

# February

## Sandown North News

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From the desk of  
**Jo-Ann K. Georgian, Principal**

During this winter season, our Star Quest Universal and Target teams are analyzing our data and making decisions to help our children be successful. This week our roll-out focused on cafeteria behaviors. We are teaching the children how to most effectively get through the lunch lines, how to make decisions and communicate so that the cafeteria staff can hear their requests. If we can help the line to move more quickly, then the children will have more time to eat. Good manners in the cafeteria will, of course, be expected and acknowledged. We encourage the children to use restaurant manners so all can enjoy their lunchtime together.

One of our new students, Cole Robinson, moved to Sandown

from another state recently. In a conversation with him, he shared with me how glad he was to be able to go to school at Sandown North. When asked to elaborate he said, "I have learned to be respectful of my classmates. My classmates here raise their hands and they don't use nasty words. They're nice and working as a team works a lot better. You know that what I'm learning really stays with me because it has taught me to be more respectful of my mom at home." The voice of the children is vitally important to us as we decide what we need to focus on to help all children feel safe and valued. I appreciate Cole's willingness to talk honestly with me and for granting me permission to share his statements with you.



Our Leadership team, as well as our grade level Professional Learning Communities, are focusing their work on instructing and learning. If a child needs additional academic or behavioral supports

to be successful, then a system is in place to provide interventions. Classroom teachers will be informing you about the plan. Some interventions are needed for a very brief period of time, basically the time needed to reinforce and practice a particular skill. In other cases, the period of time may be a bit longer. If the team determines that the plan needs to be tweaked to accelerate the progress, then that will occur. On some occasions, we will invite parents in to a meeting to gather more information and to work together to develop a plan. When parents and school staff work closely together, the children really benefit. Our staff members work within their pods and within their grade level teams to explore ways to help all children be successful, to “challenge all learners to succeed in a respectful environment”, our agreed upon mission.

Our kindergarten and first grade teachers are working with Mary Ellen Giacobbe, an expert on writing and literacy development. She, along with Martha Horn, authored Talking, Drawing, Writing: Lessons for Our Youngest Writers. She teaches

and works directly with the students in our district while the teachers observe, and then the group meets to discuss the lessons and what they observed. Having a common frame of reference allows for richer, deeper conversation and gives the participants a chance to plan next steps for their students. This has been a wonderful opportunity for our teachers to learn while working with the same grade level teachers from the other schools in our district. Hearing what others are thinking and then sharing ideas helps all members to grow and to be more skilled educators.

## Curriculum News

*Focus on Professional Learning Communities*



When my children have a day off from school, or mention that their teachers attend meetings during the school day, I often wonder “What is the school district focusing on”? Maybe

some of you wonder that too. Here is a snap shot of what the Sandown North staff is working on this year.

For the past several months, our school community has been participating in both grade level and district level *Professional Learning Communities (PLC's)*. This term was originally coined by Richard DuFour and Robert Eaker to describe conversations between staff members that center around student learning. Over the past decade, districts across our country have found this model to be very effective in supporting student achievement. At Sandown North, professional and support staff focus on the students at one grade level. Each grade level PLC meets once a week to talk about learning; grade level pods (2 teaching teams working together), meet additionally throughout the week. We work together to discuss achievement and how to offer intervention opportunities to students who need additional practice. We collect information on student progress and use that data to inform our instruction. We have found that these collaborative conversations make our lessons richer, and we are able to target interventions that

are meaningful to students. During these weekly meetings, your children are learning in a really fun way. They are attending an enrichment activity block that enhances classroom curriculum. This block is taught by Mr. Melle, Mrs. St. Hilarie, Mrs. McLaughlin, Mrs. Lenihan, Mrs. Quigley, Mrs. DeCristofaro, and Mrs. Stafford.



The Timberlane Regional School District and Sandown North share a common vision and goal for children. At the district level, our staff meets on professional development days and early release days with teachers at the same grade level from other schools. This has allowed us to discuss and revise the language arts curriculum, think about instructional approaches, and build richer consistencies in our programming. Our conversations are always centered around the students and how we can improve their education. The meetings are very productive and we learn a lot from each other.

Implementing PLC's has been exciting, and has given us an opportunity to have detailed conversations about student learning. If you should have any questions, please feel free to give me a call.

Happy February!

*Patrice L. Liff, Assistant Principal*



## News from Everyday Mathematics

Kathy Fowler  
Elementary Math Coach

The publisher of Everyday Math, Wright Group, has a new webpage full of information for parents called the Everyday Mathematics Parent Connection: [https://www.wrightgroup.com/parent\\_connection/index.html](https://www.wrightgroup.com/parent_connection/index.html).

There are eight links on the page: About EM, Tips and Activities, Success Stories, Wright Group/McGraw-Hill, U

niversity of Chicago School Mathematics project (UCSMP), NCTM (National Council of Teachers of Mathematics), Everyday Mathematics Success, and Contact Us.

In the interest of going green, we are offering parents the Family Letters online. At the website for your child's grade, you can view and print out the letters for each unit. If you prefer to receive a hardcopy, please let your child's teacher know.

