



Fletcher Elementary School

Christopher Dodge, Principal

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Important Newsletter Changes!

September 13, 2019

Dear Fletcher Families,

Attached to this note is the first F.E.S. school newsletter of the year, the Falcon Flyer. We've made some exciting changes to the newsletter that we hope will increase interest and readership this year!

- The school newsletter will be published monthly, on the second Friday. The deadline for submissions is the first Friday of the month, at noon.
- Every teacher has contributed to the newsletter, and will continue to do so this year. Be sure to read through to find out what's happening throughout the school.
- Our newsletter almost always includes information from groups like Friends of Fletcher Elementary (F.O.F.E.) and community opportunities, as well as a calendar of upcoming events. We've expanded the calendar to include several months.

We hope that you enjoy the newsletter and look forward to any feedback about the changes we've made.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Chris Dodge', written over a horizontal line.

Chris Dodge
Principal

Falcon Flyer

Fletcher Elementary School

340 School Road, Cambridge, Vermont

September 2019

BE RESPECTFUL BE RESPONSIBLE BE SAFE BE CARING SOAR LIKE A FALCON

UPCOMING EVENTS

September 26
Open House
6:00-7:30 PM

October 17
Early Release Day
Noon Dismissal

October 18
Vacation
No School

November 25-26
Inservice
No School

November 27-29
Thanksgiving Break
No School

December 23—
January 1
Break
No School

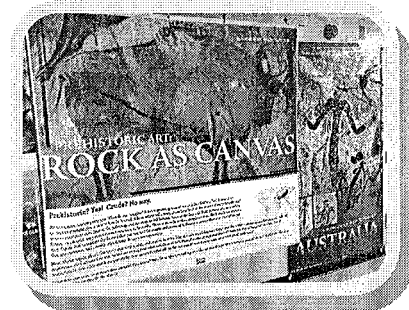
Newsletter Changes

Our newsletter is now published monthly, on the second Friday. Submissions are due no later than end-of-day, the first Friday of the month.

F.E.S. Artists "Rock" Out with Prehistoric Art!

By MC Baker
Art Teacher

Fletcher students kicked off the year with our famous traveling art show! This year, we had panels showcasing prehistoric rock art throughout the world. School counselor Lisa Coale and Art Teacher M.C. Baker are collaborating on a "Kindness Rocks" project. The goal of the project is to spread kindness throughout our larger community and within our school community through art. Inspired by the Vermont Kindness Rocks that are found and left throughout the state, our F.E.S. Kindness Rocks will hopefully be generating positive feelings of kindness, hope and community. Every student will be painting two palm sized stones in art class. These palm stones will be shared with another F.E.S. student to remind them of how valuable they are to our school community. Larger rocks created by F.E.S. students will be left in our rock garden in hopes that they will be found and transported to a new location to spread our kindness messages far and wide. If you happen across one of our rocks, please send a photo of you and the rock and tell us where you found it!



First and Second Graders Create Rock Art!

By Nancy Hurt
Grades 1 & 2 Teacher

After touring the school rock art exhibit and listening to two related stories about cave paintings, students in Mrs. Hurt's class were asked to use their imagination to draw an animal that might have been drawn thirty thousand years ago. Possibilities were shared aloud and then began to take shape on paper as students represented their own cave drawing. Our classroom is now home to it's own rock art exhibit, filled with woolly mammoths, horses, deer, and bison. Stop by to take a look!



Open House Set for September 26!

Fletcher Elementary School's Open House has been scheduled for Thursday, September 26, from 6:00 PM to 7:30 PM. Please mark your calendars. Open House is a wonderful opportunity for your child to lead you through their classroom and the school, as well as an opportunity for you to say hello to staff. As a reminder, more in-depth and specific conversations about your child's progress should be held for a more confidential meeting. We look forward to seeing you all at Open House!



Outdoor Classroom Reaches Completion Thanks to Amazing Volunteers!

*By Chris Dodge
Principal*

Our new F.E.S. Outdoor Classroom is complete! Thanks to the guidance and coordination of Tucker Riggs and a bunch of individual volunteers and generous businesses. A ribbon cutting ceremony was held last week to celebrate the installation of the outdoor classroom's roof, the last component to be completed. We would like to thank everyone who contributed to this project as follows:

Bellwether Craftsman (cut, finished and erected the frame); Greg Tatro of GW Tatro in Jeffersonville (donated the lumber for the roof); James Bell (many hours of volunteering his time to sheath the roof and get shingles on); Kyle Gabaree (helped sheath the roof and a solid day of getting shingles on the roof); Brent Simineau (helped get the shingles on the roof); Mike Previs (helped shingle the roof); Gillian and Sons excavation (gave us discounted pricing on setting the piers and leveling the pad); LSF Forest

Products (donated and planed the wood for the frame, fabricated the steel feet, provided equipment and support for the assembly and finish, benches and table for the classroom).

