Principal’s Report
to the
School Board

This last full month of school has been one of outstanding learning opportunities, fun activities, and wonderful field trips. Teachers are focusing on keeping students engaged in their learning as our time with them gets shorter. While students are excited about their upcoming summer activities, many of them are expressing their perceived missing school, a not so unusual situation at Lafayette. Be assured, however, that there are the traditional numbers of children who are eagerly looking forward to the “dog days of summer”!

We tested all of our students in the North West Education Association (NWEA) assessments and are using this data to determine student growth this year. This is part of our standardized assessment system and will be integrated into our teacher evaluation system next year.

A plethora of activities characterize the last month of school and this year is no exception. Our youngest scientists (grades K-2) traveled to the Squam Lakes Science Center to study wildlife and habitats. The Hampstead Players visited Lafayette to perform “Hercules” in keeping with our study of Greek mythology. The third graders visited the Flume and Basin in Franconia Notch State Park after conducting river system studies at Copper Cannon Camp. Our fourth graders traveled to Belknap Mills to recreate what it was like to work in the New Hampshire mills making socks for soldiers during the Civil and WW I wars. The fifth and sixth grade classes participated in their annual Boston trip to visit the Science Museum of Boston as well as walk the Freedom Trail in studying our nation’s history. Many thanks go out to the teachers who organized these wonderful trips and the many parents who helped chaperone them.

Our Spring Concert was a huge success and it was remarkable to see the band and chorus’ growth over this past year. Festival of the Arts was held last Friday and was also a resounding success. The sixth graders facilitated each of the nine stations and the fifth graders led their respective teams in visiting each station throughout the day. The weather cooperated as did the students! A grand time was had by all! The Unified Arts teachers, led by Jesse Lyman, did a great job of planning and preparing for this event.

The retirement party for Bill Mellekas was a huge success. The multi-purpose room was full, our students did a fantastic time of giving him a heartfelt send off, and even our staff members made a video that delighted Bill. The School Board and our Lafayette Parent /Teachers
Organization (LPTO) presented gifts of appreciation for Bill’s 32 years of service to Lafayette. Many community members attended to wish him all of the best in his retirement. We will never replace Bill Mellekas but Catherine Burton will be our new second grade teacher next year.

Our staff will participate in a summer professional development program called Response Classroom. This well-known and documented social/emotional development program for elementary students will help us meet our school goal of fostering more responsible future citizens. This four day workshop will be held at Lafayette and be paid for with grants. All staff members will have an opportunity to participate.

The Food Service discussion for next year is an ongoing one. We have several applications of interest for the new Director of Food Services position, however, we are also looking at a food service company to come in and give us a proposal as well. The School Board’s Building and Grounds Committee continues to work with our engineer in the process of siting and designing our new heating system, consisting of a hybrid 80% wood pellets and 20% propane model.

It is time, once again, to bring forward the proposal for a full-day kindergarten program to the Lafayette community. We are among the last of the local schools who have voted for a full-day program. The Common Core State Standards have significantly raised the bar, requiring more rigor at an early grade level. A part-time kindergarten program like we have now will not produce the results that we would like to see. We would like to survey the parents, this fall, regarding their opinions on this concept. That will enable us to produce a line item in the following year’s budget for a full-day kindergarten program.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions that you may have regarding this report. Thank you for your time and efforts on the behalf of our students and staff.

Respectfully submitted,

Gordie Johnk
Principal