Principal’s Report

to the

School Board

The start of school this year went smoothly with lots of new and excited faces greeting us. We have 27 new students (17 of them Kindergarteners). The breakdown of students in grades K – 6 is as follows:

- Kindergarten = 17
- 1st grade = 18
- 2nd grade = 17
- 3rd grade = 17
- 4th grade = 18
- 5th grade = 9
- 6th grade = 15

Total = 111

The new families are eager to join and belong to our school community and are learning the ropes quickly (What time does school REALLY start? for ex.). The changes and transitions of having a new sixth grade teacher, new art teacher, new enrichment coordinator, and several new para-professionals is also going well. We were required to hire an additional para-professional, outside of what was budgeted, due to an unexpected student with an Individual Education Plan.

Undoubtedly, the biggest transition is that our front door is locked at all times and visitors are being “buzzed in” to school. The feedback so far has been overwhelmingly positive with many parents and families thanking the school for offering this additional security measure. Most people understand the necessity in this day and age of school violence. There were a few (two) rather disgruntled members of our community who had an issue with this operational change to our school.

We are busy planning our annual International Peace Day celebration, across all grades. This collaborative project-based effort is being led by our 4th grade and Mr. Ferguson and Mrs. Koehler. The cumulating activity will be on Tuesday, September 24th with each multi-aged group presenting their ideas on what peace means to them.

In our third week of school, our teachers are quite busy getting to know their students, assessing them for benchmarking purposes, and starting in on curricular activities. We have switched to a Fountas and Pinnell program for reading and writing instruction and assessment.
The professional development activity for this switch was held during the summer at Lesley University in Cambridge, MA, and totally grant funded. The goal is to have a more sequential, uniform, and documented reading/writing instructional and assessment program for our students. This will allow us to better monitor student progress in each of these areas. NWEA online testing is also being planned for benchmarking purposes in the weeks ahead. Next month, we will, once again, participate in the state-wide NECAP testing which meets our accountability responsibilities under the federal law, No Child Left Behind. All of these assessment results will be communicated to parents.

My recent meetings with both the Franconia Emergency Management Program team and our Energy Audit from Siemen’s Engineering firm will be topics for discussion at this month’s School Board meeting.

As always, please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns that you may have with this report or any school related item in general.

Respectfully submitted,

Gordie Johnk
Principal