

Williams-Cone School Principal's Newsletter

November 2013

Randa C. Rineer, Principal



Happy Thanksgiving Williams-Cone School!

It has been quite a wonderful whirlwind here at WCS over the past several weeks. From implementing new instructional practices and assessment procedures to receiving local, state and national recognition we are a very vibrant school community. As a parent and leader I recognize that we have so much to be thankful for!

There is a common saying that goes something like this: "To whom much is given, much is expected." I believe that this rings very true for our school community, especially at this point and time in our school's history. While our school community has recently received many accolades and has worked very hard for this recognition, it is important for each of us to realize that our work is not complete. Our school will have many leadership opportunities in the coming days at the local and state levels but we also have the challenge of continuing a tradition of academic excellence. Therefore it is essential that

we work together to move our students forward to even greater levels of achievement and performance.

In reviewing student achievement through the newly adopted AimsWeb assessments, our staff have identified key instructional areas that need to be addressed. We will need to work together as an instructional community (staff, parents/caregivers and students) to increase student achievement in these areas. Math fact (addition, subtraction, multiplication and division) automaticity is one key focus area. Success with higher level math depends on the grasp of the basics in the early grades. Children who do not know their math facts quickly fall behind when they are taught long division, simplifying fractions, factoring, and pre-algebra.

Teachers will be discussing strategies for supporting your children in math facts and other areas during the

upcoming parent-teacher conferences this month. The school Data Team will continue to work together to identify and implement instructional practices that will support math fact retention and automaticity. Plans are being formulated for an upcoming Principal's Math Fact Challenge. Stay tuned!

We will be reviewing and sharing other areas of instructional focus as the school year progresses. Our school community is filled with dedication, commitment and expertise. I am confident that with focus and perseverance our students, staff and community will move forward to amazing heights and accomplish **GREAT** things!!!

So very thankful for the WCS children, staff, parents, caregivers and community!

-Randa C. Rineer, Principal

Important Dates

November 11th: Veteran's Day,
No School

November 15th: Picture Day
Retakes

November 15th: Lockdown Drill

November 15th: FOWC Spaghetti
Dinner Fundraiser & Basket
Auction, 5:00-7:00 P.M.

November 26th: Early Dismissal,
11:30 A.M.

Parent/Teacher Conferences:
November 18-26

Thanksgiving Break-No School,
November 27-29

December 3rd: FOWC Meeting,
6:00 P.M., **No November
Meeting.**

December 4th: Parent/Staff
Bullying Prevention & Education
Team Meeting, 6:00 P.M.

December 5th: Chorus & Special
Chorus Concert, 7:00 P.M.
(Snowdate 12/11)

December 10th: Science &
Technology Committee Meeting,
6:00 P.M.

December 12th: School Board
Meeting Hosted by WCS, 6:30
P.M.

December 13th: National Blue
Ribbon Award Celebration
Ceremony, 2:00 P.M. Gymnasium

December 21-January 1st-Winter
Break 1



OCTOBER HIGHLIGHTS

Diversity ruled in the types of activities and events taking place at WCS in October! Staff development activities during the in-service day on October 4th included a careful review, analyzation and interpretation of student achievement data utilizing the newly adopted AimsWeb assessments. Action plans were created for students to increase student achievement based on the assessment results. Students in grades three through five participated in the New England Common Assessment Program October 7th through October 16th. The assessment tests students skills in math and reading as well as writing in grade five.

Throughout the month of October our parent and community volunteers provided a variety of supports and service from fireproofing classroom curtains and rugs (thank-you Amber Hemond, Lori Kane, Diane Bartels and Leslie Byrne) to grinding stump and tree roots (thank-you Joe Bartels and Gordon Kinney!) to keep our playgrounds safe! We can't thank our fabulous volunteers enough for their support and dedication.

