Principal's Report
to the
School Board

If you ever wonder about where the holiday spirit of giving has gone with our over-commercialized focus these days, you need only to participate in one of our annual Recycle Sales. Every student comes down to our multi-purpose room to shop for gifts for their families. Each present costs a quarter and every child goes home with a big bag of wrapped gifts. Our Lafayette Parent/Teacher Organization (LPTO) set up the many tables of presents over the weekend and wrapped each present as holiday music filled the room. Our students were so delighted to focus on the giving aspect of this season and all of them went home with great big smiles on their excited faces. Our Recycle Sale is a quintessential example of the true spirit of these holidays!

Our sixth grade students competed in two First Lego League tournaments this month. These events are comprised of a robotic game, robot design, presentation, and core values. Our team prepared all fall to research, write, and present their information on this year’s theme of the “Trash Trek Challenge”. The fascinating subject of trash was a hot topic with the Lafayette Litter Team concentrating on “litter” as their project. The team of 10 sixth grade students traveled to Bishop Brady High School for the Qualifying Regional Tournament and it was “touch and go” whether or not they would qualify for the State Tournament. They did place high enough to go to the state tournament which was held at Nashua High School South, just last Saturday. They conducted themselves extremely well, met all challenges with a positive attitude, but did not bring home any hardware (trophies). What they did learn, however, was that hard work pays off, teamwork is very important, presentation skills can pay huge dividends, and that meeting challenges can be rewarding and fun. Everyone is extremely proud of our First Lego League team!

Report Cards went home last week. This important documentation followed the November Progress Reports and Parent/Teacher Conferences so there should have been few surprises for parents to read. All of these valuable teacher/parent communications are critical components in the overall success and achievement of every student.

Teachers are continuing to work with the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium test results in their Professional Learning Communities. These groups meet weekly to discuss instructional strategies, curriculum modifications, assessment techniques, and overall student behavior management. While our students scored fairly well on these rigorous tests, we are constantly
looking for ways to improve student achievement. We look forward to this spring’s assessment and are hoping for a more timely return of test results from the State Department of Education.

Many thanks are extended to our hard-working Budget Committee. The members included: Tom Eyman and Luther Kinney who represented the School Board, Amy Mullins and Kevin Low represented the parents, David McPhaul represented the community, Karen Marks and Toni Butterfield represented the staff, and Gordie Johnk as Chairman. Five sessions were spent pouring over the budget, line item by line item. In the end, our budget for next year will show an increase due to a new Special Education para-professional (new student), salary increases for staff, a used truck to purchase, and assorted other costs that increased from last year. This committee made a budget recommendation to the Board which will be shared at the December meeting.

Budget report deadlines, teacher observations, collaborating with teachers, and a myriad of meetings have kept us all busy this month. The children are getting antsy as season festivities are in the air. Their energy is often contagious and barely contained…. Our annual Winter Concert is coming up on Tuesday, December 15th at 6:00 and nothing can beat listening to those delightful voices and instrumentalists. You are cordially invited to attend.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns that you may have regarding this report or the school in general. Thank you for your continued support and efforts on our behalf. We wish you all a very Merry Christmas, Happy Kwanzaa, and/or a Happy Ramadan!

Respectfully submitted,

Gordie Johnk
Principal