

Ella P. Burr School Newsletter

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Principal: Peter J. Loiselle
School Website: <https://www.rsu67.org/o/ella-burr-school>



Principal's News

Welcome back. I hope everyone had a nice long break with family and got some rest because it's time for some school fun to return. Throughout the school year, the staff has been discussing childhood trauma and stress, how it affects our students, and some ways to help students regulate their emotions. Over the next several newsletters I am going to share some information from various sources to help inform parents of some of the challenges children might be dealing with in hopes it will help parents and guardians better understand and help their child(ren).

Mr. Loiselle

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2019-20 Concerts

Kindergarten: Feb. 6
First Grade: March 5
Second Grade: April 2
Third Grade: May 7

Snow dates are one week later.

Childhood Trauma and Stress www.parenttoolkit.com

So, you've likely heard of "trauma," but what exactly is it? According to the **American Psychological Association**, it's an emotional response. **The National Child Traumatic Stress Network** defines a traumatic event as a "frightening, dangerous, or violent event that poses a threat to a child's life or bodily integrity." When we first think of the word "trauma," we probably think of serious, catastrophic events like combat or sexual assault. But Guy Macpherson, a psychologist who focuses on the study of trauma and hosts the podcast "**Trauma Therapist Live!**", says that many situations can inflict trauma on children. Think about when a child is neglected or witnesses domestic violence. Or when they're exposed to a car accident, natural disaster or school shooting. Unfortunately, the list goes on.

And when situations like these do arise, the stress-response system of the brain becomes more sensitive. To put it simply: a child who's been traumatized by one of these things is likely to be stressed a lot more often. But what does that look like?

Well, picture a child who's just lived through a hurricane. They might start crying when it's raining outside. Their brain is just a lot more sensitive to that trigger. A child who's been abused might be extra sensitive about their personal space, while a child who hasn't been abused might not get upset when someone gets too close. We call reactions like these amplified responses, and they happen when the "fight or flight" response in the brain is activated.

Research by Dr. Bruce Perry, a psychiatrist and Senior Fellow of the **Child Trauma Academy** in Houston, Texas, found that when a brain is frequently under high amounts of stress, it starts to become prepared for stress continuously. Think about it this way: If it's been raining outside every day for the past six months, you've probably gotten in the habit of bringing your umbrella and raincoat to work. It's become second nature to you. Finally, if it stops to rain one day, you might still be a little cautious and bring your raincoat and umbrella - just in case. That's exactly what the traumatized brain is doing. It's used to protecting the body from stress. So, when a child who's grown up under copious amounts of stress finally gets a break, their brain will still function in a protective way.

Pre-K News

Ms. Sherman and Ms. Tash

Happy New Year to all our children and families! We are finishing up our unit on wind and water. Soon we will be starting Unit 4 in OWL, *The World of Color*. There are many fun learning activities focused on mixing colors, patterns, colors in nature and design. Stay tuned because our second set of checkpoints will be coming up at the end of the month. Thank you, families, for all that you do! *Pre-K Staff*

Early K/Kindergarten News

Mrs. McCarthy, Miss. Crockett, Mrs. Edwards, Mrs. Morse, Mrs. Olsen, and Mrs. Peters

January is an exciting month for our kindergarten friends after a restful winter break our kiddos are ready to jump back into learning. This month, among other things, students will continue to strengthen their writing using sight words, begin working with addition and subtraction facts, and explore a new science unit covering materials and motion. The students will also begin bringing home a nightly reading bag as we move into leveled reading groups. Of course, we will still squeeze in some kindergarten fun as we learn and celebrate together the life of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. with our traditional white eggs-brown eggs lesson and scrambled egg breakfast! Early K is learning about Arctic Animals and investigating snowflakes. Next, we will move down to Antarctica and study penguins. We will do literacy, art, math and geography activities centered around these topics.

First-Grade News

Mrs. Cuccinello, Mrs. Harper, and Miss Croce

The first-grade team has had a couple of changes that have happened. The wonderful changes were for Mrs. Harper to step into a Reading Recovery position and for Mrs. Whittier to take over Mrs. Harper's classroom. The learners have accepted the change quite well and Mrs. Whittier seems to fit right into our teaching team. Now onto what the first graders are up to this month. First grade has been working on addition and subtraction in math and working on getting those doubles facts down. It sure doesn't seem like we even had a vacation because learners haven't skipped a beat with their reading. They have continued to make gains and are eager to read more and more. First graders are also working on informational writing. They are learning how to become teachers of a topic and write an informational book on it.

Second-Grade News

Mrs. Hallett, Mrs. Stevens, Mrs. Gardner, and Mrs. Himes

Welcome, 2020! Here is what 2nd graders are learning about this month. In Reading, we're learning how to find the Main Idea and Supporting Details in various texts. In Writing, we're working on How-To Manuals. The students have been brainstorming different activities that they know how to do well and writing about them! In Math, we're continuing to learn about different concepts around Money. In Science, we will explore a unit on Animals and their different adaptations. We would like to thank all of you for your amazing support during our Pennies From Angels service learning project! We collected over \$1,000 in loose change! Amazing! Happy New Year to all! -Second Grade Teachers :)

Third-Grade News

Ms. Tolman, Mrs. Thornton, Mrs. Manzo, and Mrs. Brawn

Happy New Year! Third graders have done well settling back in after our holiday break. In ELA, we will be starting to read and write informational texts. In Math, we are working on multiplication of larger numbers by one digit. We have finished our habitat unit in Science and will be beginning experiments through the FOSS program. Learners have recently brought home a letter about saving pop tabs for the Ronald McDonald house. We will be saving them for the remainder of the year.

