Principal’s Report  
to the  
School Board

We have been pleasantly surprised this fall with the unseasonably warm temperatures while playing outside at recess time. The month of November usually is rather cold and gray so we will enjoy this weather while it lasts. To be sure, we are working on the logistics and organization of our Winter Program already!

Our Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) online, standardized state test results will be sent home to parents very soon. These scores, mentioned last month in this report, will inform parents how well their child is performing, based on the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Teachers will use these assessments to gauge how well they covered the respective curricula in English Language Arts and Mathematics. It will also serve as a benchmark for teachers and administrators as far as an accountability measure for how well our school is performing. The increased rigor that these tests encompass is significant. The questions focus heavily on assessing each student’s thinking rather than the regurgitation of facts. A Principal’s “roundtable” conversation with parents is scheduled to answer any questions that may arise from this new online testing.

To help meet these new requirements, we have instituted a new math program called, “Eureka Math”. This is the only math program found that specifically addresses the increased rigor of the CCSS. Teachers experienced six days of professional development activities last summer that focused on math instruction. While the learning curve is steep for both students and teachers, we are confident that student achievement will improve as a result of an improved curriculum and instruction.

General school activities this month included an enrichment activity by the Los Sugar Kings, a Cuban trained musician, who taught our students about the rhythm and nuances of Cuban music. Our very generous LPTO and the Arts Alliance of the North Country made this event possible. Our annual Halloween Parade down Main Street, Franconia, went smoothly. Many thanks go out to the Franconia and Sugar Hill Police and Fire Departments and Life Squad for stopping traffic and keeping all of us safe. A safety meeting with both Police Departments was held with all students to make sure that they knew the guidelines for staying safe on Halloween night. Parent/Teacher Conferences were held this month with huge parent participation. These valuable conversations kept parents informed of what is happening in the classrooms as well as what families may do at home to accelerate learning. The Franconia Ski Club (FSC) held
two activities here at school this month. Their Director, Rich Smith, spoke to our students regarding scholarships to their club for the upcoming winter. Several of our students applied and were granted scholarships! The other big FSC event was their annual FSC Ski Swap which was located in our Multi-Purpose Room. By Saturday morning, they had transformed our little gymnasium into a vibrant ski sale with barely enough room to turn around. Hundreds of families had the opportunity to outfit the whole family in good but used winter equipment.

We did have some excitement last week when our Primary students (grades K-3) were outside during recess. Gunshots were heard coming from across the interstate. Teachers immediately reversed-evacuated the playground with their whistles and everyone came inside as quickly as possible. When I went outside, several more gunshots were heard and seemingly rather close by the interstate. We kept everyone inside, called 911, and cooperated with the subsequent police investigation. Parents were notified after the “all clear” signal was given by the Police Chief. No one was seen on Scragg Mountain Road, the area where the shots were fired and immediately across the interstate from the school. Our local police departments responded quickly and handled the incident in a very professional manner.

Please do not hesitate to contact me regarding this report or any question you may have regarding our wonderful school.

Respectfully submitted,

Gordie Johnk
Principal