

Friday Notes

November 6, 2009

Dates to remember:

November 11th – Middle School Awareness Night 6:30pm
November 12th – H1N1 Flu Clinic **RESCHEDULED DATE** – 3:30pm -5:30pm
November 13th – School Picture Re-take day
November 20th - 12pm-1pm - WWS Thanksgiving Feast at the Church
November 23rd – 12pm-1pm - WCS Thanksgiving Feast
November 23rd – 12-1pm – North Wing Thanksgiving Feast at the Fire Station
November 24th – No School - Parent Teacher Conferences
November 25-27th – No School – Thanksgiving Break



HEALTH NEWS

The H1N1 flu clinic scheduled for Monday November 9th has been postponed. **The new clinic date is Thursday, November 12th from 3:30 until 5:30.** Due to the limited amount of vaccine that I will be receiving, I will only be able to vaccinate the students that I have already received consent forms on. In fact, consent forms that were sent in this week have been placed on a waiting list due to potential vaccine availability. The clinic has been purposely scheduled for after school hours so that you can attend with your child. For planning purposes, anyone that receives an immunization is required to stay after and wait for an additional 20 minutes to make sure there is no reaction that requires medical attention. There are many students signed up to receive the vaccine so I ask in advance for your patience if you have to wait prior to being immunized. Please call Jen Burke with any questions or concerns.

We have started to see the H1N1 flu in our school community. Most children that have “flu like symptoms,” are not formally being diagnosed with the H1N1 at the doctor’s office unless there is an underlying medical condition, or the child is severely ill. Flu like symptoms are considered to be cough, fever, sore throat, nasal congestion, muscle aches, and possibly stomach upset with diarrhea. You do not have to have all of these symptoms to be considered as having the flu. If your child has a fever with any of the above symptoms, please keep him or her home from school. Any child that is sent home during the school day with a fever must be 24 hours free of a fever without the aid Tylenol or Motrin before returning to school. At this point the school district has encouraged all schools to stay open even if this flu is present. Closing schools has not been proven to be highly effective in stopping the transmission of this virus. Naturally this will be looked at closer if there is a high percentage of student/staff absenteeism.

Health classes will be starting the week of November 9th with grades 3-6. Jon Schottland will be working with grades 5-6 and I will be working with grades 3-4 doing body systems.

The Vermont Kids Against Tobacco (VKAT) group will be starting up again in a few weeks. This is a group of 5th and 6th graders that learn all about the effects of tobacco on the body and then teach the younger grades what they have learned. The younger students love to have the older kids come in and talk to them and really seem to look up to them as positive role models. Our group has a training in Rutland on November 13th to learn all the necessary information to be able to teach our peers. We will keep you posted on our upcoming activities.

Kindergarten Friday Notes

Last week we walked to the fire station to deliver a thank you book in which each child from both kindergarten rooms wrote a sentence about their favorite part of the trip and then drew a picture to go with the sentence. Cole Streeter graciously read each child’s page aloud and the children were thrilled. As we walked home from the fire station we



saw our neighbor, Mr. Aiken in his yard. We stopped to meet him and to chat for a bit. We enjoyed singing one of our songs for him –and he seemed to enjoy it too!

Once a day we draw one of the names from our room to play “Getting to Know You.” When a child’s name is drawn, they lead the class in a cheer to spell their name. Then the rest of the class interviews the child of the day to learn more about them. Some of the questions we have asked are: What is your favorite book? How many people are in your family? Do you have any pets? What do you love to eat? It’s a great way to learn a bit more about each other and also to continue our work of learning letter names and sounds while making connections between each other’s names.

Thank you to the families that were able to come to Open House, it was a well-attended event. The students took such pride in making sure the room was clean before you arrived and they clearly enjoyed showing you what we have been doing at school.

North Wing News



Third and fourth graders participated in their last Pinnacle hike of the season this week. Fourth graders looked at changes in nature. Third graders looked at weather and clouds. All enjoyed being out in our “outdoor classroom.” We are looking forward to two hikes in the Spring.

The culmination of the third and fourth grade Raptor Study was celebrated with a trip to VINS (Vermont Institute of Natural Science) in Quechee, Vermont. Students had the opportunity to see owls, hawks and falcons up close and personal. Back in the classroom, they had the opportunity to dissect owl pellets, discovering many different bones, some fur and a few feathers. They used a bone chart to sort the bones.

First graders accompanied by the second graders, visited Stonewall Farms last month. Among other things, they went on a wagon ride, made cider, and met Great Pumpkin who shared the Life Cycle of a Pumpkin with them. We look forward to visit again in the Spring to learn about Maple Sugaring.

North Wing Second Graders have enjoyed studying about Autumn and decorating our classroom as The Harvest Room for Open House. We are very happy that every family made it to school to see the results. We read a variety of books and did some field observations around our homes and school. We also learned about Seed Movement, how seeds get from place to place. Each student created a poster of seeds they discovered around their homes. The second graders have also been busy writing and visiting other classes in the school to read their finished books.

The North Wing Community Thanksgiving will be on Monday, November 23rd at the Fire Station at noon. Please be sure to return the form to let us know how many people are coming and what you are able to contribute for our feast.

East Wing News

The East Wing first through fourths have been busy putting their garden to bed for the winter. In teams they took down signs, stakes and sunflowers after singing a garden lullabye together. The students are beginning to take a closer look at sunflower seeds and speculating about germination. These activities support their Vermont state science standards.

Many thanks to Hayden Collin's family and Virginia Ware's family for donations of garlic and horse manure. Today students planted next year's garlic.

A reminder that there is no East Wing parent meeting scheduled for November. We'll look forward to seeing you at parent conferences and at the Thanksgiving celebration this month!



