

**Annual Administrator's Report
2019-2020
Sippican School
Marion, Massachusetts**

The school year began with an enrollment of 433 students in grades PreK through 6. I began my principalship (Ms. Marla Sirois) along with Mr. Kyle Letendre as assistant principal. It was a year filled with change. Students, staff, and families collaborated to ensure that this unusual year (due to the COVID-19 pandemic) would provide the best education for the students at Sippican School.

During the 2019-2020 school year, students demonstrated progress in all academic areas according to school wide assessments. However, the state MCAS tests were cancelled this year due to COVID-19.

Staffing

The 2019-2020 school year brought change to Sippican's staff. Both of our office staff members were new this year. We welcomed Ms. Lisa Daniels as special education secretary and Ms. Donna Dunn as the interim principal's secretary. Project Grow welcomed a new teacher, Sarah Goerges. Ms. Goerges has been a teacher and administrator at Sippican for over a decade. She has been a welcome addition to the Project Grow team. We were also fortunate to bring on a new special education teacher, Ms. Brenna Kelly. Ms. Kelly worked primarily in grade 3. There were a few notable retirements as well. Long time paraprofessional Karen Santos retired in December. At the end of the year, long time school nurse Maureen Lamoureux and Reading Recovery teacher Kelly Kelleher began much deserved retirements. We are grateful to all of them for their decades of service to the children and families of Marion. We thank them all for their service.

Curriculum and Staff Development

Professional development is essential to ensure that our staff are prepared to provide the best educational experiences for our students. The focus of the 2019-2020 professional development was the goals of the District and School Improvement plans. To that end, the district provided workshops on Project Based Learning. We welcomed guest speaker Trevor Muir who “Believe(s) educators hold the key to unlocking[student] potential by building relationships and crafting learning experiences that are engaging and transformative.” Mr. Muir provided a keynote address to the ORR staff followed by an afternoon of workshops focused on developing project based learning opportunities for students. The district also held professional development this year dedicated to cultural proficiency. As a staff we were enlightened by the words of Dr. Adolph Brown. Dr. Brown inspires teachers to understand implicit and unconscious bias. He provided the ORR school district with anti-bias training. Dr. Brown supported our understanding that structural disparities need to be dismantled in order to develop solutions to issues related to social inequities. The dedication of our staff to being lifelong learners is essential to maintaining the highest standards for all of our students.

Highlights Across the School

Students at Sippican are focused on the learning that takes place inside and outside of their classrooms. These were presented in the form of projects, field trips, in-school presentations and clubs. Among these opportunities were visits with and to the New Bedford Symphony across the grade levels, the Marion Fire Department’s fire safety presentation, Zeiterion Theater experiences for most grade levels and many field trips that directly linked with curriculum. Each offering is a demonstration of the investment on the part of staff and community to extend learning beyond that which takes place in the classroom.

Sippican continued its partnership with ORRHS in a Big Brother/Big Sister Program. High school students volunteered their time weekly to travel to Sippican to work with their Little Brothers and Sisters. This program provided mentoring experiences for young and old and was a collaboration that we are grateful to have.

Anchor offered programming to families each month. Under the direction of Lisa Horan and many other staff members, families and community members were welcomed to a spaghetti supper/BINGO night and a Family Game Night cosponsored by the YMCA.

The Sippican School band and Concert Choir performed wonderfully for the 2019 Holiday Stroll. Our school community also enjoyed winter concerts for grades 4, 5 and 6 which featured the band, jazz bands, and the concert choir. We were also grateful that our Concert Choir was able to represent us at the district's FORM concert. With the onset of Covid-19, Band students at Sippican School quickly pivoted to online lessons, discovering that there were some things they could not do (playing together in groups) but that they could make huge strides in building their individual skills. It all came together for a 'virtual' Memorial Day celebration, even though we couldn't march. With great determination, 80% of the 4th, 5th & 6th grade students are continuing to practice and participate in the school program with hopes of 'normalcy'.

Community Connections

Sippican is blessed to have the Volunteers at Sippican Elementary (V.A.S.E.) members who tirelessly supported the Sippican experience by promoting the arts. They graciously coordinated trips for grade levels to visit the Zeiterion Theater. Each grade level was able to bring varying experiences into the school that added to the curriculum through their financial support. Examples of these programs

would be Toe Jam Puppet Band, Pilgrim presentation, Energized Guyz, and the Museum of Science visit. V.A.S.E. also provided enrichment opportunities through their ACE program. We are appreciative of their dedication to the Sippican School community.

Family and community members are regularly invited to see student learning and talent outside of the school day. Here are a few of the highlights from 2019-2020:

- Sippican School band marching in the Christmas Stroll
- Band and Chorus evening performances
- Drama Club's performance of What Happened After Once Upon a Time
- Virtual Vocabulary day
- Schoolwide Reading Challenges
- Global Hour of Code
- Maker Mondays
- Rubik's Cube Club
- Reading is Fundamental book distribution
- Sippican's Got Talent, virtual talent show

Conclusion

The 2019-2020 school year was quite simply, an unusual year. The COVID-19 pandemic changed the way our school year looked from March through June. However, as a school community we supported each other and persevered. Although many of our spring events looked different, we worked hard to preserve as many events and traditions as possible. We are thankful for the community support that we have all felt. The dedication of our staff and the support of the community ensured a successful school year for our students in these truly unprecedented times. We look forward to appreciating all that there is to look forward to in our school community post COVID. *To continue to follow our activities on a continual basis please follow us on our webpage that includes a link to our Facebook page.*

<https://www.oldrochester.org/ss>

Respectfully submitted,
Marla Sirois, Principal