

# REPORT TO THE CEDAR GROVE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Michael J. Fetherman, Superintendent

February 27, 2018

## ENROLLMENT INFORMATION

Grade	June 2017	January 2018	Change (+/-)
K	106	93	- 13
1	84	110	+ 26
2	120	82	- 38
3	130	123	- 7
4	113	128	+ 15
Total	553	536	- 17
5	127	114	- 13
6	125	127	+ 2
7	132	124	- 8
8	139	135	- 4
Total	523	500	- 23
9	115	130	+ 15
10	132	114	- 18
11	146	130	- 16
12	120	142	+ 22
Total	513	516	+ 3
Special Education (Self-Contained PreK-12)	20	27	+ 7
Preschool (Tuition)	4	14	+ 10
GRAND TOTAL	1613	1593	- 20
Handicapped students in other Public and Private Schools & Shared Time Students			41
Home Instruction			5

### **BOE Goal #1: Student Achievement / College & Career Readiness**

- Assess the impact of character education as part of the curriculum in all District schools; *Character Committees* at each school will evaluate and rewrite Code of Conduct practices to reflect desired standards.
  - Each school's committee has made progress with reviewing current Code of Conduct practices. Recommendations are currently being compiled for careful consideration.
- Conduct needs assessment of AP and college prep courses offered at CGHS; consider assessing student interest for the creation of new courses.
- Conduct an audit of all placement rubrics in grades 7-12 to establish a balance between inclusiveness and rigor; rewrite, as necessary.
- Conduct a needs assessment of "decile" class ranking at CGHS.
  - Beginning with the Class of 2021, class ranking by decile (10% increments) will be offered.

### **BOE Goal #2: Communication & Community Outreach**

- Facilitate open discourse with the greater Cedar Grove community regarding District happenings through the use of social media, print media and the hosting of events. Specifically, this effort will include the use of coffee talks, *Did You Know?* emails, Facebook, Twitter, public meetings with the CG Town Council and regular columns in the VCGT.
- Our most recent Coffee Talk was held at North End School on January 18<sup>th</sup>. Several parents were in attendance to discuss topics that ranged from the efficacy of our new standards-based elementary school assessment rubrics to the need
- The Cedar Grove Education Foundation is back! The superintendent and Board of Education wish to extend their sincere appreciation to Mrs. Kathleen Jablonski, CGEF President, Mrs. Trish Wilson, CGEF Vice President, and Mrs. Jennifer Warkentin, CGEF Treasurer. The Foundation is preparing to hold its first event sometime this spring.
- The Friday Folder is sent out via email to all parents/guardians who have registered their email address with the school district. The Friday Folder contains district-wide announcements, school-level updates, FSA and/or APT reminders and recreation department fliers and registration documents. All announcements are archived for your convenience.
- Follow your superintendent on Facebook @ Cedar Grove Superintendent
- Follow your superintendent on Twitter: @Cgssuper
- Follow you superintendent on Facebook: Cedar Grove Superintendent
- Follow your high school principal on Twitter: @CGPantherPride
- Follow Cedar Grove High School on Facebook
- Follow your middle school principal on Twitter: @CGMMSPRINCIPAL
- Follow your SE principal on Twitter: @southendprin
- Follow your NE principal on Twitter: @NEprincipal
- If you don't have a Twitter account, text "follow @account name" to 40404 and you will be connected!

### **BOE Goal #3: Technology**

- Continue the pursuit of "Future Ready" certification in all District schools using the Future Ready - NJ Framework. South End School and Memorial Middle School were recently certified as Future Ready as a part of the inaugural certification process!
- Expand, where possible, the 1:1 Chromebook initiative across all District schools.
- Increase STEM offerings, technology programs and extracurricular activities related to technology throughout the District.
- The district-wide January 15, 2018 EdCamp was a huge success! This full-day professional day experience engaged staff in personalized learning that was embedded (for the most part) in technology education and self-improvement. Feedback surveys have been disseminated and will be analyzed to assist us with the planning process for next year's EdCamps! The Technology Committee extends their sincerest appreciation to all of the presenters and organizers of this meaningful and worthwhile event.

#### **BOE Goal #4: Facilities**

- Develop a Strategic Plan for the District that addresses the next five-year and ten-year goals; consider a Demographic Study upon finalization of the plan.
- Remain informed and updated on any of the residential developments in town to be able to plan effectively for any changes in student population.

#### **BOE Goal #5: Finances**

- Maintain fiscal responsibility while identifying and pursuing additional revenue sources for the District including, but not limited to, signage on District property and the Cedar Grove Education Foundation.

#### **Promoting Mathematics and Science in our Schools:**

##### District-Wide:

- Moby Max, an online, easy-to-use, standards-based assessment tool that enables us to monitor student growth as they try and retry questions, is enjoying expanded use by teachers and students of mathematics due in large part to the expertise of Mrs. Massotto, Mrs. Grossman and Mrs. Danieli, teacher leaders who work at North End Elementary School. We are grateful for their assistance!

##### 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills – College & Career Readiness:

- Mr. Cardinale, Business Teacher at CGHS, is currently working with his Sports Management class on running another *Orange Invitational* to be held March 22. He is also in the process of creating the first CGHS Business Honor Society.

##### Professional Development:

- The next round of Conquer Math workshops include Literature in Mathematics and a 3-part series of Differentiation in Math for Grades 2-4.
- The EdCamp Science workshops were a great success. Dr. Djanna Hill shared a slew of hands-on activities for K-4 teachers to bring the NGSS alive! Dr. Jessica Riccio provided insight into assessment and curriculum in Grades 5-12, as well as materials for the new state Science Assessment.

##### Departmental Goals:

- Science teachers district-wide are further investigating the evidence statements within the NGSS to best guide instruction. All teachers are being encouraged to post and translate the Engineering Practices and Cross Cutting Concepts in their classrooms. These are practices that help develop more confident and efficient scientists - “engaging in argument from evidence, interpreting data, developing models, etc.”
- Math teachers district-wide are displaying and referring to the 8 Mathematical Practices to better involve students in identifying the processes they are using within the content. These are practices that help develop more confident and efficient mathematicians - i.e. “persevere in problem solving, model with mathematics, critique the work of others, etc.”
- Dozens of multi-step, layered tasks have been shared with Math Teachers Grades 5-12 from NCTM’s Illustrative Mathematics and have been instructed to be implemented in classrooms as warm-ups, group tasks, homework, and assessment. This is not only for PARCC practice, but also to support the initiative of connecting isolated concepts and applying skills to real-world phenomena or abstract problems.

