

Viola Rand and Alton Elementary Schools

Report for the RSU34 School Board

March 15, 2019

UPCOMING EVENTS

March 15	Trimester 2 report cards go home	March 26	Alton Field Trip to Casella Sugar House
March 15	Ice Skating at Alford Arena	April 3	STEM After School Program VRS
March 20	MEA EmPowerME testing begins	April 4	VRS Field Trip to Casella Sugar House
March 21	Down Syndrome Awareness 'Lots of Socks' Wear bright, crazy socks!	April 10	Kindergarten Screening at AES
March 25-29	VRS Dino-mite Book Fair	April 12	Kindergarten Screening at VRS

ACES, SEL and Trauma Sensitive Schools

There has been an increased focus on having a better understanding of the many complicated children we are seeing in schools now. The Adverse Childhood Experiences Study identifies a number of events that may impact students negatively. These adverse experiences are things such as divorce, having a family member die, incarceration of a parent, domestic violence, child abuse or neglect, frequent moves or homelessness. Teachers had the opportunity last spring to attend two presentations on ACES and found the information valid and helpful. This year I have attended three DOE conference days with presenter Cassie Yackley on Trauma Sensitive Schools. She is a gifted speaker and is very knowledgeable and passionate. She has worked extensively with schools in New Hampshire and has started coordinating with the DOE in Maine. She shared a lot of information about how to manage and help these ACEs kids in our schools. Our workshop day last Friday afforded all staff the opportunity to hear Heather Forbes, author of Help For Billy, speak about "A Beyond Consequences Approach to Helping Children in the Classroom" at Bangor High School. She was terrific and provided a lot of insight into the book, which staff has been reading throughout the district. A break out session earlier that day on Social Emotional Learning was very helpful in thinking about a schoolwide approach to all of this. It specifically involves directly teaching the SEL language to empower children to understand and deal with situations that arise. The information that was shared would pull together many things that we have happening already into a more cohesive whole. It also provided resources for more information and for fun books and games with which to approach this learning. This attention to the complicated lives from which some of our children come, is eye opening and compelling. Each of us has the capacity to positively impact all children that are in our care for a good part of every day!

AES Parent Group

Alton Elementary School parents are renewing efforts to raise funds to update the equipment on the playground. They have a plan for each month coming up! In April they plan to have a Nature's Vision catalog sale, which has been well received in the past. In May they plan to sell calendars for a calendar raffle with drawings the month of June. On June 8th, there will be a spring fling at the school. Fun activities and concessions are in the works for that day. It should be great! To date about \$4500 has been raised for this purpose, so we do have quite a way to go yet. Heather Dykstra, Melissa Gil and Shannon Pettit are the driving force for this undertaking.



Read Across America Week

Both schools celebrated literacy daily during the first week of March. There were reading buddy groups on pajama day, dress like twins or Thing 1 and Thing 2 day, dress like what you want to be when you grow up day and more, then each school had a book swap!



Ice Skating at the Alfond Arena

Last Friday, Alton Elementary and Viola Rand students went on their second trip to Alfond Arena this winter. It is amazing how much skill kids have acquired with just a couple of chances to skate. The parent volunteers are really key to getting all of the skates laced up and children onto the ice. The hockey team was able to send some players this time, which makes for even more fun! The staff has gotten used to our trips now, and is ready with lots of folding chairs for kids to use as trainers. Sometimes, they are just used for fun on the ice! Mr. Doty joined us and got a good workout in!

