

BARRE CITY ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOL

CO-PRINCIPALS' REPORT

OCTOBER, 2015

On Tuesday, October 6, we held a practice "Clear the Halls" and "Lockdown" drill. This followed an incident that occurred two weeks ago when we initiated a lockdown in response to a perceived potential safety risk at the school. That situation has served as a good learning experience for us. We have had numerous meetings since then with both in-house staff members as well as local police officers. We have received the completed safety audit report done by former Montpelier SRO, Mark Moody and have been reviewing and working to follow up on and implement its recommendations. The practice drill held on October 6 went very well. Children and staff members take these drills very seriously and there was a sense of complete compliance throughout the building. We look forward to reviewing the security/safety report with the facilities committee soon.

On Thursday, September 24, our math lab staff hosted our first of six math nights. The topic of this event was on basic understanding of number concepts. Approximately 25 parents attend. These evenings are designed to share with parents the goals and objectives of our math program, some of our instructional strategies, and key math concepts we expect children will master. Childcare is provided and families enjoy a pizza dinner! The math nights are supported by the Consolidated Federal Programs grant.

Parent /Teacher Conferences are being held on Thursday, October 8 from 11:30 until 6:30 pm.. This will be a time for teachers and parents to talk about each child's progress to date, with enough time remaining before report cards are sent home on November 4 for a student to improve his/her performance.

We are again working with Peter Cudney from the Northeastern Family Institute this year. Peter consults with schools and families who are dealing with children who have experienced developmental trauma. This year he will be teaching a 7 day, 14 hour, after-school course to a team of 14 of our staff. The focus of this work will be on the effects of trauma and effective ways for us to respond to children's behavior that result from these early childhood experiences. In addition, he will be meeting with each of our grade levels to conduct case studies of individual students struggling with the impact of developmental trauma.

Our Positive Behavior Interventions and Support system is in its 8th year of implementation. Our "Pawsitive" Patrol has been catching students exhibiting appropriate behavior in the hallways, in the lunchroom, outside at recess, and in classroom settings. Our buses are also displaying the bus paw print expectations and the drivers are giving yellow bus paws to students demonstrating appropriate behaviors.

The Backpack Program we are implementing through the Vermont Foodbank is continuing again this year. The purpose of the program is to provide food for the weekend for children who might have little or none. We have over 100 students participating. Para-educator, Mrs. Pam Burt is coordinating this program.

For your information, we have attached a letter we sent home to all K-8 parents informing them of their potential right to apply for supplemental educational services for their children. This is a required action, part of No Child Left Behind, designed to help support improved student performance.

Our annual PTO Fundraiser, "Walk, Run, Fun" was held on Friday, October 12. Children collected "pledges" in support of their participation in 10 minutes of walking or running around a track the PTO created on our large north field. Pre-run, jazzercise warm-ups were led by two of our teachers and the children enjoyed a treat of watermelon slices at the conclusion of their run. It was once again a wonderful, upbeat, school-wide event!

On Wednesday, October 7, our school is joining many others across Vermont and the nation in the International Walk to School event. Children with parent permission will be getting off their buses at the corner of Pond St. and East Parkside Terrace and, escorted by our staff members, walking up the hill to the school. Other children are walking or being dropped off where the bike path joins Fairview St. and, again escorted by our staff, walking the rest of the way to school. George Mackey and FitzVogt are preparing hot cider for the children to enjoy as they walk past the large, north parking lot! At least two School Board members are planning to join us in this celebration of wellness!

Respectfully,

Jackie Ramsay-Tolman

James Taffel