#### **Fire Drill / Security Drill Update:**

- CGHS: Fire Drill –Feb. 21, 2018; Lock Down Drill – Week of Feb. 26, 2018
- MMS: Fire Drill – Feb. 16, 2018; Lock Down Drill – Week of Feb. 26, 2018
- NE: Fire Drill – Feb. 21, 2018; Lock Down Drill – Week of Feb. 26
- SE: Fire Drill – Feb. 21, 2018; Lock Down Drill – Feb. 12, 2018

### **Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying Update (District-Wide Running Totals):**

- 9 HIB investigation to date:
  - 6 unconfirmed incidences; 3 confirmed incidences

### **CEDAR GROVE HIGH SCHOOL:**

#### **Student Activities/School Special Events:**

- Congratulation to Kathleen Sickinger as our student of month for Social Studies. Katie is currently taking AP United States Government and Politics and has consistently displays a strong work ethic as well as a passion for the subject material. Katie is also a participant in the Tomorrow's Teachers program, where she has built a great rapport with her students. She has left little doubt that she will go on to be a successful educator one day. Beyond the classroom, Katie has also taken on several leadership roles in the student community. She was elected to serve as the President of the National Honor Society and Vice President of the Interact Club. She also was selected as a captain of the girls' soccer team, manager of the boys' basketball team, and she even finds time to write for the school newspaper. Kathleen is obviously a well-rounded individual with a great attitude, positive work ethic, and commitment to academic excellence. For all of these reasons, I believe she is well deserving of the social studies student of the month award for February.
- Congratulation goes out to the Leonardo Da Vinci Chapter of the Italian National Honor Society at Cedar Grove High School for helping raise money for St. Jude's Research Hospital for Children at basketball game between Cedar Grove and Verona on February 20<sup>th</sup>. The goal was to raise \$500, but thanks to the generosity of the students and community of CGHS, \$800 was raised in just a little under 2 hours. All proceeds are being sent directly to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.
- Mrs. Jessen-Foose and the CGHS drama, choir and band students will be presenting "Free to Be You and Me," an interactive and educational platform which initiates discussions, self-reflection and tolerance through a musical performance. This presentation will be at North and South End Elementary Schools, Laning & Forest Elementary Schools in Verona and KDM Elementary School in Rockaway. There will be an additional performance on March 28<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM in the CGHS auditorium.
- Congratulations to the CGHS Interact Club for hosting Cupid's Café on Thursday, February 15<sup>th</sup>. The evening was filled with singing and stand-up comedy from our very own students. The Interact Club raised over \$375 for the American Heart Association.

#### **College & Career Readiness:**

- CGHS will be offering the SAT on Saturday, March 10<sup>th</sup> from 8AM -12:00PM. We have 125 students signed up. We are currently at capacity as the College Board determines the amount of open seats at each site.

#### **Specialist Update (Guidance, SAC, PE, Media Athletics, Clubs):**

- **Guidance (Mrs. Denman and Ms. Rubino)**
  - Essex County College was at CGHS on 2/13 for an Instant Decision day. Six seniors met with the admissions counselor and were accepted for the Fall 2018 semester.
  - Counselors continue to process transcript requests and seniors are inputting acceptance information into their Naviance accounts.
  - Local Scholarships have arrived and are available in the guidance office for CGHS seniors. Information on local scholarships is available for seniors in their Naviance account.
  - The counselors visited MMS on 2/16 to meet with 8th graders to distribute the Program of Studies and provide an introduction to the high school and the scheduling process.
  - Ms. Rubino also visited the 8th grade students at St. Catherine's. Core subject teachers were asked to input course recommendations for next year by February 23rd. Counselors will begin meeting with students to plan next year's schedule during the last week of February.
  - Junior meetings will also include post-high school planning. Students taking AP exams had to bring in their exam fee by 2/9.

- Marking period 3 progress reports will be posted for parents in the portal by 3pm on 2/23. The counselors will also be meeting with any student who is in danger of failing a course.
- Mrs. Denman and Ms. Rubino continue to assist Mrs. DeFabiis, SAC, on the community service program and x2vol. Mrs. Denman worked with Mr. Konopka, NHS advisor, to pilot having access to x2vol. If it is successful, x2vol will be available for use for all CGHS clubs that have a community service requirement.

#### ➤ **Student Assistance Counselor (Ms. DeFabiis)**

- Continued to meet with students regarding any issues or concerns.
- Continued collaboration with staff and administration on a daily basis regarding any issues/concerns about students.
- Logging into X2VOL daily to approve student hours and monitor progress.
- Working and communicating with nonprofit organizations to inform staff of current volunteer opportunities.
- Updating X2VOL bulletin board to provide students with important information
- Emailed students and parents a reminder letter explaining the benefits of X2VOL for those who have not registered as well as for those who have signed up but have not logged in any hours.
- Emailed follow up letters to all students reminding them that all hours will need to be documented by the end of the third marking period.
- Emailed all Seniors actively participating in X2VOL, making them aware of their remaining hours and when service hours will need to be in by.
- Presented at Ed Camp on 1/15/18
- Attended the ASAP-NJ convention on 2/8 and 2/9

