

# REPORT TO THE CEDAR GROVE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Michael J. Fetherman, Superintendent

January 16, 2018

## ENROLLMENT INFORMATION

Grade	June 2017	December 2018	Change (+/-)
K	106	94	- 12
1	84	109	+ 25
2	120	83	- 37
3	130	122	- 8
4	113	105	- 8
Total	553	513	- 40
5	127	114	- 13
6	125	127	+ 2
7	132	124	- 8
8	139	134	- 5
Total	523	499	- 24
9	115	131	+ 16
10	132	115	- 17
11	146	131	- 15
12	120	142	+ 22
Total	513	519	+ 6
Special Education (Self-Contained PreK-12)	20	25	+ 5
Preschool (Tuition)	4	14	+ 10
GRAND TOTAL	1613	1570	- 43
Handicapped students in other Public and Private Schools & Shared Time Students			39
Home Instruction			4

### **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.
- 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.

### **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 next Coffee Talk will be held at North End School on January 18<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 PM prior to the NE FSA meeting. Parents/Guardians of students in all grade levels are invited to participate.
- 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.

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

- CGHS: Fire Drill – Jan. 11, 2018; Shelter-in-Place Drill – TBD
- MMS: Fire Drill – Jan. 11, 2018; Shelter-in-Place Drill – Week of Jan. 15, 2018
- NE: Fire Drill – Jan. 11, 2018; Shelter-in-Place Drill – TBD
- SE: Fire Drill – Jan. 11, 2018; Shelter-in-Place Drill – Jan. 9, 2018

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

- 8 HIB investigation to date:
  - 6 unconfirmed incidences; 2 confirmed incidences

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

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

- The January Student of the Month is a versatile vocalist in the select choir, often singing whatever voice part is asked of her, an outstanding AP Music Theory student who makes connections between analysis and performance, a Spring Musical cast member all four years of her high school career, a featured soloist at CG Tonight; our open mic nights, a leader in the drama class; performing roles in dramatic and comedic scenes, and a role model and mentor for her peers. This young lady will go out of her way to help other students feel more comfortable about their music in choir or their scenes in drama. She always volunteers to take on extra roles when needed. She plans on pursuing theater when she graduates from CGHS. Congratulations to Justice Abud!
- The CGHS Drama class participated in the New Jersey Governor's Theater Competition on Saturday, January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2018. Students performed monologues, scenes and improvisations and competed with 28 other schools from New Jersey. Congratulations to Devon Snider Smith who was a finalist with her dramatic monologue.
- Congratulations to the CGHS National Honor Society for their generous gift of \$457.98 to the Wounded Warrior Project. The CGHS NHS received donations from students during lunch periods (pocket change) during the month of December. Kudos goes out to the National Honor Society students and Mr. Konopka the NHS advisor.
- Student members of the CGHS Italian National Honor Society are hosting a raffle to raise money for St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital. The event will be held in the high school in the gym on February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2018 at 7PM at the Boys Basketball Game vs. Verona. All proceeds will go directly to the kids at St. Jude's.

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

- CGHS is offering SAT prep in the mornings for all juniors. Currently we have 67 juniors signed up for our prep course. Students receive a free SAT prep book "2018 Princeton Review." Students will meet twice a week with a Math and English teacher to review SAT questions and strategies to earn a better score. This prep course will assist students for the March 10<sup>th</sup> SAT assessment which will be at CGHS.

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

- **Guidance (Mrs. Denman and Ms. Rubino)**
  - The Winter Newsletter for the 2017-2018 school year has been completed. Ms. Rubino will be visiting all AP classes to distribute the AP Students and Parents Bulletin, explain the registration process and hand out the appropriate forms. Mrs. Denman and Ms. Rubino will be visiting all senior