Thanks, everyone! Our beautiful new Outdoor Classroom will be used for science, art and many, many other lessons and activities year-round. We appreciate the support of our incredible community.



Good Behavior Comes Home to "Nest!"

Thanks to School Counselor Lisa Coale, there is a new Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) token collection "nest" in the lobby. This year, F.E.S. rolled out a new and improved behavior recognition system that uses personalized wooden tokens with our falcon mascot and expectations printed on them. Our new lobby collection "nest" holds about 1,200 tokens.

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When it's full we'll have a school-wide celebration. Students are using smaller nests in the classroom and other spaces around the school to collect 50 tokens before contributing them to the whole-school nest in the lobby. How can you get involved? Ask your children how they are Respectful, Responsible, Safe and Caring at school to earn a token. And, don't forget to give out the tokens at home that we sent home last week and send us pics of your child following these expectations outside of school!



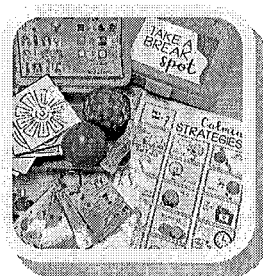
Building a 5th and 6th Grade Classroom Community!

*By Lorrene Palermo
Grades 5 & 6 Teacher*

Students in Mrs. Palermo's 5th and 6th grade classroom spent their first few days back at school building a strong classroom community by participating in team-building challenges that included lots of movement! Fletcher Elementary is partnering school-wide with the wellness group RiseVT to promote increased movement by students and staff during the school day. Here, Mrs. Palermo's students practice trusting each other through an active game. "It's important to make sure your peers trust you," sixth grader Jayden Pratt said. "And that you trust them," sixth grader Jude Buskey added. "Trust makes you more likely to ask for help and give help when you need it," Pratt said.



Mrs. Palermo's class participates in team-building games!



*Tools for Take-a-Break!
See story below.*

Take-A-Break Supports Self-Regulation

*By Lisa Coale
School Counselor*

As a Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (P.B.I.S.) school, we teach and encourage students to self-identify when they may need to take a break in order to refocus and reconnect to the work they are doing in class. Every classroom in the building, including the library, gymnasium and studio, has a designated spot in the room where students can go when they need to regroup, calm down, relax and settle their emotions.

This year, we are revamping our take a break experiences by including tools and calming strategies that students can use intentionally in order to practice self-regulation. Each take a break spot will now have a box that contains a variety of calming strategies such as breathing maps, guided stretch routines, mindful mazes, stress balls and other sensory tools to help students settle their thoughts and emotions and refocus on their day.

Take a break has come a long way from the shame and embarrassment of "sitting in the corner." The goal is to provide a break that helps students reset and gain the skills necessary to self-regulate in the future.

WHEN SHOULD YOUR CHILD STAY HOME FROM SCHOOL?

By Tara McMahon, RN
School Nurse

Please take a few minutes at home to carefully check your child's health before he/she leaves for school each morning. The following are a few suggestions, which may help to guide you:

Reasons for Keeping Your Child at Home:

1. Illness during the night
2. Fever is present (100 degrees or greater). Child should be without fever (and unmedicated for fever) for 24 hours prior to returning to school.
3. Complaints of nausea, upset stomach, vomiting, headache, diarrhea prior to leaving for school. Student should be vomiting and diarrhea free for 24 hours before returning to school.
4. Development of a rash on face and/ or body
5. Have a severe cold, cough and/ or sore throat
6. Have inflamed eye(s) with discharge from them

Please Remember: An ill child cannot function properly in the classroom. The spread of illness and disease through class or school can be more easily monitored if sick children remain at home during the acute stages of illness. If the school detects any of the above, your child will be sent home.

Please make sure that we know how to reach you during the day and that there is a backup plan and phone number on file if we cannot reach you.

Children can be more easily monitored if sick children remain at home during the acute stages of illness. If the school detects any of the above, your child will be sent home.

Early Release Days this Year

Franklin West Supervisory Union Schools have three early release days this year. Fletcher Dismissal is at noon.