#### ➤ **Athletics**

- The boys' basketball team has a current record of 10-13 on the season. The team has qualified for the NJSIAA North 1 Group 1 state playoffs as the #9 seed. The state playoff game will be on February 26<sup>th</sup> as they travel to West Caldwell Tech at 4pm for the first round game. The boys' basketball team had a great 39-36 victory over Verona High School on senior night. During the game the Italian National Honor Society raised \$800 for the St. Jude Research Hospital by raffling off various donated gift baskets.
- The girls' basketball team has a current record of 9-13 on the season. The girls have qualified for the NJSIAA North 1 Group 1 state playoffs as the #8 seed. The state playoff game will be on February 26<sup>th</sup> as they will host Waldwick High School at 7pm for the first round game. The girls' basketball team hosted the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Hoops for Hopes rivalry game against Verona on February 16<sup>th</sup>. Although we fell a bit short on the scoreboard the night was a huge success, raising over \$3,000 for two local CG Fire Fighters battling cancer.
- The wrestling team has finished the dual season with a 9-14 record and lost in the first round of the NJSIAA North 1 Group 1 state tournament to Butler High School. Congratulations to Anthony Clarizio who won his fourth straight Essex County Tournament Championship and to Joe McCarthy who won his first Essex County Tournament Championship. Seven CGHS wrestlers have qualified for the NJSIAA Region Championships by reaching the podium during the District Tournament. The NJSIAA Region Championships will be held on February 24<sup>th</sup> at Mount Olive High School.
- The Passaic Valley/Cedar Grove Hockey Team finished the 2018 season with an 11-11-2 record. The co-op team captured their first ever NJSIAA State Tournament win by defeating Park Regional 5-1 in the first round of the Public B State Tournament. Cedar Grove High School hockey players continue to make huge strides in the program and have contributed in 52 of the teams 79 goals this season
- The CGHS competition cheerleading team has been outstanding this year so far. The team has one 2<sup>nd</sup> place finish, five 1<sup>st</sup> place finishes, and 4 Grand Champion finishes. The team traveled to Texas and placed 7<sup>th</sup> in the 2018 NCA Senior & Junior High School National Championship. They will compete in the NJCDCA State High School Cheer Competition on March 4<sup>th</sup> at Sun Bank Center.

➤ **Media Center (Ms. Swanson)**

- Meetings Attended:
  - Thursday, February 1st, 7:00 PM - Public Library Board of Trustees Meeting
  - Monday, February 5th, 6:45 PM - Public Library Budget Hearing before Town Council
  - Wednesday, February 7th, 11:00 AM - Middle States Planning Committee Meeting
  - Thursday, February 22nd, 8:30 AM - 3:00 PM - North Regional Future Ready Schools-NJ Certification Summit
  - Monday, February 26th, 2:50 PM - Faculty Meeting
- Activities since Last Report:
  - 15 Classes are scheduled to come to the media center as of February 12<sup>th</sup>
  - The media center was/will be open at 7:30 AM on February 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 12, 26, 27 and 28.
  - Attended a one hour webinar on February 5th starting at 4:00 PM on The Incredible Times: A News & Media Literacy Game that is being produced by Common Sense Education
  - Created a website for the Middle States Validation Team members

**APT and Parent Outreach:**

- APT Meeting Monday, February 12<sup>th</sup> , 2018 at 7:00PM

**MEMORIAL MIDDLE SCHOOL:**

**Student Activities/School Special Events:**

- On February 27, the entire 6th, 7th, and 8th grade participated in the 2017-2018 New Jersey Mathematics League Contest. High-scoring students will earn the chance to be invited to the league's Math Camp in July. Memorial Middle School's highest scoring students will also receive Amazon gift cards for their accomplishment.
- During the months of January and February, Miss Caravella and the Student Council planned different activities. Spirit days were conducted for Kindness week. Spare change was collected during lunch periods to help with rebuilding hurricane-affected playgrounds in Texas, Louisiana, Florida, and Puerto Rico. Smile face ornaments were handmade and painted with Mrs. Hatzikyriakou's help to be delivered to local assistive facilities. Students took a pledge to be kind as well as created a smiley face banner which hangs in the middle school entryway.
- Fifteen choir students in grades 5-8 recorded audition tapes to be judged for the New Jersey Elementary and Junior High Honor Choirs. These students competed against fourth through ninth grade students from all over the state. Six students were accepted: Kailyn Luizzi - 5th Grade, Siena Giordano - 6th Grade, Kimlani Tanella - 6th Grade, Gianna Albanese - 8th Grade, Victoria Cutalo - 8th Grade, and Peter Ulrich - 8th Grade. Congratulations to all!
- Sandy Hook Promise is a national non-profit organization led by several family members whose loved ones were killed in the tragic mass shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School. The organization celebrates "Start With Hello Week" which brings attention to the growing epidemic of social isolation and empowers young people to create a culture of inclusion and connectedness within their school, youth organizations and community. MMS celebrated "Start With Hello" on Friday, February 9th. All staff and students were asked to wear green, which is the Sandy Hook Promise's colors. Staff and students were also able to take pictures in front of our new MMS backdrop that has been created by Mrs. Hatzikyriakou! Let's celebrate teamwork and show the community that nobody at MMS is alone.

**College and Career Readiness:**

- Our 5th-grade engineering students have just completed learning about circuits with a PBL assignment. Students brainstormed reasons why they would need a light source and created a list on the board. Students were then challenged to solve one of the problems as they were able to choose from LED diodes, copper tape, 3 volt batteries and any materials necessary to create a base or structure. The final project involved

solving a problem using series or parallel circuits and included a switch to turn the invention on or off to show mastery of how a circuit works.

### **Grade Level Updates:**

**5th Grade** - In Science the students are getting a visit from NBC News 4 Weather Team on February 21! The News 4 anchors will be giving a presentation to the entire 5th grade about weather and how they predict it. The 5th graders will be able to take a tour of the Storm Chaser truck and its equipment! Finally, NBC will be filming a live weather segment for the evening news right from Memorial Middle School! In Social Studies, the students have been working as tour guides for a European country that they chose with their partner. Using the chromebooks, they researched their country's history, culture, food, famous cities and attractions. They then put together a Google slides presentation about their country and will be presenting them to their classes next week acting as tour guides. On February 22, we are honored to have the grandmother of Brian Dorflauer come speak to the 5th grade social studies classes about the Holocaust. Mrs. Paulette Dorflauer was 5 years old living in France when the Germans invaded her home country. She is excited to come speak to the students about her experiences in Europe as well as what it was like coming to America aboard the ship *Queen Elizabeth!* In Language Arts the classes have been reading different texts about historical and influential leaders to celebrate Black History Month. To integrate technology, students are using Flipgrid to record video responses to compare and contrast these influential leaders. As a cross-curricular assignment, students will be writing a reflective paper based on what they learned about the Holocaust from Mrs. Paulette Dorflauer. The students have also worked on Read Works articles based on the weather to go along with the NBC Storm Team coming. In Math, students have been investigating fractions using a multi-sensory approach using pattern blocks, number lines, and fraction tiles.

