing, tasting, feeling, non-judgmental observation and always using our breath as an anchor. We have discussed that thoughts can linger in the past, focus on the present or project into the future. When we are able to keep our thoughts present, it can help us to be focused and relaxed. Some examples of mindful focus practice include, focusing our thoughts on the breath entering and exiting the body, focusing on a single object (rock/pebble) and noticing its features, closing our eyes and listening to the sound of an object and trying to guess what that object is. For mindfulness relaxation practice some students have had the opportunity to be led through a body scan, which is holding and releasing tension in different body parts, progressing from head to toe. I will share more resources for families in next week's newsletter.