*October 17
January 20
March 25*

Communication Station: A Bit About Stuttering

*By Phyllis Quarles, M.A., CCC-SLP
Speech-Language Pathologist*

Stuttering is a complicated speech disorder that affects about 1% of the population. All children go through periods where they get stuck on words and have difficulty formulating sentences. In addition to that, many children (about 25%) go through a period where they may be stuttering. This means they are repeating sounds or syllables, prolonging sounds, or generally speaking in a way that is halted and not flowing or fluent. This can be disturbing for parents. Most children will outgrow this temporary stuttering phase. Below are some DO's and DON'T's when talking to children who might be demonstrating what we call speech disfluencies:

1. DO pause and allow your child time to finish his or her sentence.
2. DO NOT finish your child's sentences. Give him or her time to finish what they are trying to say.
3. DO model an unhurried rate of speech, inserting pauses between phrases.
4. DO NOT tell your child to "slow down and think about what you want to say."
5. DO take time to relax with your child and read books in a slow, smooth voice.
6. DO NOT show that you are worried or concerned about your child's speech.
7. DO acknowledge that talking can be difficult. If your child is struggling and is visibly frustrated, reassure him/her that you have time to listen and that maybe you can practice saying that hard word together.
8. DO call your friendly speech-language pathologist any time you have a concern about your child's speech.

F.E.S. Band Has Begun!

By Jennifer McConnell
Music Teacher

I am so excited to share that we have started something new this year in Fletcher music! In addition to weekly instrument lessons for Band students, we are having Band rehearsals! Once a week, all Band students in grades 5 and 6 will have a rehearsal together. During Band rehearsals, students will be learning important music ensemble skills like: playing a part independently, rehearsal etiquette, listening and blending, and so much more! Stay "tuned" for updates on our progress!!

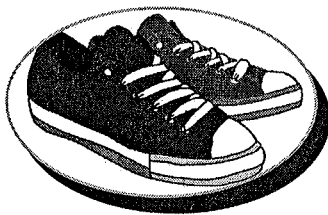


P.E. News (It's All About the Shoes, 'Bout the Shoes!)

By Doug Young
P.E. Teacher

Welcome back, everyone! Please remember to be ready for P.E. class on Mondays and Wednesdays again this year. It is important to have comfortable clothes and safe responsible footwear. If you have any shoes you would like to donate, we can put them in the bin in the P.E closet for those who may have forgotten theirs.

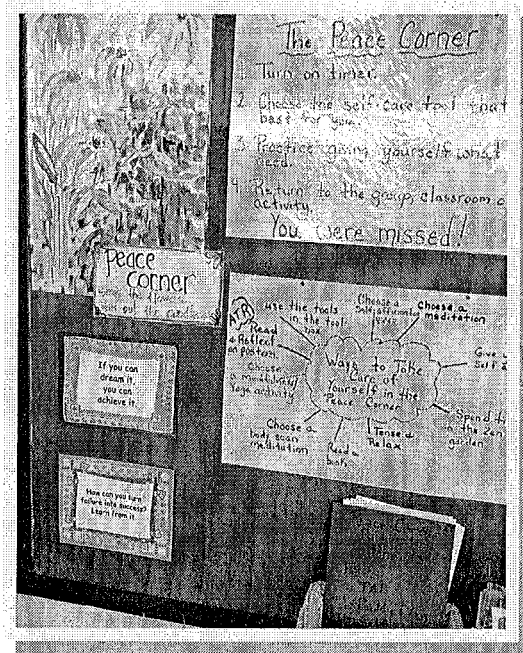
I am looking forward to a great year.



Peace Corner Supports Students

By Tracey Godin
Grades 3/4 Teacher

In Ms. Godin's 3/4 classroom, a Peace Corner has been created to give students a chance to take a break when either directed to, or if a student feels the need to calm down, refocus or reenergize. There are a multitude of self help tools to help students gain control over their emotions.



Kindergarten Explore and Snack

By Cathy O'Brien
Kindergarten Teacher



Explore time and snack are favorite activities in kindergarten. Both provide opportunities for students to practice respectful, responsible,

safe and caring interactions with classmates and adults.

Authentic and Relevant Learning

By Blythe Baskette
Preschool Special Educator

Like the butterfly among the flowers, Pre-K learning experiences should be as authentic and relevant to children's own lives. Being a child matters, and this means they must play, play, play. I see this happening in our Pre-K program.