**6th Grade** - In Language Arts, the sixth graders are just beginning their Influential Person Projects. Each student is in the process of choosing an influential person to research, and will begin by reading a biography or autobiography about that person. After reading, students will conduct further research and write a formal research paper using MLA format. The entire project will culminate in a wax museum presentation for parents in May. Utilizing what they learned about graphing and coordinate grids in Math, students created a "work to reveal" picture on the grid. Students also practiced responding to PARCC questions both on paper and using the PARCC platform. In Science, the students are continuing to learn about the four systems of the Earth. In learning about the geosphere, they performed two labs on identifying and classifying rocks and minerals. They are preparing to learn about the water cycle and apply it to a real world concern of fresh water shortage.

**7th Grade** - As the students continue reviewing, practicing, and building upon the same grammar concepts, essay structures, and reading skills they develop a better understanding of the literature they are reading. At this point in the school year in English 7, students have developed enough literary knowledge to participate in Socratic Seminars. Students often participate in debates and discussion seminars in an effort to demonstrate their understanding of the novel, and to agree and disagree with their classmates' point of view, which is a very important skill to have as a reader and writer. Participating in these Socratic Seminars enables the students to think critically about the literature they are reading and how they feel about it. Another writing structure that the students have been working on in addition to narrative and three-paragraph constructed responses are analytical essays and compare and contrast essays. All essay components have been modeled, practiced, and discussed throughout the duration of the second marking period and are being utilized when writing about the literature being read in the classroom. Sensory description is the new writing technique that the students will be learning. This focuses upon using a variety of figurative language techniques that will be learned throughout the duration of the third marking period. As the students learn each technique, they practice their skills by writing based upon viewing a picture prompt on the Smartboard, seeing an object that the teacher brings and that the students bring in, seeing short film clips to execute this skill, and eventually going outside in the courtyard to write using the five senses. In Social Studies class, the seventh grade students have been discussing Brown vs. Board of Ed for Black History Month. Through readings and videos, the students were able to see what it was like when schools were segregated. Students wrote a research essay on Brown vs. Board of Ed and discussed the issue of

segregation, especially in the school system. The students connected the Constitutional issues we have been learning about in the Judicial Branch unit with the Case of Brown vs. Board of Ed.

**8th Grade** - In Science students have been using Google Classroom to drive internet research on the most common minerals in order to identify real specimens within a lab. In all Language Arts classes, students will soon be completing their short research papers. The process has included choosing from a variety of topics, finding reliable sources, and thesis statement writing. Students will have mini-lessons on writing introductions, citing, and creating a works cited page in MLA format as the process continues. The project will culminate with students creating a presentation for classmates that detail their findings. In Social Studies students are currently participating in a summary writing competition in which they are constructing summaries for the written sections in a document that describes the origin of monotheistic worship in relationship to the Exile in Babylon. Students are writing according to four criteria: original wording, use of content-related vocabulary, expressing main ideas, and appropriate grammar. After completing a summary, one student's work will be selected to represent the class and be displayed on the board using the document camera. Next, the summary will be compared to an outline of teacher notes that identifies and explains the vocabulary and main ideas. The last step is scoring the sample summary according to the four criteria. This process will repeat itself for each section in the lesson.

## **SOUTH END SCHOOL:**

### **Student Activities/School Special Events:**

- South End was pleased to welcome parents interested in our Preschool for the 2018-2019 school year for an Open House and presentation by our Preschool teacher, Ms. Brittany Ur and our Director of Special Service, Mr. Kinney.
- South End had a very special visitor this month. The Cat in the Hat (sponsored by NJEA) visited our K-2 students during a surprise assembly. We couldn't be any more excited!
- Can you believe we have officially celebrated the 100<sup>th</sup> day of school on February 9<sup>th</sup>! Our Preschoolers made 100 day t-shirts, Kindergarteners posters that celebrated everything 100 and first graders designed amazing 100 day hats. The 100<sup>th</sup> day of school was quite the celebration!
- Thank you to all our 3<sup>rd</sup> grade parents who didn't mind getting their hands dirty by helping create our Kachina Dolls, a third grade tradition. We can't wait to see the finished products!
- Grade 4 students amazed their parents and fellow classmates with their reading skills during our annual Grade 4 Battle of the Books. The four grade 4 homerooms each had a team of students who worked together to read 16 novels and tested their comprehension by "battling" each other in the presence of their parents and classmates. Congratulations to all our students who took part. We are so proud of you!
- Our fourth graders absolutely love being part of Panther Peers. Each Wednesday, these students spend time working with the youngest in our school, our Preschoolers. We are so proud of how hard they are working and the leadership skills they are forming.

### **Specialist Update**

**Music:** This month in music, Kindergarten has been practicing their steady beat versus rhythm in songs like *Lucy Locket*, and *Doggie Doggie Where's Your Bone*. They have been practicing quarter and eighth note rhythms by using the syllables in words that have one and two sounds. They have also been practicing their percussion instruments to songs like *Willowbee*, interpreting if the music asks them to start, stop, hold the sound, or keep a beat. First grade has been practicing rhythms, adding half notes and rests. For Valentine's Day we practiced many rhythms and clapped syllables in words like "February". We also played the game "Messenger" where students had to skip around the circle to our song, delivering a rhythm message for whoever they landed on at the end of the song. They practiced using the mallet instruments to keep a steady beat. The students participated in *Wake Up You Sleepyhead* to understand fast/slow loud/soft in a new way, and dramatize song. Second graders finished their

instrument unit, identifying Percussion, Woodwind, Brass, and String instruments. They also practiced some new Jazz songs, and *My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean*, comparing melody and song structure to one of our older songs, *Neesa*. Third grade is wrapping up their recorder karate unit, using notes DEBAG in various ways. We also practice playing all kinds of quarter, eighth, and whole rhythms. We learned how to perform a partner song, *Michael Finnegan/This Old Man*. Fourth Grade has finished learning practicing rhythms, a song *Mexican Moon*, and identifying various musical symbols. We also performed a stick routine to *Sarasponda*, and sang a song about the life of Abraham Lincoln.