- English classes to talk about local scholarships. The guidance office mailed a letter to all organizations who have provided scholarships in the past inviting them to participate this year.
- Mrs. Denman and Ms. Rubino are working closely with Mrs. DeFabiis with x2VOL and assisting students create and account and upload their hours for the new Optional Community Service Program.
  - Ms. Rubino is working with the history department to select/nominate students for the Boys and Girls State Programs this upcoming June. This program is geared towards students with an interest in politics/government, has at least a 3.0 GPA and demonstrates leadership skills. Students who are nominated have the option to apply, complete the application, and then will be interviewed by the Boys or Girls State's respective local representative.
  - The guidance counselors are working closely with the principal to revise the Program of Studies for the 18-19 school year. Report cards will be processed for the 2nd marking period at the end of the month. In Danger of Failing letters will be sent home at the completion of MP2. The guidance office will be processing mid-year reports to be sent to any college that requests this report for an individual student. The guidance counselors will be scheduling a visit to the middle school to discuss the Program of Studies with the 8th graders during their P.E. class. Ms. Rubino will be visiting St. Catherine of Siena School to meet with the entire 8th grade class, review the Program of Studies and answer any questions they may have regarding course selection or anything regarding CGHS.
  - The college application process is ongoing. Seniors are beginning to enter their acceptances into their Family Connection accounts

### **MEMORIAL MIDDLE SCHOOL:**

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

- The next ASMA contest for the high math students in grades 7 and 8 will be Thursday, January 11th. ASMA is an international math contest that takes place once a month at MMS.
- The 6th grade ACE students completed Operation Save Rapunzel project the week before the holiday break. OSR is a STEAM project where students have to build a device for Rapunzel, a raw egg, to safely escape from a tower when she leaps.
- Our Cultural Arts Committee organized an outstanding assembly prior to the holiday break. The Young Audiences organization presented a Classic Rock Show. The show was educational, interactive, and relevant!

#### **College and Career Readiness:**

- In Makers Club, we currently have several different unique projects going on simultaneously. One group of our students have created a means of simple communication over long distances using only plastic cups and string. These students were interested in learning how sound waves travel, as this is their second project related to sound. This group found that sound travels faster over a long distance through a taught string than through simply the air. Students were able to use the invention to talk at a distance between 75 and 100 feet. Another group of students is building a PC from scratch using parts scraped from old computers. To this point, they have been able to get the computer turned on. They are currently working on outputting video to a monitor. We are excited to see what our inventors will be creating throughout the rest of the year.

#### **Grade Level Updates:**

**5th Grade** - Language Arts students have been reading Tuck Everlasting in class. One of the topics that the students have been discussing or debating is the question, "Do you want to live forever?" The students have been split into groups and debating/arguing their stance on the question. They have had to work in groups and write down their reasons to back up their stance. Science students have just completed a Mystery Powder lab in class! They were given multiple samples of different types of powders, and were asked to identify the physical and chemical properties of each powder. The students then recorded their findings and kept track of the data

they found. Currently, the science classes are about to begin an acid based project where they will put together slides on Google. In social studies the classes have just begun their unit on Europe. There will be a focus on the 2 World Wars and how both changed the geography of Europe. As we tour the continent, students are keeping track of countries they are interested in to research for their Europe Travel Agent Google project. To start off the New Year in math, the students have finished a project where they had to calculate the total cost of the 12 Days of Christmas gifts based on current prices today! The total cost came out to over \$100,000! Students had to keep track of the results and prices as they solved them.

**6th Grade** - The 6th grade science class recently completed the unit on astronomy. As a concluding activity the students needed to create a travel poster to one of the 8 planets or a satellite. Using their knowledge of the planets they needed to take a distinctive and unique feature of that planet and illustrate it on the poster with a slogan. This activity needed the students to work collaboratively and think beyond the basic. The poster was also presented to the class and the students needed to defend their choice of feature that they illustrated. This activity was based upon a NASA activity and also incorporated some ideas relating to NGSS.

**7th Grade** - The students in Language Arts are continuing to work on timed writing responses to effectively cite information from the text and make appropriate world and text connections. Included in the writing components being taught are the use of clauses, compound and complex sentence structure, and the use of a variety of conjunction types and transitions. Additionally, the students are learning a variety of literary terms. The main focus has been foreshadowing in short stories and novels. As the students begin their Charles Dickens author study, they have been applying the foreshadowing techniques learned in class. The students have used this skill to review all of the literature we have read up to this point and identify the clues within these stories that indicate foreshadowing. Developing this skill as reader is imperative because it assists the students in being better able to make inferences and effectively predict what will happen later in the story. Upon reading “A Christmas Carol”, the students having practiced this skill, were able to make very accurate predictions about the events that were about to occur in the play. Students applied this same foreshadowing concept to John Steinbeck's novel *The Red Pony* in order to use foreshadowing techniques to predict and analyze the death of one of the main characters. Additionally, students created eulogies to bid farewell to the characters that pass on in this novel. Students not only compose well-written eulogies in the point of view of one of the many characters in the novel, they also formally dress and present their eulogies to class so that an audience is present. This demonstrates an engaging project with real-life skills that assists the students in dealing with the loss of beloved characters. The funeral ceremony and burial follow the student-created eulogies.

