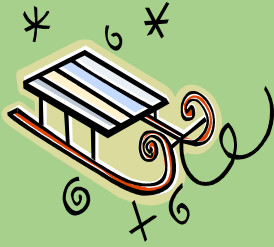
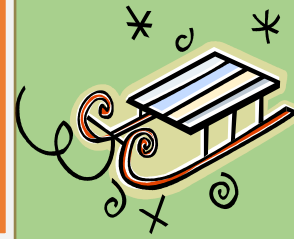


DECEMBER 2014



**SANDOWN
NORTH
ELEMENTARY**



NEWSLETTER



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



I hope you had a wonderful Thanksgiving and that you will enjoy this holiday season. Our students are certainly showing their excitement which puts smiles on all our faces. We keep the routines and schedules the same with just a few changes as we get closer to the break. It is important for the children to have a predictable routine for learning to continue. We can incorporate some of the holiday fun in

their math and in their writing, of course, while continuing on with the teaching and learning of important skills and concepts.

As you heard at parent teacher conferences, we are administering the STAR Early Literacy or Reading, as well as STAR Math, to all of our students three times a year. They took the benchmark assessment in September and will be taking it again in January to look at growth. Our Leadership Team will be looking at the data for trends, successes, and areas of growth for us as a school. Our Target team will be looking at the information regarding students who are receiving interventions; we will determine if we are providing the correct intervention to maximize growth. Our Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) at the grade level will look at their students to determine groupings and supports needed for their individual students. The conversations are exciting; they are based on the data and the needs of our students. The information we get from STAR is valid and reliable but is one piece of

information. Classroom performance and teacher observations are critically important to the whole picture of how the student is learning. If the assessment and classroom performance do not match, we talk about it and determine the best way to gather more information. Classroom teachers will explain to you what they are seeing and get input from you as well as we all work to move our students along the growth continuum. The information we receive from the testing shows us what students know and what they are ready to learn next so we can target our instruction and practice, as well as consider our interventions. You will receive the Parent Report in January that you heard about at your conference. If you have questions or would like to discuss it further, your child's teacher is always happy to do so.

In addition to academic data, our teams look at our School-Wide Information Systems (SWIS) data to see trends, successes, and needed areas of focus for the school population as a whole and then for individual students. As you know, we take note of behaviors that interfere with learning, behaviors that we need to teach, reinforce, and acknowledge when the students are putting them into practice. The data shows us that we have a peak in minor disruptive behaviors closer to 3:00. Children are tired at that time of day and many are anticipating the bus ride. To respond to the data, Nancy Stafford, School Counselor, and Terry Kellaway,

Special Educator, have looked at our bus dismissal procedures and conferred with staff about necessary changes. We are hoping that what we have put in place will help the children to feel more relaxed and will help expedite the dismissal process. We collect the data to give us an accurate picture of needed instruction and supports.



As we enter this fun season, we know that our students are excited and may need additional movement and breaks to be able to sustain their attention. Please try to keep a scheduled bedtime to help their bodies recover. All research I have read strongly suggests turning off electronic devices at least an hour before bed. Reading books in bed often helps a child unwind and have a more restful sleep.



I wish you a very happy holiday season and hope to see many of you at the PTA Auction this Friday. The event begins at 6:00 and free babysitting is available. I want to take this opportunity to thank Linda Meehan from Playmates Learning

Center for providing this service, making it possible for families to attend.



From the School Counselor:

During the month of December I will be visiting the K-3 classrooms and talking with the children about feelings and empathy. December is such a hectic time for families. Besides all the regular activities it seems that there are a lot of additional happenings this time of year. It can be especially tricky for children as their routines might be changed, bedtimes may be later, relatives may be visiting or your family may be travelling. Using this month to talk about feelings may give your child additional strategies to use when feeling sad or overwhelmed. Students who accurately identify emotions tend to be less aggressive, more accepted by peers and are able to show better social skills. In addition, research shows that students who have a good understanding of their feelings do better academically. In the lessons, we will be looking at recognizing feelings within ourselves and others and paying attention to the physical clues that help us to see how

others may be feeling. When students are able to recognize feelings in others they are more likely to show empathy.

I also wanted to let parents know that I will be sending home letters regarding attendance and tardies. If your child has been absent or tardy more than 5 days we need to inform you of that. I realize many of you are aware of the number of days and the absences may be due to illness or vacation; nevertheless, the district is asking the school counselors to be in touch with parents. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns around your child's attendance or tardies.

Nancy Stafford

School Counselor, 887-8505 x317



Enrichment News, December 2014

Sandown North is organizing our 2015 SPARKS teams. SPARKS is an extracurricular research and presentation program for students in grades 3-5. Teams of eight students will meet with coaches once each week between March 2nd and April 23rd. A competition and celebration will be held in early May.

SPARKS promotes critical thinking, problem-solving and teamwork skills

through investigative group challenges that require reading, discussion, planning, and production. The 2015 SPARKS challenge will be announced in January. Team members will work together to create a presentation that will be evaluated based on content, collaboration, and originality. SPARKS teams are allowed to meet for up to ten hours during the season. During that time students will create a presentation that lasts no more than ten minutes from stage call to the final bow. Presentation time includes unpacking, set-up, performance, pack-up, and interview questions. The content, performance, and time challenges add up to an exciting completion day!

We are not accepting requests for team members until January, but we are ready to enroll coaches. If you would like to coach, please email Justin Bentley-Melle (Justin.Bentley-Melle@timberlane.net) with your name, phone number and the day and time you plan to schedule for your team practices. Thanks for considering!



Music news

Yee ha! The music classes enjoyed the cowboy-themed songs and activities the week before Thanksgiving. Students moved to "Hoedown" by Aaron Copland and sang cowboy songs around the

"campfire." After these activities, they listened to the story of *Cowpoke Clyde and Dirty Dawg* by Lori Mortensen and Michael Allen Austin, one of the Ladybug Award books. This humorous tale is about a cowboy who attempts to give his dog a bath.

The string classes are busy preparing repertoire for the Sandown Winter Concert on **Tuesday, January 13 at 7:00 PM at the PAC**. They will perform with the Sandown Central string classes. Central's band and chorus will also participate in this concert. Encourage your child to perform a few pieces for visiting friends and relatives! The Wednesday afternoon cello class recently performed at Monday Morning Meeting. Congratulations to performers Kaitlyn Reynolds, Julia Reynolds, Kaylee Bloomfield, and Gracen Lajoie on a job well-done 😊



ART ROOM NEWS

First grade artists used shapes and lines to draw and paint a turkey. They are excited for Thanksgiving!



ENJOY YOUR HOLIDAYS!