**Art:** All classes embraced the true meaning of LOVE during the month of February! Kindergarten classes each designed magnificent multi-media compositions inspired by the artwork of Jim Dine. Kindergarten created paintings, using solid tempera with charcoal and pastel layered over it, while first grade students designed collages using a large variety of handmade papers, watercolors and pastels. Second grade classes painted folk-art hearts, integrating math and art for a simple, stunning composition. Third graders used blending techniques from a previous lesson and integrated that into a valentine using a variety of “love” words, thus, integrating language arts into the lesson. Fourth grades explored the concept of “vintage” and designed beautiful “vintage valentines”, complete with sentimental artifacts from home. The results were breathtaking!

**Physical Education:** All 2nd-4th grade physical education students are participating in a floor hockey unit. The students will understand and perform introductory hockey skills of dribbling, stick handling, and shooting to the best of their ability. They will understand and apply the rules and regulations of hockey to practice and game activities. All K-1 students are in a cooperative learning unit. They are learning the proper safety procedures when riding a scooter. The activities and games will focus on scooter safety and cooperative skills using group challenges.

**Media:** Happy New Year! This short month of February is long on things to do. We have been reading about Valentine’s Day, learning about Presidents and digging into groundhogs and Groundhog Day. We have also reviewed good dental health, with stories like *Sweet Tooth* by Margie Palatini. Battle of the Books was a huge success for the fourth graders who did a wonderful job of reading and working together. Congratulations to Mrs. Wichot’s class who came in first place. In Comp Tech, we have been exploring the Iditarod and penguins and our Kindergartners are now able to log in as themselves independently.

**World Language:** This month Kindergartners continued to listen to Judy Schachner’s *Skippyjon Jones* books and learn new Spanish words/phrases: *Lost in Spice*, *Class Action*, etc. They are also preparing to learn their formas (shapes) in Spanish as well. First grade continued to practice their meses del año (months of the year) in Spanish by playing Kahoot! and learning how to say and write their birthday in Spanish. Second grade continues to practice their Spanish speaking countries and also the continents/oceans of the world! They also continued to practice their vocabulary words for los animales. Third grade started their unit on la casa (the house); rooms of the house and furniture. Fourth grade reviewed their numbers 1-30 and started their unit on telling time in Spanish.

**Guidance:** Kindergarten, first and second grade students started *Zippy’s Friends*. Zippy teaches children social and emotional skills. It is geared to children that are between five and seven years old. In each session the children listen to stories, participate in an activity, and learn how to find their own solution to problems. There are six different modules the students will be learning about. The students started the second module which is called communication. In the first two sessions, the students talked about improving communication and listening. The students are learning about the importance of telling someone when something is wrong. In the second session about listening, the children were given a page to color. Each student had to listen to the directions and then color what was said. They were told that the directions were only going to be read once. The students had a difficult time with this activity. They were constantly raising their hands saying asking for repetition.

**Nurse:** Annual Health S SES participated in Wear Red for Heart Health on Friday, Feb. 2<sup>nd</sup>. The students, faculty and staff wore red along with a letter encouraging the parents to wear red. Information on heart disease and ways to promote a heart healthy life style for children and parents had been sent home and also noted in my Homework Now. The faculty/staff donated \$130.00 towards the American Heart Association. Nurse Lohmann will continue to be available as a resource for updated information on the Flu to the faculty/staff, students and parents. She recently participated in a Conference Call for Essex County Health Care Providers on February 6<sup>th</sup> presented by the State Department of Health on the current flu status and question/answer period to help provide the most updated statistics, helpful hints and to reinforce the guidelines for when to send a student to school, and how to prevent the spread of germs. On February 3<sup>rd</sup>, Mrs. Lohmann presented a program to the Pre-Kindergarten Saturday program (sponsored by the SES FSA) on Germs, Hand Washing Techniques, took the students and parents on a tour of the Nurse's Office and was available to answer questions for the parents who were present. The upcoming Nurse's Theme for March will be "March into Wellness."

### **Grade Level Updates:**

***Preschool*** – The month of February has flown by in preschool. We had so many fun things in store this month. Students started the month by learning about friendship and kindness in honor of Valentine's Day. They did some role playing to review the way we should be treating others and ways of showing kindness. They even made Valentine's for kids in the children's hospital. It made us feel happy to help out others. This week preschoolers are learning all about dental health, since February is dental health month. They are discussing ways to take care of our teeth, what are healthy and unhealthy foods for our teeth, and what do dentists do. The children will be painting with toothbrushes and floss as a way to incorporate creativity and process art into this theme. We are hoping to have a real dentist and a nutritionist come into our classroom to expand upon this learning too. To end February, we will be celebrating Read Across America with a Dr. Seuss themed week. We will be reading some of the classic Dr. Seuss books and doing a lot of exciting projects to go along with each one.

***Kindergarten*** – In Math the kindergarten children have been counting up to 100 as they prepared for 100th Day! They have even been practicing counting by 5's and 10's too. Students celebrated the day with sorting, counting and exercising in groups of 10 to reach 100. The children presented their 100th day 3-D project made out of 100 items to present to the class. They did a fantastic job! Our new unit in Math is the numbers 6-10. In Social Studies, the children have been studying Abraham Lincoln and George Washington in honor of Presidents' Day. The children are very interested in the importance of these two men in our nation's history. We have completed art projects that incorporate a writing piece and a Venn Diagram comparing and contrasting. This will also reinforce our current reading theme which is non-fiction. Students are learning the common characteristics found in non-fiction literature.

***Grade 1*** – The first graders are working on their penguin study and are learning about Arctic animals. Students are completing their penguin research and will begin their non-fiction informational writing on a penguin on their choice. In math, we have completed our addition chapter and have moved on to Chapter 4 –Subtraction Strategies. In phonics and word work, we have been working on the controlled r sound. The students loved their pirate themed week when they learned the "ar" pattern. To culminate the lessons, students went on a treasure hunt using their map of "Aargh" words.