The entire student body, staff and many community members supported the National Walk to School Day on October 9th. The walk began at the Topsham Fairgrounds winding through The Highlands neighborhood and concluding back at WCS. The weather was gorgeous and spirits were high as we participated in this great wellness and outdoor opportunity.

Several Kids Academies were implemented this month including Move and Groove, Arts and Crafts, Gardening, Tennis as well as Science and Technology. Students are thoroughly enjoying these before and after school opportunities to grow, develop and discover new talents, interests and skills.

A Playground Thank-You/Dedication Ceremony was held in honor of The Highlands on October 24th. The assembly included student essays, the school song, a slide show presentation, special commendations to The Highlands and Dorothy Gardner, MSAD #75 school board member who helped to secure the generous \$20,000.00 donation from The Highlands. Holly Kopp, former FOWC co-chair and current MSAD #75 board member presented John Wasileski, owner of The Highlands with a framed photo collage of the new playground equipment. FOWC provided residents and staff members from The Highlands with refreshments following the assembly,

Blue Ribbon Spirit Day was held on October 31st. Students and staff were encouraged to wear blue in honor of our school receiving the National Blue Ribbon Schools Award. Activities also included an all school picture with students standing in a "WCS" formation. Special thanks to Heather Hollenbach and Diane Bartels who climbed up on the WCS roof to take the photos!

WCS also hosted some special visitors in October including Mallory Brooke, meteorologist from Channel 8 who broadcasted live at WCS on October 31st. Representatives from U.S. Cellular also visited second grade on October 25th, presenting Mrs. Kish and Mrs. San Pedro, second grade teachers with certificates in honor of their recent donations from Cellular One through the Donors Choose program.

Many thanks WCS community for making all of this and more happen for our students and staff!



MUSIC NEWS

If you haven't checked out the WCS General Music Website, please take some time to do so. You'll find curriculum information, concert dates, recorder information and many more resources.

To visit the page, simply go to the school's homepage, scroll down the left side until you find "Specials - Art, Music & PE", then click on "General Music." From there, you will find information about our school music program.

STUDENT TEACHER

Thursday music classes have had the opportunity to work with a student teacher this fall. Miss Adrian St. Pierre is a graduate of Brunswick HS and currently a student at the University of Maine in Orono. She is enrolled in a dual Bachelor degree program: Vocal Performance and Music Education. Education majors need to work in a school for a period of 15 weeks in order to fulfill their course study. As well as being at WCS, Miss St. Pierre is also at HCS, MAMS and HS. It has been a wonderful experience to have her with us.

School Breakfast

Did you know that breakfast is served everyday at our school? If your child receives free or reduced lunch they can also come to school and get a free breakfast. Otherwise the cost of breakfast is \$1.50.



Blue Ribbon Update

Ms. Dutton and Mrs. Rineer will be traveling to Washington D.C. to accept the 2013 National Blue Ribbon Award on behalf of WCS this month. Plans are underway for a school wide celebration that will be held Friday, December 13th at 2:00 P.M. Stay tuned for further details and information!

Parent-Teacher Conferences November 18-26, 2013

Parent involvement and home-to school partnerships rank as one of the top three factors impacting student achievement. Over the next few weeks parent-teacher conferences will be held at Williams-Cone School. To help ensure a highly productive and beneficial conference, consider the following tips:

1. Talk to your child-Ask if there is anything that he/she would like for you to discuss with the teacher.
2. Be prepared-Write down things that you would like to discuss/questions that you would like to ask at the conference.
3. Be specific. Bring any work with you that is of concern. Describe your child's strengths and areas of need.
4. Arrive promptly or a few minutes early.
5. Exchange information. Feel free to share with the teacher situations in the home that may affect your child's school work (Ex. a new baby in the family, new babysitter, etc.).
6. Discuss the whole child. Your child's social and emotional development is as important as his/her academic success.
7. Leave with a plan. The conference should end with a clear statement of what you will do and what the teacher will do.