

December 7, 2018 Vol. 4

Every Student, Every Day!

Parents, Families, Friends, and Educators Working Together on Behalf of Our Children!

Building the Perfect Snowman



It's a great time for recess in Vermont! The last few weeks have given our children just the right kind of snow to engage in early engineering skills. From one corner of our huge, inviting play yard to the other, children worked together to build a multitude of snow forts and many, many snowmen! The snowballs grew larger and larger as children rolled them, and you could hear groups of two children yelling to another child or two to come over, help them roll, and lift those heavy snowballs one on top of the other. What great planning, creating, and teamwork!

Imaginations were used, too. A couple of children were overheard wondering what the night would bring when the snowmen would "come alive and get to use the snow forts!"

Self Portraits by First Graders



First graders created mixed media self-portraits in art class with art teacher, Nicole Graves, over the course of three weeks. During the creative process, students looked at the work of *Pablo Picasso* and *Frida Kahlo* for inspiration and read the book *My Many Colored Days* by Dr. Seuss.

Once the portraits were completed, students wrote about themselves back in the classroom. We share two portraits here, along with student writing done in Mrs. O'Rourke's classroom:

Meet first grader, Durell (see above): *My name is Durell. I am 7 years old. I like to play video games. My favorite color is red. I am learning how to read.*

Meet first grader, Capri: *My name is Capri. I am 7 years old. I like to do things with my family. I am learning how to read.*



"I'm Not a Math Person!"

You may have heard someone say this, or maybe you have said this about yourself. The truth, however, is that there is no truth to this idea. People are not born with a fixed ability to learn anything, including math. Everyone can learn math, and one of the most important factors in students' success in math is the belief that "I can get better at this. I can get smarter."

How can we help our children with math?

Tell them that we believe in their ability to learn math. If they don't understand something, say they don't know it YET. This lets them know that we believe that they can and will learn it.

Make math meaningful. Find daily opportunities to ask our children to help solve math problems. For example, "We have 4 apples at home and we need 8 to make a pie. How many more apples do we need to buy?"

Let them struggle with math and help them to see the struggle as brain exercise. Just as we push our bodies to get stronger or faster, we need to push our brains to get smarter. Children need to learn to see mistakes as learning opportunities. If allowed to struggle a little, children will learn that effort pays off and they will enjoy the results. "Now I get it!" "Yes, I figured it out!"

We want our children to be *thinkers*, not *answer-getters*.

Talk to children about math. When your child brings math work home from school, ask them to explain it to you. When your child helps you to solve a math problem at home, ask how they solved it. Children can show their thinking by telling you, drawing a picture of it, or using things to show it. (For example, a child may use pennies to show how they solved the apple problem.)

Have fun doing math with your child!

(submitted by Kathy Corbo, NW Interventionist and Vermont Mathematics Institute Graduate)



Second Graders in Concert

What a beautiful concert! Our second graders showcased their musical talents and musical skills learned in a lovely concert on November 14th. Many thanks to our music teacher, Jennifer Hart, for giving children this opportunity! And thank you to Nicole Graves and second graders for giving us a thematic backdrop for the evening concert.

Come Join the Parent/Teacher Collaborative!

Our Parent/Teacher Collaborative (PTC) holds its next meeting on Wednesday, December 12th, from 6:30 pm - 7:30 pm in the NW art & music room. Please join us! When parents and educators work together, our children benefit. Our primary focus for this meeting will be on our upcoming "Make it/ Take it" event. Snacks will be available. All are welcome!



Therapy Dogs Visit Northwest

Northwest students look forward to very special visitors each month: therapy dogs! These dogs come to us with a special purpose -- to provide a relaxed atmosphere where students may practice their reading skills. Often times, children feel anxious or self-conscious when reading in front of classmates. However, when reading aloud to a dog, a child will visibly relax, confidence grows, and the child associates reading with this pleasant experience. When reading to a dog, all threats of being judged are put aside, and children are more apt to take risks to sound out words or take a logical guess. Most importantly, reading to the therapy dogs builds excitement in our children!



We thank our visiting therapy dogs: Charlie, Riley, and Olaf!
(We thank their masters, too!)

NW Students Give Back to Community

Our non-perishable food just kept growing in abundance! Many thanks to our students and their families for a job well done. NW students met their goal by contributing 2000 non-perishable food and other items to the Stuff-a-Bus efforts in Rutland City! Our students rode the school bus with *Captain Credit Union* from Heritage Family Credit Union, and police escort with Officer Blongy and Office Laguardia, until we reached the Price Chopper parking lot to stuff that bus! Great job, NW community!



Reminder: Procedures for Student Absences

If your child is absent, please remember to call the attendance line at Northwest School. Some of our parents are leaving messages directly with the teachers, but the office does not always receive this information in a timely manner. Please save us time and worry by leaving a message at 786-1778.

Dates to Remember:

December 12th
PTC 6:30 - 7:30 pm

December 14th
NW Celebration
Morning Dance Party

December 17th
Students Participate in
"Make it / Take it"

December 18th
Hero Assembly &
Sing-a-Long

December 20 - January 1
No School / Break

January 2nd
School Resumes

January 9th
PTC 6:30 - 7:30 pm

Cooking with Come Alive Outside

What was the menu for November? Sweet Potato Bread... Yum! Last week Nicholle Nelson's second graders made delicious sweet potato bread. All students participated in a taste test: 97 children "loved it," 4 reported with a "maybe," and 25 said "not yet." Many children asked for the recipe. See attached...in case your children are asking for it!

Ms. Nelson's second graders returned to their classroom to write about this cooking experience. Below is a paragraph written by NW second grader, Robert Galiano:

Do you know what sweet potato bread is? Today we made sweet potato bread! My friends and I made the sweet potato bread and I got to crack an egg! I also got to shred some of the sweet potatoes! And I will tell you where I made it. We made the sweet potato bread in our cafeteria and we got to try the sweet potato bread! Now you know what sweet potato bread is. It was so much fun. I hope we get to do it again.

We would still love to have a NW parent volunteer to help us with our Harvest of the Month cooking workshops. Please contact Grace Davy directly if you would like to help and can spare an hour or two each month: grace@comealiveoutside.com.



Warmest wishes to our children & families this holiday season!

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