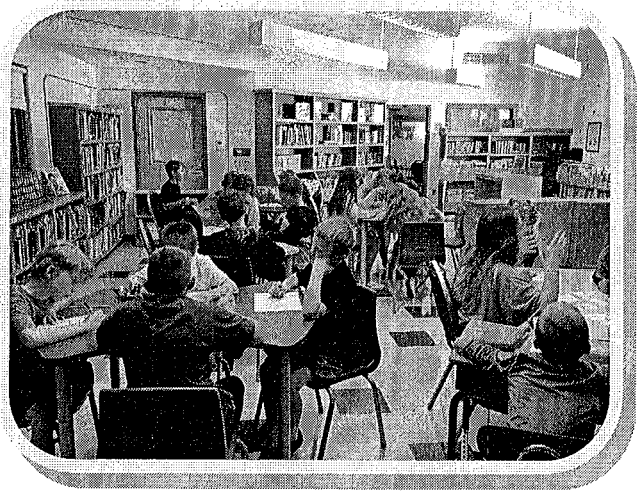
For example, in the Pre-K science center, a child looked at the display of a preserved butterfly, an empty wasp hive, and used a magnifying glass to look at some rocks. Then this child turned to a friend and said, "Do you want to play with me?" They began playing with the small animals on the rocks. As the deer walked over the rocks the child counted. Then he sorted all the rocks that looked like chicken nuggets. "These are rocks that look like chicken nuggets." My little friend said to me as a reminder to not clean up but to leave them for his friend.



Fletcher Peas in a Pod!

By Sarah Tucker
K-6 Special Educator

Students throughout our school have access to sensory and fidget items thanks to a fully-funded grant through donorschoose.org. The student pictured chose to use technology while sitting in an inflatable pea pod! This is just one example of a variety of sensory tools our students have access to and enjoy.



Planting "Seeds" in the library!

By Rebecca Cardone
Academic Interventionist/Librarian

Library classes were off to a great start on the first day of school! We read *The Curious Garden*, written and illustrated by Peter Brown. This book helped to facilitate a great discussion about the 'seeds' students want to plant at the beginning of the year that they will help nurture and grow throughout the year. Students then wrote or drew their hopes and dreams for the library on their own pot with a seedling in it. These will be on display soon!

Our second week of library classes began with sharing our hopes and dreams we came up with the week prior. As grades 3-6 listened to *The Library Lion*, written by Michelle Knudsen and grades K-2 listened to *What If Everybody Did That?*, written by Ellen Javernick, students thought about the rules needed to help everyone achieve their hopes and dreams. During a "silent chalk walk", students wrote or drew their ideas for rules which fit under each school-wide expectation: Respect, Responsibility, Safe, and Caring. We are laying the foundation for a great year in the library!

F.E.S. and RiseVT Partner to Keep Classrooms Moving!

*By Kathleen Pellegrino
Grades 1 & 2 Teacher*

Fletcher Elementary and the Vermont wellness group RiseVT have partnered up to incorporate more movement into students' days! Pictured here, students use a RiseVT activity to review behavior expectations at school. As teacher read scenarios to students, if the scenario met the expectation (i.e. respectful, responsible, safe and caring) the students made the movement indicated on the poster. Check out these pictures of this fun activity!

Ms. Pellegrino's class has been having fun working on team building and creating relationships within the classroom and whole-school setting.



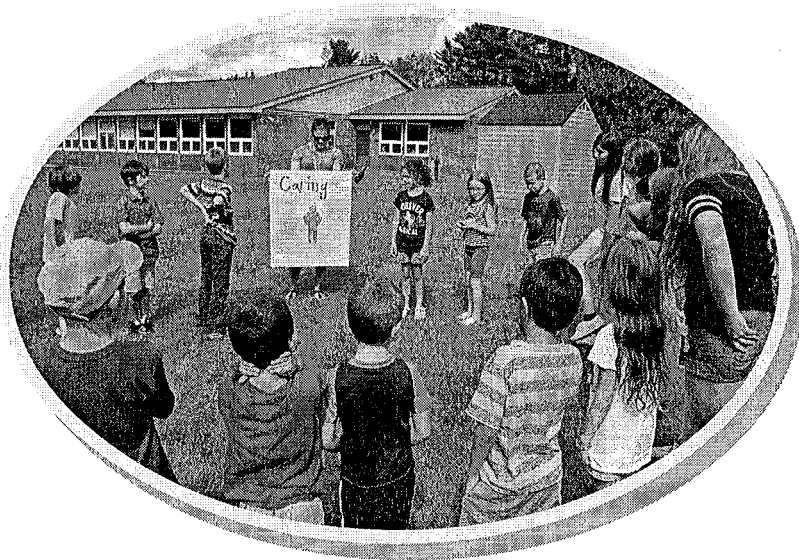
Custodial Substitutes Needed

Fletcher Elementary is seeking on-call custodial substitutes for part-day, day and evening shifts. Duties include general custodial efforts such as mopping, vacuuming, cleaning bathrooms, cleaning classroom furniture, etc. Interested candidates are subject to online and fingerprint supported background checks. Submit letter of interest and three recent references to Chris Dodge, Principal.

