

Principal's Report

May 7, 2009

Staffing Update

Pending Board approval tonight, Patty Smith will become our Health Education Coordinator for next year. Board members and staff have received a DRAFT job description for this new position. This DRAFT is also cued for Board approval tonight. This is a one-year, grant-funded position made possible by HAPCO, the WWSU nurse's group. Their hope is that the Board will consider funding the position from the local budget after next year. The Hiring Committee is very excited about Patty's experience in the healthcare field as a nurse and school nurse at FES, as well as her teaching abilities. During the interview process she conducted a model teaching in Mrs. Goldhammer's first and second grade that was very well received. Patty has already registered for the week-long Responsive Classroom course this summer.

I am very pleased to announce that, pending Superintendent and Board approval tomorrow, Lauren May will become our one-year part-time kindergarten teacher. Lauren is completing courses through a partnership between UVM and the Vermont Higher Education Collaborative to earn her degree in Early Childhood Education. She has recently student taught in kindergarten in Barre Town and has an undergraduate degree in speech and language from U Mass, Amherst. Lauren is currently a paraprofessional in a preschool setting. She has been a speech-language assistant in Williamstown and has countless experiences with young children in preschool and childcare settings. She has attended many professional conferences and workshops dedicated to early education, notably, a two-day conference on the Reggio Emilia approach used by our own Spring Hill School. The hiring committee was impressed with her knowledge of the developmental needs of kindergarteners and her ability to plan and implement age-appropriate lessons that include various literacy skills. Lauren will take RC I this summer and plans to attend our step-up day in June.

The process to hire an on-staff substitute is ongoing. Interview and model teachings have taken place, and a second round of model teaching is being used to help make the decision. We hope to have a candidate to bring to the Board in June.

Potential Changes to Tiger News and Mascot

We will be making some changes to the school newsletter next year in an effort to and increase readership. Beginning in the fall, the newsletter will be distributed every other week rather than weekly. Additionally, we will be tightening up the content in an effort to keep it to no more than two pages. This will require us to be much more selective with what we print, but we hope more families will completely read each issue. There is also discussion of sending it home to every family in hard copy, the theory being if it is lying around folks are more likely to pick it up and read it as opposed to calling it

up on the website. And finally, we're exploring a new school mascot, perhaps on that is more relevant and Vermont-friendly than the tiger. We will keep you posted!

Pandemic Flu Response

The fear of a pandemic flu outbreak in Vermont did reach our school last week. There were many telephone calls from families concerned about potential exposure by families who had traveled over break. The Vermont Department of Health and Centers for Disease Prevention and Control have been helpful by providing daily updates and recommendations. At the present time, we have not had any ill children connected with the pandemic swine flu. While the incubation period for the illness can be up to seven days, only symptomatic children, of whom we have none, are being asked to stay home. Various schools and childcare providers have established individual response protocols to this situation. Thursday morning, the WWSU Administrative Team is expected to begin work on a supervisory union wide plan for future such illnesses.

No School

Last Friday's school cancellation had nothing to do with illness. Rather, there was no power. Based on information from the power company that it would be "hours" before power would be restored, I contacted Superintendent Moser and school was cancelled. At this time Superintendent Moser has asked the teacher's union to forgive the day and allow the last day of school to remain on Thursday, June 18th for children and Friday, May 19th for staff. We will make you aware of their response.

Teacher and Staff Appreciation Week

This has been teacher and staff appreciation week. Everyone has enjoyed treats from baked goodies to small gifts during the week thanks to the generosity of the Board and PTO.

Permanent Art Collections

We have begun a permanent collection of framed student art here at school. The first piece chosen is displayed outside my office. Art teacher Nora McDonough plans to add to this framed, displayed collection year-to-year. Additionally, we are preparing three pieces of student work to be displayed at Central Office by request of incoming Superintendent Scheffert.

Office Coverage

I am very pleased to report that Leslee Torsell will be the "face of the office" while Cally is away donating a kidney to her sister-in-law. Leslee spends time in the office now and is well-versed on its workings. She will be spending some time with Cally during the coming weeks to learn some of the PowerSchool components and other details. Having Leslee in the off required the flexibility of many folks who are

accustomed to her help day-to-day. Thanks to everyone who was flexible and allowed a familiar face to be in the office.

Congratulations, Nicole

Nicole Krotinger, School Counselor and Family Support Coordinator, has completed her school counseling internship. As you may recall, Nicole is a licensed mental health counselor. In order to meet school quality standards, Nicole pursued an internship here at FES this year. As a licensed counselor, I was able to provide her supervision on behalf of the college. She is completing her licensure portfolio now, and we expect Nicole to have her official School Counselor license very soon. In the interim, we have asked for an extension of her provisional license, just until the state can process her licensure paperwork. Congratulations, Nicole!