***Grade 2*** – In reading, the second grade has completed Unit 4 in our reading program *Good Habits, Great Readers*. The students have learned the fourth habit of a great reader: Understand How Stories Work. We have also begun Unit 5 in *Good Habits, Great Readers* and the students are learning how to *Read to Learn*. Students have applied this habit to identify story elements such as character, setting, plot, and problem/solution. Students have also learned how to understand relationships between characters in a story and the character's relationship to the plot of the story. The children are beginning to identify the difference between fiction and non-fiction stories and books and are identifying their purpose for reading so that they can generate questions. The children have been incorporating the Daily 5/Café models to help foster independence and build their reading and writing stamina. The children have been listening to

stories and are continuing to develop strategies to enhance overall reading comprehension skills. The students are continuing to work on building vocabulary skills and word study skills. Students are learning about verb tenses and how to recognize whether a verb is being used in the past, present, or future tense. Students are also learning how to recognize and use homophones as well as how to use commas in a sentence. Second graders are using *Words Their Way* to work on specific word study skills with each student. Students are working on sorting their words and recognizing words that follow the same pattern in a story or poem. The second grade has written fairy tales. Students have listened to fairy tales such as *Cinderella*, *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*, and *The Three Little Pigs*. Students have used these fairy tales as a model to assist them in writing their own fairy tales. In Social Studies, the second grade discussed how people lived long ago and why it's important to honor our country's heritage. The students have also learned about the Pilgrims and Native Americans, as well as important events and people in our country's history. In Science, the second grade is continuing to learn about different kinds of habitats and the plants and animals that live in each of those habitats. In Math, the second grade has learned how to add and subtract 3-digit numbers with and without regrouping. Students continue to use problem solving strategies such as writing number sentences and drawing pictures to solve story problems.

**Grade 3** – In third grade, the students have continued to study nonfiction text, and they are applying what they are learning to their writing. They have been researching and writing informational pieces. They are practicing reading skills such as making inferences and summarizing. Students have finished their novel study of *The Cricket in Times Square* which they truly enjoyed. In math they are identifying fractions as parts of a whole, and they are relating fractions to geometry. They are locating fractions on a number line and solving word problems. In science they have moved on to their electricity and magnets chapter. They have performed experiments to find out more about static electricity, and they will use their knowledge of charges for their upcoming magnets lesson. Furthermore, the students have had the opportunity to be in a Star Dome where they were able to see constellations and discuss the super blue blood moon. In addition, the students are creating their Kachina Dolls which has been a third grade tradition for years.

**Grade 4** – Oh no, a blizzard hit South End, and we were “Snowed-In” Fourth Grade. We had a blast making sock snowmen, watching *The Indian in the Cupboard*, creating our own snowflakes, and much more! Earthquakes! Volcanoes! Twisters! Some natural disasters cause destruction faster than you can say, “mister!” During our cultural arts science program, Fun-O-Mena, we had so much learning and experimenting with so many of nature's phenomenon, the warning signs, the destruction, and how to stay safe. Verona/Cedar Grove Patch- add us to your classifieds...we've got some future writers on hand!

We've been writing up a storm in fourth grade. From essays about character traits, theme, and point of view to stories about broken vases, camping disasters, and Santas who need to lay off the cookies! We have become professionals through the entire writing process. Drafting, revising, editing, and publishing, we have been working tirelessly through each and every step, and love seeing the progress we have made! Sioux, Pioneers, Homestead Act, Frontier, and so much more! The Midwest region has so much for us to explore! We've crossed the treacherous Appalachian Mountains and have seen all that the Great Lakes and the Midwest have to offer. Travelling back in time to 1862, we stepped into the shoes of the adventurous pioneers, picked up our pens, and journaled “our” daily lives on the frontier. Number lines, models, multiplication, and addition. Parts of a whole is nothing, but some simple partitions! Using manipulatives and drawing models have been very helpful strategies with the concept of fractions. We have learned so many different ways to model and express fraction and fractional equations. We are having a lot of fun with so many of our fraction games, too!

### **Communication:**

- Mrs. DiMatteo encourages all families to follow her on Twitter (@southendprin) for the latest and greatest happenings at South End. If you don't have a Twitter account, text “follow @southendprin” to 40404 and you will be connected to Mrs. DiMatteo's account.

- You are cordially invited to join any classroom teacher’s class account for Remind 101, Twitter, Instagram, etc. to stay in tune with all going on in your child’s classroom.

### **FSA and Parent Outreach:**

- Thank you to our FSA for continuing to sponsor our in-class Cultural Arts programs specific to grade level content. From Preschool to grade 4, our students were presented with engaging and informative presentations. These included Preschoolers learning all about “Spooky Spiders”, Kindergarten, “Weather Wizards”, grade 1 “Snakes and Scales”, grade 2 “Jurassic Classic”, grade 3 “What’s Out There Planetarium”, and grade 4 “Funomenia.”
- Our FSA is busily preparing for South End’s major fundraiser, Casino Night on March 3<sup>rd</sup>. Thank you to our parents/guardians for their generosity in helping us to provide many additional “perks” in our classrooms to help our children succeed.

### **Professional Development Staff has attended:**

- South End teachers on all grade levels continue to attend Conquer Math training to hone their teaching of mathematics. The teachers are able to apply exciting strategies in the classroom to help our children become successful mathematicians.
- Teachers are becoming more and more proficient in their use of Performance Matters and online assessments at South End. From Kindergarten to grade 4, teachers are using Faculty Meeting times to create online assessments in ELA and Math and analyze the data drawn from these assessments to drive their instruction.