Morning Math Club Mrs. Gulesian and Mrs. Gordon

Third-grade learners are beginning to do quite a lot of multiplication activities in Morning Math. They are also practicing adding in one and two-digit columns. A gumball activity has kept a lot of them busy with simple adding and subtracting. They earn a small prize after twelve lessons.

Vocabulary Mrs. Crane, Ms. Murchison, and Mrs. Harper

Developing an extensive vocabulary and knowing how to use that vocabulary efficiently is key to developing strong overall language skills and learning to read. Here are some suggestions on how you can support your child's vocabulary development at home:

- **Continue to read to/with your child.**
- **Create a culture of reading and conversation at home.**
- **Explain new vocabulary and concepts.**
- **Point out how words relate to each other.** Simple word relationships include words related by category (colors, shapes, numbers, nouns, adjectives), by concept (words that have to do with a single topic, things you see in a school, things you need to complete an activity), object/function, words that mean the same thing, opposites, and sound-alike words to name a few.
- **Make sure your child experiences and uses new words in a variety of ways.** To successfully integrate new words into your child's vocabulary they have to hear the word multiple times, in a variety of meaningful contexts, in all settings.

Have fun with words. Joke around, make silly rhymes, talk about silly words, invent absurd words, recite kid-type poems, look up fun quotes, discuss feelings or tone of books/stories, talk about exciting and interesting things, discuss books, describe pictures in books, ask questions and sing.

Physical Education/Health Mr. Lindsay

PE News: we have been patiently watching the weather in hopes we get enough snow for our snowshoeing unit. As we start a new year, 2020, we are also beginning the team strategy unit. Students will be on teams during PE class and will be working on communication, teamwork, and sportsmanship as we engage in activities designed to make them strategize.

Art and Music Mrs. York

Art is finishing up our work with color and will be looking at textures soon.

Music classes are starting concert preparations so be looking for a save the date! Kindergarten is first on February 6 at 1 pm. Other things we will be looking at and listening to include sounds that are noise and sounds that are musical, along with instrument identification.

From the Library/Media Center Mrs. Pellitier

In the Library, we continue to learn proper book handling/care skills, as well as exploring new and exciting people, places and things through our reading. The goal is for every learner to find a love for books either through words or pictures, allowing them to learn about things they may never have the opportunity to experience personally.

In our second and third-grade computer classes, learners are developing proper laptop care/skills, as well as learning keyboarding. They've been working to learn keyboarding skills through a program that is in a game form, which most learners enjoy. This instruction will help them become more proficient in those skills needed as they progress in their educational careers.

We are fortunate to have received a grant which provided us with 3Doodler Pens and Sphero Robots. These will be introduced soon to our second and third-graders in after school activities. Please keep watch for permission slips, which need to be completed and returned to allow your child to participate in these activities.



Family Support Mrs. Turner

Ella P. Burr Elementary
23 Ella P. Burr St.
Lincoln, ME 04457

Phone:
(207) 794-3014

Fax:
(207) 794-2602

E-mail:
ploiselle@rsu67.org

**Empowering
Learners, Today
and Tomorrow.**

Support for Others during the holidays:

Penobscot Valley Hospital donated 28 turkey vouchers to our school district. Members of a department in PVHS also donated to a family in our school. This added to the second-grade service-learning project called "Pennies for Angels" helped make the holidays better for others. We also used some funds from our anonymous donation to buy winter clothing for students in our school.

Ella P. Burr BackPack Program:

The Lincoln Maine Historical Society donated some snacks to our program. My oldest granddaughter, Addison gave me a \$60 donation for the program as a Christmas present. Nikita McMannus bought several gloves for children in need, she did this using her own money. We are very blessed to have such kind people in our schools and community.

A reminder that if you would like your child to receive snacks to have a school and bring home some food for the weekend, please call or send a note in. If you have signed up and have misplaced your orange bag, please call or send in a note. We have the means to help out and are happy to.

Fuel Fund:

Please remember that every Friday students and staff can bring in 50 cents to wear a hat in school. The money collected helps families keep warm during the cold winter months.

Kindness Challenge:

Mr. Loiselle has set up a challenge to all the students at Ella P. Burr! If we can fill the school-wide bucket two times before school is over he willshave his head in front of the entire school! The kiddos are very excited and motivated to see this happen. I have to be honest with you, the staff is pretty excited too! We know they can do it and this is a great motivator to keep being "safe, respectful, responsible and above all kind".

Guidance Lessons:

This month we will be learning more about how to show compassion for others and reviewing how to regulate our emotions when we are having strong emotions.

Please feel free to call me at any time with any questions or concerns.

Respectfully, Patrice Turner - School Counselor

*"A child without
education is like a
bird without
wings."*

Tibetan Proverb

***From the Ella P. Burr family to yours, May your days be filled
with love, joy, and peace this holiday season and in the new
year.***