**8th Grade** - In Social Studies students worked in small groups to complete a mummification project focused on New Kingdom pharaohs. The final product will provide a written depiction of a pharaoh's life, identity as a divine king, tomb construction, mummification, and legacy. All work will be done on and inside a decorated shoe box, which will represent the pharaoh's sarcophagus, or outer coffin. In its complete form, the project should be a thorough expression of the pharaoh's identity: the trajectory of their life and time as king as well as the preparations they made for their inevitable death. In Spanish students have begun reading their first novel, *Brandon Brown quiere un perro*, about a little boy who desperately wants a dog. Comprehension of action in the story is developed using role playing activities and the utilization of different translation techniques. In all Language Arts classes, students have begun 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 Science students are completing their chemistry unit by participating in a differentiated scavenger hunt. Students will work individually to solve chemical mysteries by locating the hidden card and identifying the answers based on the prompts written on cards scattered throughout the room.

## **SOUTH END SCHOOL:**

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

- South End students ended 2017 with many classroom celebrations, including visits by the Grinch, Santa, reading and viewing *The Polar Express* and classroom holiday celebrations. It was a busy and FUN holiday season at South End.
- Our Kindergarten, first and second grade students are working with Mr. Skowronek on Zippy's Friends, a program that helps young children develop coping and social skills. The program teaches children how to deal with everyday difficulties and to identify and talk about their feelings and how to deal with them. The children are excited about the program and look forward to their guidance class each week.

### **Specialist Update**

**Music** - Kindergarten students are working on independent singing and improvisation in songs like "Here Sits the Monkey" by Raffi. Students are practicing moving to music and songs, dramatizing the emotions and sounds. First graders are reading and identifying quarter notes, rests and eighth notes. Two new songs are "Frosty Weather" and "Frog in the Meadow." Students practiced clapping the syllables, keeping a beat, and identifying/ clapping the rhythms. They follow this sequence by playing songs on musical instruments, and working in groups to arrange musical phrases in the correct order that they sing them. Students are even making our own musical patterns! Second graders have begun their instruments of the orchestra unit. They learned the four families of instruments, and the instruments that belong to them according to their similar properties. Students watched videos of these instruments and compared their sounds. Third grade started their composition unit. They all know 5 notes on their recorders, and have gotten up to 4 or 5 belts in our recorder karate unit. Students still practice our songs, but now make their own songs writing notes and rhythms. Fourth graders have been finishing their unit on time signature, meter, and musical symbols. This week they learned "An Austrian Went Yodeling" and "Tideo." Students bounced tennis balls to the strong beat of our songs, in triple and quadruple meter. Students took turns in "Tideo" racing each other to the end of a musical bridge/hand clapping game to mirror the melodic contour and lyrics. "Tideo" introduced the final notes we use in elementary school, sixteenth notes!

**Art** - We've entered the New Year, up and running, in the art room!! Kindergarten classes are building upon prior knowledge of iconic artist, Jasper Johns, in the creation of mixed media compositions involving their names. Students watched a video on Jasper Johns and made connections between prior art works. First grade students are investigating French artist, Georges Roualt, and are producing a fruit bowl still life composition using his "stained glass" technique. Second grade classes have designed very creative "enchanted" snow houses, using solid tempera paints, complete with snow glitter. Third graders have created still-life acrylic landscapes, featuring pine trees in the snow, focusing on the moon in the background. Fourth grade students have discussed St. Basil's Cathedral in Moscow and have viewed multiple images of the architectural beauty. They are in the process of developing their own mixed media painting of this church.

**Physical Education** - All physical education students are participating in a basketball unit. The students will understand and perform introductory basketball skills of dribbling, passing, shooting, and ball handling to the best of their ability. They will understand and apply the rules and regulations of basketball to practice and game activities.

