

6/8/2023

**Principal's Report
to the
School Board**

It is hard to imagine that it is June already and we are heading into the summer months. Our students are excited about their summer activities even though we are still focused on academic progress. We finished our progress monitoring program with the STAR assessments this month. These results will be presented at this month's School Board meeting. Our summative assessments, the State's Assessment System (SAS) results will also be presented. Both of these testing systems give accountability measures of how well our school is performing in the academic realm.

In other school news and events, we held our annual Poetry Night this past month. We integrated the focus of poetry with the 20th Commemoration of the Old Man of the Mountain falling down. Our students did an amazing job of both writing poetry and illustrating their poems with their various art forms. All of those afternoons thinking that something was burning in school paid off when we viewed the sixth graders wood burning handiwork of the mountains.

Shelley Koehler, school librarian and enrichment coordinator, hosted the Scholastic Book Fair this year with huge success. Students got to pick out some favorite books to take home and in return, our school received 40% of the profits which equaled over \$800 in Scholastic Book monies. We will be buying more books for our library with these funds.

Continuing our tradition of holding community events in our multi-purpose room, the Easton Conservation Commission, requested that we hold a bear presentation at our school. Approximately 200+ community members attended an intriguing lecture on black bear behaviors and habitats by Ben Killam. He is the owner and founder of a bear rehabilitation center in Lyme, NH, and currently has 138 bear cubs at his center.

The Lafayette teachers held their scheduled professional development day in May which focused on math curriculum and strategies. As this is the first year that we are using the revamped, "Eureka Squared" math program, it was a good time to highlight the pros and cons of this curriculum. Other professional development days are scheduled in July (3 days) and August (3 days).

Our wonderful Lafayette Parent/Teacher Organization (LPTO), held their annual Community Spelling Bee which saw 16 teams compete for the coveted trophy. This fundraising activity offered the adults in our community a great deal of fun and excitement. Every school should

have a LPTO as successful as ours. Sarah Reeder and Ashley Garrison do a fantastic job of handling the administrative chores of this organization which enables many superb enrichment opportunities for all of our students.

We held transition meetings and visits between our sixth graders and the Profile School. These important exchanges help alleviate some of the anxiety around moving to middle school while also extenuating the excitement around attending the “big school”. Traditionally, our students perform extremely well at Profile Middle and High School.

Our Spring Concert was a big success. We heard traditional singing from all of the classes as well as our band and chorus song numbers. What we did not expect was hearing over 35 drummers performing for us all at the same time. The uniqueness of drumming on huge exercise balls was not lost on the audience as they clapped along to the songs. Mrs. Song (Yes, our music teacher’s name!), was certainly creative on this one!

The culminating trip of fifth and sixth graders traveled to Boston to study science and history in a hands-on manner. We visited the Boston Science Museum for the morning, ate lunch along the Charles River, and then walked the Freedom Trail, visiting the North Church, Bunker Hill Monument and the USS Constitution. These types of activities enhance learning in bringing academia to our students in a real-life setting.

Another very special event was my retirement party, held outside near our Outdoor Classroom and attended by current and former students and staff members as well as various community members and parents. The outpouring of sentiments was overwhelming as our students sang a song, the staff read a remembrance, and the School Board said some very kind words. It was a heartwarming farewell which will hold a very special place in my heart. The amount of thoughtfulness and preparation, during a tough end of the year period, was truly remarkable. My tenure at Lafayette Regional School is the highlight of my 41 years in the field of education. As our circus friend, Troy Wunderle always reminds us, we don’t say goodbye in the circus, instead we say, “I’ll see you down the road.”

Thank you, Lafayette School Board, for working so diligently in supporting our incredibly successful, small school. In an age when volunteerism is not very popular, this group meets and works together in making sure that the children in our community get a solid elementary education. Thank you to the SAU #35 office which is seldom acknowledged but helps on the “back side” of our educational endeavors. From grants to budgets to contracts to payroll, the SAU staff helps our school run as smoothly as possible. Thank you to our dedicated staff members, who work day in and day out to ensure that our students get the very best instruction and support possible. Thank you to the parents and community members who pass our budgets and most importantly, send their children to school eager and ready to learn. Together, we have focused on our students and not been overly distracted by the many

complexities of the world around us, including the recent pandemic. The school is on solid footing but improvements can always be made. I am confident that Lafayette Regional School will continue on its successful path towards meeting our Mission Statement:

“As a community, we educate, nurture, and challenge all students to be successful, enthusiastic, life-long learners who creatively explore, effectively apply and share knowledge as responsible participants in an every-changing world.”

I wish you all the very best in the years ahead.

Respectfully submitted,

**Gordie Johnk
Principal**