

Whitefield Wildcat Weekly



Issue 17

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Principal's Message **Hunger @ WHES**

Much has been written and broadcast in the media recently about "food insecurity" in Maine and around the country. Food insecurity is defined as individuals or families who experience serious challenges in having enough food to consistently feed themselves or their families. That margin between knowing that you have enough food for your needs or not creates enormous stress and anxiety on those in need. Whitefield is not immune to food insecurity and at Whitefield Elementary School we have a number of children and families who struggle with this issue weekly. At WHES, 51% of our students qualified for free or reduced breakfast and lunch and that availability of good nutritious food twice a day is extremely helpful. However, we are keenly aware of several children who go home each day with serious questions about whether or not they'll have food provided until the next school day. This is particularly problematic over weekends and school vacations.

To address the problem of hungry children in our school, last year WHES established a school Food Pantry. Generous donations have helped us stock the pantry with a variety of non-perishable foods that we pack into backpacks and send home to needy families. These backpacks typically go out on Friday for weekend consumption but we have several families that are receiving supplemental food assistance from the school two to three times each week. We know that this assistance not only impacts 20+ students who attend school but, in several cases, supports a good number of pre-school age children as well. Kara Waller (WHES Food Service Director) and Kendra Anderson (WHES School Nurse) have expended great amounts of energy organizing this resource. The pantry is located in the office complex at school and we are always eager to receive donations. These donations can consist of cereals, canned soups and other entrees, non-perishable food stuffs / ready to eat or microwavable materials and various snack-type items. Our participating students indicate cliff bars and pop tarts are delightful to find within their supplemental food backpacks. The only donations that are discouraged would be fresh foods and anything in a glass container (as children transport their backpacks on school buses and glass is problematic). We have had several donors who generously provided cash for the pantry and this allowed our volunteers to acquire specific items that were beneficial to our students.

It is extremely distressing for anyone to consider a hungry child within our school and society and I am very proud of this school's efforts to respond to this clear need. I would encourage all WHES families who have the capacity to donate to our food pantry. If you have questions please contact either Kara or Kendra here at school. Know that your efforts will make a difference for many children as we try to diminish the effects of food insecurity in this school. Also, there is a section within the Wildcat Weekly from our food pantry and, often, there are requests or needs listed within that section of the newsletter.

Office: Please remember to send your child to school with a note if they are going to a different destination on the bus after school. It helps to avoid last minute phone calls to the school, which can make dismissal very chaotic. We appreciate the advance notice and thank you for not calling with these changes after 2:00 p.m.

Food Pantry: Items needed - cans of spaghetti sauce, noodles, Beefaroni - like items with pop top lids, cereal, Ritz or Saltine crackers, granola bars, soups. If anyone has large plastic containers with lids, we could use them for storage!

Flocking for Food:

Health: It's going to be chilly this weekend! Cold weather safety tips....Dress in layers. Wear hat, mittens, and gloves. Wear warm, waterproof footwear.

Kitchen: There is now an easier way to pay your students lunch bill online! Please go to our school website, under parents is "My School Bucks" and sign up there! Just as a reminder when sending money in for lunch accounts, please be sure to label it with the name of your student(s) and the amount(s) to be deposited into their account. We also encourage everyone to fill out the Free and Reduced Lunch form. It is open to everyone! If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact Kara Waller or Amanda Lincoln in the kitchen.

Click below to check out the Whitefield School Collaborative Problem-Solving Project!

<http://www.svrsu.org/o/whes/page/whitefield-collaborative-problem-solving-project>

Grades Pre K- 1

Pre K: Our Friday training was very beneficial! Have a great weekend.

Beck: The K Krew has been working on LABELLING their pictures as we begin our Writing unit. We checked out a website called: AFRICAM.com today to watch a lion by the watering hole and some elephants playing. We will begin to practice our LAST names this week. PLEASE remember to pack ski pants, hats and mittens for recess. Have a great weekend!

Lamothe: The first graders took winter NWEA tests this past week in Reading and Math. The majority of students are making steady gains. Your support with reading at home makes a big difference. Thank you to Daniel and Gracie's Mom for sending in the extra mittens and gloves. We would also like to extend a thank you to Daniel's Mom for her donation to our snack bucket.

Grades 2-4

Brewer: Even with our snowy, icy week Grade 2 has been busy! We continue to work on our opinion writing. We can tell the difference between facts and opinions as we put these into our writing. In math, we continue with place value and expanded form. Thanks to Blake's family and Chiara's family for sending in extra snack. Our word of the week is jovial. Ask your second grader what this word means. We have been enjoying solving mystery math. This is a review of concepts previously learned in math.

Northrup: We will be doing Winter NWEA testing the week of the 21st. Many children are NOT bringing their homework to school. Please check backpacks nightly. Student of the Week- Jaxon

Trask: The class has been working on longitude and latitude in geography. Using maps, the students have been finding different locations around the world. Along with this, they are learning the names of the continents and oceans, working with coordinates, and learning about the hemispheres.

Middle School News

Norris: Our explorer projects are complete, and we have learned quite a bit about early explorers, such as where and why they traveled. We have expanded our knowledge by sharing a "Mix and Match" explorer activity as well as taking a peek at Antarctica (Ernest Shackleton) and the Arctic (Robert Peary and Matthew Henson).

McCormick: This winter, Nina has come to Whitefield Elementary for a second year from The Leadership School at Kieve. Emphasizing values of kindness and respect, Nina works principally with the 6th graders on their collaboration and leadership skills to prepare them for their trip to Kieve's campus in April. Additionally, Nina helps out with all other grades at Whitefield to follow through on the values of effective communication and healthy risk taking. She's very excited to return and help out in the classroom and with various community activities like the upcoming Winter carnival. She is also looking into some after school programming

Mathews: Students have been working hard on several items including literary essays discussing character work, language study, and independent study projects. Next week we will begin winter NWEA testing.

Howard: 7th grade completed the Integer Lesson and will be working with Rational Numbers next. 8th grade has really begun to work with one and two step equations and showing all the steps in the process of solving the unknown variable. 6th grade is working with decimals - specifically division and being able to move the decimal into the correct place value position - we will continue this into next week. Have a safe and warm weekend.

Resource News

Brann: Students are making great gains with their reading! Please keep practicing at home. Also, students in grades 5-8 are encouraged to check Jump rope for missing assignments. Have a great weekend!

Grady/Richards: When reading with your child, create a word book of unknown words. Practice them for a few minutes each night. Continue to add words, and take out words when they are able to say them 3 or four days in a row without help. It is great to see how their list changes over the course of time! Have a great weekend!

Art - Library - Music - PE

Martin: On Monday January 14th a volunteer from Knox/Lincoln county watershed dept will be coming to speak with 5th grade students about life in the soil. This will prep the class for an upcoming national conservation poster contest.

Abbott: 2nd and 3rd grade will be starting a new typing program that the district just purchased! We will be begin in a few weeks - so stay tuned for updates!

Simpson: Thank you to Lisa Couture from New Hope for Women, for her presentations to our students on Monday! Unfortunately, her Tuesday presentations needed to be rescheduled, so we look forward to seeing her later this school year.

Have a great weekend!