Our colorful autumn experience is quickly turning into a winter weather watch. In fact, we had to cancel our Outdoor Education hike to Lonesome Lake this week due to the nor’easter that is forecasted to arrive this Thursday (today). While we educate our students how to dress and what to bring along in case of bad weather setting in while on a hike, we also teach them how to make the important mountain decisions of when to stay home or turn back. Despite their disappointment, our students are learning important decision-making skills that will hopefully help them in many ways as they grow older.

Our New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP) testing is complete. Our students took these tests seriously and performed in an appropriate manner during the testing sessions. The results of these standardized tests will hopefully be sent back to us by the December winter break. The teachers will be using these results to determine any modifications or changes to their instruction, assessment, or curricula.

School activities and field trips included the following exciting adventures! Our Outdoor Education Program hiked to the summit of Middle Sugarloaf Mountain this month. It was a spectacularly beautiful day and all of the fifth and sixth graders as well as the chaperones had a great time! Every student has the responsibility for completing academic work during these hikes including taking water and air temperature samples, writing observations, sketching observations, writing poetry, and using much of this data/information to answer questions back in the classroom the next day. When we take the “classroom” outside on these trips, the learning becomes more powerful and personal for many of our students. Mrs. Ross and Ms. Sieberg organize this logistical nightmare of making sure that 32 students have everything that they need to be safe and comfortable in this outdoor learning activity. The first (Mrs. Lanin) and fourth (Mr. Ferguson) grades continue to SKYPE with other students in schools around the world. This global presence is part of our technology goal and is important aspect of having students in a small school in northern New Hampshire learn more about the world around them. The fourth grade also visited the Alpine Clinic to learn more about the skeletal system. Dr. Chen and his staff were very informative hosts, even putting casts on some of our students! This class also completed the infamous Monster Project which can be viewed in our library at any time. Mr. Lyman conducted his renowned Soccer Tournament and Wiffleball World Series this month with all participants having a great time. We conducted our weekly Community Meetings focusing on concepts such as Fire Prevention (The Franconia and Sugar Hill Fire
Departments came to demonstrate and teach us about fire safety.), Halloween Safety (The Franconia Police Chief John Monahan and the Sugar Hill Police Chief David Wentworth visited and discussed how to stay safe during Halloween.), new library books were also introduced to the school community, as well as an explanation of the Monster Project.

We have also been busy with keeping our facilities up to date and looking good. This fall we had a bleacher inspection, health inspection, fire inspection, and an ongoing grounds cleanup. A flu clinic for staff members was also conducted this month.

While we are enjoying a strong start this fall the major frustration for all teachers has been our technology. Specifically, our internet has not run properly or as fast as promised, connectivity issues were a conundrum, filtering problems were many, and a myriad of other computer system problems have hampered the technology integration and functionality that we have been striving for these past few years. We have been working through all of these significant issues with our technology partner, Profile Technologies, in trying to achieve the student success that is our obvious goal. It has been a long fall in this respect....

Our Budget Committee continues to meet on a weekly basis as we try to manage the balance between providing a strong elementary school education with being fiscally responsible to all taxpayers. Every line item elicits an explanation and is thoroughly scrutinized. We have met for 3 work sessions and are making progress. Four more sessions are scheduled with the end goal of having a recommended budget to hand over to the School Board at their December School Board meeting.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any question that you may have with this report or any school topic in general.

Respectfully submitted,

Gordie Johnk
Principal