Sixth Grade News

The sixth grade has been working quite well in writing. They have done original narratives and have done a response to literature after reading Tuck Everlasting. This is made easier with the use of our new notebook computers. Children have more time to edit, revise and create on their computer. Students look forward each day to continue reading their self-selective book. We will begin literature circles next week and we will do some historic research. Many students are trying to read all the DCF books and have succeeded. We are continuing our look at different kinds of maps.

We are still actively involved in the cell project. Students are moving from the research phase to reports and presentation phase. The students have made excellent use of time and remain enthusiastic. I can't wait to see the final results. We are finishing up unit two in Everyday Math with a unit exam to come sometime next week.

Many thanks to the parents who helped with the Halloween festivities and for those who sent in treats. The children had a great afternoon.

The Westminster West School News:

The Westminster West first and second graders have been focusing on seeds as we put our garden to bed for winter. We did some seed saving with our gardening teachers and look forward to planting the beautiful Chester beans next year. We are learning about pollination, germination and will start focusing on seed dispersal. We have also begun to learn about colonial times, in preparation for our annual community Thanksgiving at the West Church. Now that soccer season has ended, the children are starting some homework. They bring a packet home on Mondays and return it on Fridays. They also bring books home each night with the goal of becoming lifelong readers!

The third and fourth graders are wrapping up our local history unit, and we have learned so much from our cemetery and census research, stories from Jessie Haas, our visit to Town Hall, and more. We're currently writing imaginative narratives, using maps to organize our work and practicing editing techniques. The fourth graders have finished a math unit on statistics and data collection, and they are now focusing on multiplication. The third graders have been working on multi-digit addition, and they are now focusing on multi-digit subtraction with regrouping (or trading).

There are lots of upcoming events:

This Saturday, November 7th, we will have a West School Playground Clean-up Day from 9:30 am to noon. Kids are welcome; please help us clear out the edge of the woods, put the garden to bed, and more.

Our next Westminster West PTO meeting is Tuesday, November 10th from 6:30 – 7:30 pm. Childcare is available. Please come and join our active team of parents and teachers working together to support our students.



The Westminster West Community Thanksgiving will be on Friday, November 20th at the Church at noon. Please be sure to return the form to let us know how many people are coming and what you are able to contribute for our feast.



You're Invited to our Thanksgiving Feast

Monday, November 23, 2009 from 12-1pm

What's on the Menu?

Chef Kim & Mary will grace us with turkey, rolls, cider, milk and paper products

Families are welcome to contribute

Kindergarten families - stuffing

East Wing families - pies

5th grade families - cranberry and fruit salads

6th grade families - green beans and green salads

Please look for the sign up forms to come home in the near future!

Afterschool Updates

The 4th annual **FUN RUN** was held this past Wednesday. It was a brisk November afternoon, nearly perfect conditions for the 80 students, 25 parents and 20 staff who walked or ran multiple 1/4 mile loops or ventured into Evan's Woods. A huge thank you to parents and staff who helped make this event such a success. Look for another FUN RUN in the spring and it has been suggested that we try a snowshoe event. Let me know if that is of interest.

Thursday Clubs will begin on Nov. 12. These will be offered to all students regularly attending Afterschool on Thursdays. The first session will run for 5 weeks, with a new session starting in Jan. The goal of **Thursday Clubs** is to engage students in enrichment experiences that develop one or more of the following essential skills: critical thinking and problem solving, creativity and innovation, or communication and collaboration. Club offerings this session include: Knitting, Elementary Physics, Books and More, Animal Creations, Chess, Afterschool Newspaper, Big Brothers/Big Sisters (currently full) and Weaving.

Homework Help for 5/6 students is every Tuesday and Thursday from 3:00-4:30. Also, on Tuesdays all K-4 students will have Homework Help from 3:30-4:00.

Westminster Afterschool can always use volunteers. Contact Elaine at 722-3241 with questions.

Garden News!

Many thanks to our wonderful community farmers, Paul Harlow, Mike Collins, Brandon Allen and John Cohen. They tilled our all school garden this week!

Early Childhood News

Early Childhood Open Gym for Toddlers & Preschoolers, Monday mornings, 8:30am-9:45am beginning November 2nd.

Open House Days at Saxtons River Montessori School - The Saxtons River Montessori School invites parents of prospective preschoolers to visit the classroom in session and learn how the unique environment sparks a child's curiosity. Open House Days are scheduled the first Thursday of the month, beginning November 5th. Visiting time is from 9:15 to 10:00 AM. All visits must be scheduled in advance. To schedule a visit, please call Becky at 869-3349.

Community-School Liaison

We were recently able to fill the position of "community-school liaison" by hiring Anne Briccetti. Many of you know Anne from her work as our Early Education Outreach Coordinator. She will build on this work by assisting families in various ways - from connecting to community services to working with school personnel to meet the needs of Westminster families to enhance the success of children. You can access her services by calling the Center School or visit her in the Family Resource room on Thursday mornings, 9:30-11:30am.

Parent Volunteers to host morning coffees

The Tuesday morning coffees for parents have been a great success! If you are willing to host a coffee on a Tuesday morning from 8 am -9am please sign up on the calendar posted on the door of the Parent Resource room. You bring the baked goods to the school we'll supply the coffee!

The Brattleboro Museum & Art Center invites LEGO fans of all ages to take part in its Second Annual LEGO Contest & Awards Ceremony! Design and build an original LEGO structure according to contest guidelines, or simply come view the entries on display at BMAC November 13-16. Prizes for artistry, originality, and architectural design will be awarded in six age groups at an Awards Ceremony on November 13 at 5:30 p.m. For more information, contest guidelines, and entry forms, please visit www.brattleboromuseum.org, or call 802-257-0124.