**Media** - Happy New Year! In library, we have been learning about and sharing about holidays, resolutions and Martin Luther King. This includes, in technology, having third and fourth grade create slide shows of their research and all of the interesting facts they have learned and want to share. In Kindergarten tech, we are actually logging in ourselves now that we are familiar with the keyboard. In fourth grade, we continue to read Wonder and work toward our Battle of the Books in February.

**World Language** - Kindergarteners are continuing to practice their *colores* and their *números*. They will also be constructing their own *hombre de nieva* (snowman) out of construction paper, popsicle sticks and a paper plate. First graders will continue to practice their *números* (1-31) and their *meses del año* (months of the year). They will also make their own snow globe for the month of *enero* (January) using construction paper and cotton balls. Second graders will continue to work with *la familia* (the family) vocabulary words/phrases and start to learn about world geography (the continents/oceans/Spanish speaking countries). They will also be making their own construction paper diagram of *la familia de pinguino* (the penguin family), where they will cut/paste/label a family of penguins using their Spanish vocabulary words. Third graders are starting their unit on *la clase* (the classroom) and completing a *mochila* (backpack) project. Students will have these mochilas displayed in the hallway for all to see! Fourth graders are starting their unit on *la comida* (food) and discussing what they eat for *desayuno*, *almuerzo* y *cena* (breakfast, lunch and dinner). They will end their unit by making a small menu in Spanish using their Spanish/English dictionaries and classroom vocabulary!

**Guidance** - Kindergarten through second graders has started learning about *Zippy's Friends*. Zippy teaches children social and emotional skills. The program is geared toward 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 throughout the rest of the year. The first module is about feelings. The students are talking about how they feel when they are happy, sad, angry, jealous and nervous. Most importantly, students are learning different strategies to work through these feelings.

**Nurse** - Annual Health Screenings have been completed on all students at SES. The process of re-screening those students who exhibited difficulty with vision and/or hearing is now underway before a referral is shared with the parent. The mentoring of Senior Nursing Students from Ramapo College is complete for this school year noting positive feedback from the faculty preceptors. We will be recognizing Wear RED Day for Heart Health on Friday, February 2<sup>nd</sup> with the entire school (faculty/staff/students) wearing red and receiving information throughout the month on how to maintain a healthy heart. The Nurse's Theme for the next month will be "South End School has Heart" continuing with the SE theme of Kindness and looking at ways to share kindness with each other. On February 3<sup>rd</sup>, Mrs. Lohmann will be attending the SES Saturday Preschool Program to teach the children about Germs, ways to prevent the spread of germs and developing healthy habits.

### **Grade Level Updates:**

***Preschool*** – This month in Preschool, students have started our Clothes Study. This is one of five studies that is part of the Creative Curriculum for Preschool. The clothes study will last approximately 6 weeks and students will go on several investigations during the course. They will discuss what clothing is appropriate during different seasons and types of weather, which an extremely important life skill for our little learners. Students will also explore the different types of clothing worn by people in different countries. We are working very hard on instilling kindness in our preschoolers. We want them to see that people may look and dress differently than them and that is ok! Students will also be exploring snow this month. This topic is perfect to start in January as our preschoolers are fascinated with the snow they are seeing outside. We will bring that experience to the classroom by have a snow sensory table, and painting on ice. Finally, students will be learning about hibernation. We will make a "cave" in our classroom and have all students bring in their teddy bear so they can go to sleep for winter! January is an exciting month filled with a lot of hands-on learning experiences.

***Kindergarten*** – Kindergarten is continuing to work on building stamina as we work on our Daily Five rotations. Our new unit in math is numbers, and students will be discussing how to count, write and show ways to make the numbers up to 10. We are also counting each day waiting anxiously to reach Day #100 so we can have a big celebration. The children will be reading *The Mitten* by Jan Brett. This Ukrainian Folktale is about a little boy, Nicki, who drops his white mitten in the snow and goes on without realizing

that it is missing. One by one, woodland animals find the mitten and crawl in. The Kindergarten students are going to use their creativity and complete this sentence: My mitten was so big that a \_\_\_\_\_ fit inside. They will also include an illustration. Children are also learning about the importance of Martin Luther King, Jr. and his message. They are completing activities to promote peace and to commemorate the lessons he has taught. As a finale, the children will write what their dream is along with an illustration.

