Principal’s Report
to the
School Board

The month of December was packed with great enthusiasm and good cheer; however, it went by extremely quickly given that we had a two week winter vacation. Since our last School Board meeting, one of our most exciting activities was our annual Holiday Concert. We tried a totally new stage arrangement which appeared to work out very well. While the Kindergarteners annually steal the show, the rest of the students played and sang their hearts out and a great time was had by all!

Under the tutelage of Kathy Ross, our sixth graders helped their first grade friends build gingerbread houses and integrated many math activities into this fabulous event. They counted by ones, twos, threes, fives, and tens, as they decorated each house with ornamental candies. The enthusiastic spirit between our oldest and younger students was simply amazing! The sixth graders also read holiday stories to the rest of the school in small groups. This annual tradition also warms the heart of everyone involved. Our Chorus visited our elderly neighbors at the Lafayette Center and sang Christmas carols with them. Despite this cold weather, we are actively organizing our Winter Program which will start this Friday. This logistical nightmare has many great benefits for our students and is greatly appreciated by many students and parents. We will, once again, be downhill skiing and snowboarding at Cannon Mountain, Nordic skiing at Bretton Woods, and participating in Winter Fun activities throughout our area.

Due to a medical leave of absence, we are staffing our sixth grade classroom with Emily Clark and Shelley Koehler. Mrs. Clark is teaching mathematics in the mornings. Mrs. Koehler is teaching language arts in the afternoons. These extremely talented and veteran teachers are getting our students ready for the upcoming Smarter Balance Assessment Consortium (SBAC) tests. These state-wide assessments will replace the New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP) and will take place in March and April of this spring. This online, adjusted testing will be very different from pencil and paper testing, will assess the Common Core State Standards, and will hold our school accountable for teaching and learning these fairly new standards. Grades 3-6 will undergo this assessment.

We are excited about the full-day Kindergarten proposal for next year. The expectations for schools and students have greatly increased over time and we simply cannot accomplish all that is needed in a part-time program. We hope for community support in the upcoming Annual School Meeting for this transition to occur. Otherwise, our budget for next year is a fairly conservative one. Our wood pellet heating system is moving forward with a new RFP out for bid this month. We look forward to an improved and more efficient way to heat our building.

Please contact me if you have any questions or comments regarding this report or any other school issue, please let me know.

Respectfully submitted,

Gordie Johnk
Principal