## **NORTH END SCHOOL:**

### **Student Activities/School Special Events:**

- Mr. Fetherman conducted a “Coffee Talk” at NE School on January 18, 2018.
- The FSA held a meeting on January 18, 2018.
- The Principal’s Round Table Committee met on January 24, 2018. The following items were discussed:
  - ✓ Technology Plan – Future Ready Certification for NE & CGHS
  - ✓ The District’s 3-year Strategic Plan
  - ✓ Revised Report Cards & Benchmark Rubrics
  - ✓ Budget
- Big Brother/Big Sister was held on February 8, 2018 for students in Kindergarten and grade 4. Students created a Valentine’s Day craft and had lunch with his/her partner!
- An Open House was held for the Integrated Preschool Program on February 8, 2018. Six parents participated in the event that discussed the program for the 2018-19 school year.
- Staff members raised \$140 for the American Heart Association’s Wear Red for Heart Disease promotion by participating in our “Jeans Day” fundraiser on February 9, 2018.
- The FSA sponsored DJ Night on February 9, 2018. Thank you to the parent chaperones and Mr. Anthony Freitas for his awesome DJ skills!
- Our School Safety Committee met on February 13, 2018.
- Students and staff showed his/her school spirit by wearing red on Valentine’s Day. Classrooms celebrated this special day by exchanging valentines with one another.

### **Grade/Department Level Updates:**

- *PK* – The month of February has been an exciting and interesting month in Preschool. The children continued the “clothing study” as we investigated clothing worn in other countries. Students brought in cultural clothing from relatives around the world and they shared them with one another. We collected clothing from China, Croatia, Hawaii, India, Nicaragua, Pakistan and Peru and located these countries on the world globe! The students noticed many similarities and differences in the clothing

worn. We ended our study with a celebration of learning as we welcomed our “reading buddies” into our classroom to view the many areas of our investigation. In math, the children continue to practice counting by tens, and also are counting by fives. They are comparing and measuring with fun activities such as estimating how many people it would take, arms outstretched, to reach across the length of the classroom! Students also spent small group time on chrome books completing “STEM” activities. In the spirit of democracy, a classroom vote was taken to determine the next study. “Reuse, Reduce, Recycle” was almost unanimous! The children already brought in trash and our “wall of recycling” will be complete as soon as the children sort through the trash. In language and literacy, the students are becoming more familiar with the connection between writing and reading. They are excited to see that we are more than half way to our reading challenge of 25 books as we continue to participate in the Read Across America Program!

- **Grade K** – During the month of February, we have been very busy in Kindergarten! Since September, we have been counting up to the 100th day during our Morning Meeting and in math. Our 100th days chart was completed on Friday, February 9, and the students marched around the school in celebration wearing their 100th day hats. The hats were very creative this year, each having 100 items beautifully displayed in various ways! The students also created beaded necklaces with 100 beads divided into sections, counting by 10’s. They took 100 footsteps into the school and got to exercise counting by groups of tens to 100! We were joyously exhausted! In Language Arts, the students have been busily writing in their journals using invented spelling and our word wall to create simple sentences to share with the class during Morning Meetings. They have been meeting with their third grade book buddies each week reading their guided reading books and practicing sight words booklets. We have also been celebrating Presidents’ Day and learning through non-fiction stories about Abraham Lincoln and George Washington. We are excited to be celebrating Dr. Seuss and will soon start many activities for Read Across America!
- **Grade 1** – February was quite an exciting month. Our students learned so much while celebrating Groundhog Day. Studying about the groundhog touched on all subject areas. Students went to work researching facts about the groundhog. They wrote wonderful informational pieces presenting facts such as, what the animal looks like, why it is a mammal, why it is an herbivore, describing its burrow, and explaining the legend of Groundhog Day. During math, students took a poll on whether our favorite groundhog, Punxsutawney Phil, would see its shadow. They used a bar graph to show the results and made necklaces to wear and display his/her vote. It was a close race...almost 50/50. Phil did see his shadow so hello to six more weeks of winter weather. During Morning Meeting, students had fun during the “sharing” component, while discussing what they learned about this amazing animal. Another great topic was Valentine’s Day. Students were so eager to show their kindness and love on this day. In our writing notebooks, they expressed what Valentine’s Day meant to them. They also made heart wreaths to give to parents on this special day. Another great topic during this month was Presidents’ Day. First graders read about and discussed facts about these two great presidents. They engaged in several activities demonstrating knowledge of both presidents. In science, students learned about sound and light. They loved being scientists as they discovered new things. Students continue to grow as was evident from the winter MAP assessments. They are enjoying Moby Max and RazKids and continue to be proud of their own progress, growth, and strengths. First graders are surpassing the Read Across America challenge of reading 50 books by March 2nd. It is a pleasure to watch their enthusiasm as they read more and more books.
- **Grade 2** – In ELA, our second graders have been working diligently learning to analyze characters in fiction stories. They have also been locating text evidence to answer questions in nonfiction works such as Scholastic News and Read Works articles. The students have learned that adverbs answer the questions HOW, WHEN, and WHERE and they modify or describe verbs. In writing, the children have continued to support an opinion piece with reasons as well as providing a bold beginning and a strong conclusion. During February, their opinion topic was to write about “The Best Thing to Do on

the Weekend.” The second graders have been thrilled to begin learning the cursive alphabet! They have started learning lowercase letters using an under curve stroke. Our grade level is also involved in a research project with our Media Specialist, Mrs. Linda Leddy. Each child is researching a famous American for Black History month. Mrs. Leddy provided an appropriate website on her VMC page that the children access when they have computer time each week. Once all of the research has been completed, the students will learn how to make a visual presentation. The second grade students are also sprinkling kindness within our classrooms and hopefully throughout North End. After reading a story The Jelly Donut Difference students created donuts for a bulletin board showing ways they know how to show kindness to others. Something as simple as smiling at someone or saying hello can be a huge first step! In Math, the children have been recognizing pennies, nickels, dimes, quarters and dollars, understanding the values, and counting amounts of money. Using resources like Moby Max and Think Central to reinforce these skills has been very helpful. In science, the children used what they learned about solids, liquids, gases and their properties to plan and carry out engineering practices. They had two different opportunities to construct and test model boats. The first was made of paper and the second could be made from an assortment of materials such as paper, clay, string, tape, and craft sticks. The children loved seeing whose boats floated or sank and analyzing what caused those outcomes.