Magic Number and More in Preschool!

*By Rebecca Jackson
Preschool Teacher*

The preschool children have been getting to know each other and learning about our classroom and our routines as we settle in to our year together. We learned about counting our "magic number" of children present each day, and have been singing many songs together to help us transition through all the different parts of our day. Children shared the rocks that they brought in from home and some decided to contribute their rocks to our classroom nature museum. On Wednesday we had the excitement of thunder and rain, and had to wait to go outside, and on Thursday we saw many spiders and a snake outside! We have been exploring our wonderful playground, learning how to pump on the swings, practicing rock climbing skills, and creating mud, berry, acorn and apple pies.



NATURE'S NEWS

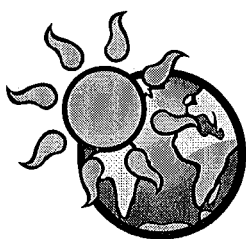
From: Four Winds Nature Institute - www.FourWindsInstitute.org

A Newsletter for Parents, Teachers, and Students participating in Four Winds Natural Science Workshops

Topic of the Month:

SUNLIGHT and SHADOW

Even though it is 93 million miles away from Earth, the sun provides enough heat and light energy for all living things on the planet. Energy from the sun powers the water cycle, generates weather systems, provides visible light and is essential to life as the basis of food chains. Sunlight energy is also important as a source of fuel for human activities.



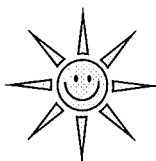
The earth rotates on an axis as it makes a 365-day-long revolution around the sun. The sun's rays reach only the part of the earth that is facing the sun at any given time; this causes us to experience night and day. Because the earth is a sphere, some of the sun's rays shine directly on the earth while others reach the earth at an angle. This means it is

much warmer at the earth's equator, where sunrays are the most direct, than at the north and south poles.

The earth's axis is tilted at 23° with respect to the sun. This results in variations in the amount of sun energy reaching the surface of the earth at any given point. These variations combined with the movement of the earth around the sun give us seasons.

We cannot live without the sun!

SUN COMPASS



When there's enough sun to make shadows, you can use the sun to find north, south, east and west - a good thing to know, especially if you get lost. To make a sun compass, first find a stick about three feet long. In a flat, sunny spot shove the stick into the ground standing straight up. Use a stone to mark the end of the shadow the stick makes on the ground. Wait about 20 minutes. Mark the end of the shadow the stick makes now with another stone. Then, stand with your back to the sun. Put your left foot on the first stone. Put your right foot on the second stone (the one with the shadow on it now). You are facing north. If you hold out your arms, your left arm will point west and your right arm will point east. South is behind you.

NEWS FROM SCHOOL:

This month begins our year long focus of topics centered around **Earth: Exploring Our Physical World**. We will have 8 different monthly topics this school year for our students, families and teachers to learn more about our world.

We are still in need of volunteers to help out with our Nature Program. If you would like more information, please contact Denette at 849-6251 or dlocke@fwsu.org

Thanks for supporting nature and outdoor learning with our Fletcher children!



Four Winds Nature Institute
4 Casey Road
Chittenden, VT 05737
802 353-9440
www.FourWindsInstitute.org



The Nurturing Parenting Program® is about to start!

Nurturing Programs offer practical tools to help families become stronger, happier, and closer. Program provided free of charge.

Where: St. Albans Public Library

When: Fridays 10am - noon

Starting: September 27th

Space is limited! Please call 802-498-0607 or email hniquette@pcavt.org to reserve a spot.

Funded in part by the Agency of Human Services, the United Way of Northwest Vermont, the United Way of Rutland County, the United Way of Windham County, and the Vermont Children's Trust Foundation.

F.O.F.E. PRESENTS

The Winter Clothing & Gear Swap

GET RID OF INFANT TO YOUTH LARGE
WINTER HATS, MITTENS, GLOVES, WOOL
SOCKS, BOOTS, SWEATERS, COATS,
ANYTHING WINTER!

DROP OFF ALL CLEAN ITEMS TO F.E.S UNTIL
MONDAY, SEPT 23RD.

Then come pick some gear at
Open House, Sept 26th
items will be displayed for the
taking in the gym.
Also during Movie Night Oct 4th.

Please only donate items you yourself
would dress your child in. No holes, or
stains. Any questions email
Fofevt@gmail.com