Here are the links for each grade:

Kindergarten

[https://www.wrightgroup.com/suport\\_info.html?sid=256](https://www.wrightgroup.com/suport_info.html?sid=256)

First grade

[https://www.wrightgroup.com/suport\\_info.html?sid=258](https://www.wrightgroup.com/suport_info.html?sid=258)

Second grade

[https://www.wrightgroup.com/suport\\_info.html?sid=260](https://www.wrightgroup.com/suport_info.html?sid=260)

Third grade

[https://www.wrightgroup.com/suport\\_info.html?sid=262](https://www.wrightgroup.com/suport_info.html?sid=262)

Fourth grade

[https://www.wrightgroup.com/suport\\_info.html?sid=264](https://www.wrightgroup.com/suport_info.html?sid=264)

Fifth grade

[https://www.wrightgroup.com/suport\\_info.html?sid=266](https://www.wrightgroup.com/suport_info.html?sid=266)

## FROM THE SCHOOL COUNSELOR

During my conversations with children, they often tell me about the latest video game they bought. For Christmas and birthdays so many of the children want electronic items, such as Nintendo DS, Xboxes, Play Stations and Wii games. One of the concerns I often read about on various school counseling websites and journals is video game violence and I feel it is important information that should be shared with parents.



As many of you know, video games are rated for age appropriateness. The ratings generally fall into several categories and are labeled differently depending on the company. For instance, Play Station rates its games in the following way: "EC" stands for Early Childhood and has no

material that a parent would find inappropriate. "E" stands for "appropriate for Everyone", "T" stands for "appropriate for teens and older" and "M" ratings stand for "Mature" and are for persons ages 17 and older. "AO" stands for Adults Only, for ages 18 and older. The American Psychological Association has found 3 major effects of watching violence either on television or video games. Children who watch violence on TV or play violent video games may become less sensitive to the pain and suffering of others. They also can become more afraid and fearful of the world around them. Lastly, these children are more likely to exhibit aggressive and cruel behavior towards others.

If you are buying video games for your child please take note of which games you are purchasing. If your child requests a specific game, find out about its contents. On the game package there is a rating symbol which suggests age appropriateness but also be sure to read the content description which indicates why a game was given that particular rating. Just as you need to monitor your child's TV viewing, you also need to know what video games they

are playing. One helpful website is put out by the Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB). This board applies and enforces ratings for video games. It will give you the most up to date list of video game ratings and content descriptors. The web address is [www.esrb.org](http://www.esrb.org). If you have any questions/concerns or would like more information, please give me a call.

Nancy Stafford, SchoolCounselor  
887-8505 x317

## Physical Education



The first and second grade Physical Education activities for the first trimester included games such as Tag Games in which locomotor skills are

learned and practiced. Spatial awareness, including both general and personal space, as well as throwing and catching games, are practiced. Soccer lead-up games in which soccer skills such as dribbling, trapping, passing and kicking on goal are learned and practiced as well as some exposure to modified team play. Football lead-up games in which football skills such as passing, catching, hiking, kicking and punting are learned and have been practiced. The trimester concluded with Fitness activities such as Parachute play in which heart rate and muscles were discussed.

The third grade students participated in the same units as the first and second grade students but their activities were geared for their age group and they expected to perform skills at a more proficient level than the first and second graders.

The first and second grade Physical Education activities for the second trimester include the second half of our Fitness Unit with Cargo Net, Climbing Rope, Pillo Polo Floor Hockey. Basketball lead-up games in which passing, dribbling and shooting

skills are practiced. A Winter Obstacle Course and Volleyball lead-up games in which passes, serving and setting skills are learned and practiced along with an introduction to several key volleyball rules and procedures.

Second trimester activities for third grade students include a continuation of Fitness activities such as Cargo Net, Climbing Rope, Scooter Hockey, Pillo Polo Floor Hockey, basketball games in which the basketball skills of passing, dribbling and shooting are learned and practiced, Omniken(A Canadian-based Team game), Winter Obstacle Course and Volleyball games in which volleyball skills including passing, serving and setting are learned and practiced. Third graders also have a greater exposure to the actual games, rules, team play etc., than first and second graders do and are expected to perform at a more proficient level of skill than the first and second graders.

Our annual 🏠 Jumprope for Heart Event is scheduled to take place on Thursday, February 12, 2009 from 3:00 PM -5:00 PM in our School Gym with a snow date of Thursday, February 19, 2009.



## Kindergarten 2009 - 2010



Registration for incoming kindergarten students has begun! If you have a child or know of a child who will be 5 years old by September 30, 2009, please call the office.






## New Students Grade 1 🌟 2009 - 2010

Incoming grade 1 children *not* currently enrolled in kindergarten at Sandown North please call the office to register your child.

# Sandown North Elementary

## February, 2009



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2 Monday Morning Meeting 9:10 am	3	4	5 Deliberative Session 7pm PAC	6	7
8	9 Monday Morning Meeting 9:10 am	10 Early release 1:10pm NO K class	11	12 Jumprope For Heart  	13	14  Happy Valentines Day! 
15	16 Monday Morning Meeting 9:10 am	17	18	19 If cancelled 2/12 Make-up for Jumprope For Heart	20	21
22	23 <b>WINTER</b> Vacation 	24 Vacation	25 Vacation	26 Vacation	27 Vacation	28

March 2 – 6 Read Across America Week