- **Grade 3** – The children wrote opinion pieces on why they should be a family member’s Valentine. They also have been focusing on non-fiction reading with an emphasis on identifying main idea, cause and effect and sequencing. In math, we have been learning all about fractions. We have been comparing, ordering and using problem solving strategies to solve word problems. In social studies, we have been learning about our country’s history. The children are making Kachinas in art that ties in nicely to our social studies unit.
- **Grade 4** – Love is in the air in fourth grade. In math, we have been loving all the work we are doing with fractions and decimals. Students are learning strategies for simplifying fractions, finding equivalences, and representing fractions as decimals. In language arts, we have been working diligently on various non-fiction skills including utilizing text features to improve our understanding of text as well as summarizing and finding the main idea. Writing is filled with lovely thoughts as we review various genres, but also generate Valentine metaphor poems and a writing that centers on why we love school. It is electric in science as students build circuits and explore how energy transfers through electricity. Finally, we continue to develop our character as students spent the days leading up to Valentine's Day sharing daily compliment hearts with one another. Students paid their peers very specific compliments each day so that everyone could start the day feeling the love of the season.
- **Art** – All classes embraced the true meaning of LOVE during the month of February! Kindergarten classes each designed magnificent multi-media compositions inspired by the artwork of Jim Dine. Kindergarten created paintings, using solid tempera with charcoal and pastel layered over it, while first grade students designed collages using a large variety of handmade papers, watercolors and pastels. Second grade classes painted folk-art hearts, integrating math and art for a simple, stunning composition. Third graders used blending techniques from a previous lesson and integrated that into a valentine using a variety of “love” words, thus, integrating language arts into the lesson. Fourth grades explored the concept of “vintage” and designed beautiful “vintage valentines,” complete with sentimental artifacts from home. The results were breathtaking!
- **Guidance** – In kindergarten through second grade, we started Zippy’s Friends. Zippy teaches children social and emotional skills and is for children that are between five and seven years old. In each session, the children listen to stories, participate in an activity, and learn how to find their own solution to problems. The students started the second module called communication. In the first two sessions, the students talked about improving communication and listening. The students are learning

about the importance of telling someone when something is wrong. In the second session about listening, the children were given a page to color. Each student had to listen to the directions and then follow them to complete the activity. They were told that the directions were only going to be read once. The students had a difficult time with this activity. They were constantly raising their hands asking for the directions to be repeated. Sessions three and four are about who can help us and how say what we want to say.

- **Media Center** – Preschool and Kindergarten Students have been listening to and discussing stories about winter and Valentine’s Day. First grade has continued to practice their independent reading and checking for comprehension with Accelerated Reader quizzes. Second grade has been researching, reading about and discussing African Americans. Third graders have been working in groups to become experts on an assigned area of the Dewey Decimal System and have started a collaborative Google Slides document demonstrating why their section is the best one in the library. Fourth grade has been continuing their research about national parks, historic sites and monuments.
- **Music** – This month in music, Kindergarten has been practicing their steady beat versus rhythm in songs like Lucy Locket, and Doggie Doggie Where’s Your Bone. They have been practicing quarter and eighth note rhythms by using the syllables in words that have one and two sounds. They have also been practicing their percussion instruments to songs like Willowbee, interpreting if the music asks them to start, stop, hold the sound, or keep a beat. First grade has been practicing rhythms, adding half notes and rests. For Valentine’s Day, we practiced many rhythms and clapped syllables in words like “February.” We also played the game “messenger” and students had to skip around the circle to our song, delivering a rhythm message for whoever they landed on at the end of the song. They practiced using the mallet instruments to keep a steady beat. We also played, Wake Up You Sleepyhead, to understand fast/slow loud/soft in a new way, and dramatize song. Second graders finished an instrument unit, identifying percussion, woodwind, brass, and string instruments. We also practiced some new Jazz songs, and “My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean,” comparing melody and song structure to one of our older songs, “Neesa.” Third grade is wrapping up their recorder karate unit, using notes DEBAG in various ways. We also practiced playing all kinds of quarter, eighth, and whole rhythms. We learned how to perform a partner song, Michael Finnegan/This Old Man. Fourth grade has finished learning practicing rhythms, a song “Mexican Moon,” and identifying various musical symbols. We also performed a stick routine to Sarasponda, and sang a song on the life of Abraham Lincoln.
- **Physical Education** – This month in Physical Education, all students have been learning the different skills related to basketball. Students began learning the basic skills of dribbling using fingertips, as well as keeping the ball under control. All grades then graduated to passing, learning the different types of passing from overhead, to bounce passing, and chest passing. Once students have shown more mastery of these skills, they began to learn the proper form and ways to shoot a basketball. We used an acronym of B.E.E.F to aid the students in remembering the different parts of a basketball shot. B stands for “Balance” to remind students to bend their knees and keep feet shoulder width apart. E stands for “Elbow,” in order to remind students to keep their elbows tucked in while shooting a basketball. The second E is for “Eyes,” to help students to remember to look at their target when they are shooting. Finally, F stands for “Follow through.” Each individual skill was utilized during lead up games throughout the basketball unit, culminating in a game where students implemented each of these individual skills into a game situation during our scooter basketball game. The scooter basketball game also helps students understand the importance of making smart passes and not taking too many ill-advised chances.
- **World Language** – This month, Kindergarten students continued to listen to Judy Schachner’s Skippyjon Jones books and learn new Spanish words/phrases. They are also preparing to learn their formas (shapes) in Spanish. First grade continued to practice their meses del año (months of the year)

in Spanish by playing Kahoot! They have also been learning how to say and write his/her birthday in Spanish. Second grade continued to practice the names of the Spanish speaking countries and also the continents/oceans of the world. They also continued to practice vocabulary words for los animales. Third grade started a unit on la casa (the house), the rooms of the house and furniture. Fourth grade reviewed the numbers 1-30 and started a unit on telling time in Spanish.

**Professional Development Staff has attended:**

- Teachers continued to attend Year 3 Conquer Math training.
- A Teacher Academy was held on January 24, 2018. Topics discussed:
  - Performance Matters – Kathleen Danieli
    - Sharing a test with colleagues
    - In-line choice
    - Viewing/accessing reports
    - Features that coincide with PARCC preparation
    - Teacher requests for assistance
- Our faculty meeting was held on February 7, 2018. Dr. Margaret Freedson from Montclair State University discussed “Inquiry & Informational Writing in PK-4 Classrooms.”