**Grade 1** – First graders are very excited about winter and are beginning their penguin study. The students have been working on identifying text features and love doing scavenger hunts in their non-fiction books. In math students are working on adding within twenty and using various strategies to aid problem solving. The students enjoy using a variety of manipulatives to solve addition sentences. In phonics first graders have completed the CVCe pattern and will be moving on to vowel teams. The students love the word work component of Daily 5, especially “building” their words and applying their phonics strategies. We are finalizing our second personal narrative and will be moving on to our non-fiction informative writing piece. Students will have an opportunity to choose a penguin of their choice to write about.

**Grade 2** – In reading, the second grade has completed Unit 3 in our reading program *Good Habits, Great Readers*. Students have also begun Unit 4 and have learned the fourth habit of a great reader: Understand How Stories Work. Students are applying this habit to identify story elements such as character, setting, plot, and problem/solution. Students are also learning how to understand relationships between characters in a story and the character’s relationship to the plot of the story. 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 about pronouns and how they take the place of a noun in a sentence. Second graders are using *Words Their Way* to work on specific word study skills. They are sorting words and recognizing words that follow the same pattern in a story or poem. Each class is writing alliterations about a snowman. Students will also be 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. They are also learning about Martin Luther King, Jr. and why he was an important person in history. In Science, the second grade is continuing to learn about the states of matter and is learning how to identify each state of matter as a solid, liquid, or gas. In Math, the second grade is learning how to add and subtract 2-digit numbers with and without regrouping. They continue to use problem solving strategies such to solve story problems.

**Grade 3** – In third grade, the students have read and discussed Arctic animals. The students have been using nonfiction text features to learn more information, and they have been utilizing text evidence. In addition to nonfiction, they are enjoying fiction with their second novel study of *The Cricket in Times Square*. They are curious about the characters and the plot of this story. They are writing in response to their reading, so they are extending their thinking. In math the students are finishing their addition and subtraction chapter. They have been learning new strategies to add and subtract, as well as solving word problems with both operations. Their next math chapter is area, and they will be able to apply their knowledge of multiplication. In social studies, the students have been talking about their global address and locating states on a map. They will be interviewing family members about what countries they were from, when they traveled here, and why they came to America.

**Grade 4** – Fourth graders have been working on their division and problem solving skills. In ELA, students are preparing to work on their upcoming breakfast project that is interdisciplinary and uses different modes of technology. The project is based on their reading of *The Indian in the Cupboard*. Ms. Liddy has been assisting us in the Media Center to upload exciting projects, such as *Holidays Around the*

*World* and an interactive project related to Martin Luther King, Jr. Students continue to use Scholastic News to gather information and focus on skills that are presented in each monthly piece. In Science, students are excited to learn about energy and motion and apply what they are learning to their Science labs.

### **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 sponsoring once again our classroom Cultural Arts program to our Kindergarteners on January 12. Students learned all about weather and enjoyed hands-on activities including the ability to make a tornado in a bottle. The program, Weather Wizards, was presented by High Touch.

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

- Through our partnership with Montclair State University Network for Educational Renewal, South End teachers honed their skills in the teaching of writing at a recent faculty meeting. Dr. Margaret Freenon, a professor from Montclair, worked with our teachers presenting information on the New Jersey Student Learning Standards through Informational Writing. The teachers look forward to using what they learned with our children.

## **NORTH END SCHOOL:**

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

- Big Brother/Big Sister was held for students in Kindergarten and grade 4. Students created a holiday craft with his/her buddy on December 14, 2017.
- The first trimester report cards for students in grades 1 – 4 were posted in the Genesis Parent Portal on December 15, 2017. The recently approved benchmark rubrics were also made available (posted on our website) for parents to use as a reference while reviewing the report cards.
- The FSA sponsored a Holiday Breakfast for all staff on December 20, 2017.
- School Spirit Day featured holiday hats/shirts on December 22, 2017.
- Holiday parties were held in all classrooms on December 22, 2017. Class Parents coordinated the fun with classroom teachers!
- The annual Read Across America Kick-Off Assembly was held on January 9, 2018. Our theme for this year is "North End School is Reading to Feed the World." Representatives from Heifer International visited our students to explain how the voluntary "Read to Feed" program works. (Students get people to sponsor them for reading books and the money goes to Heifer International to buy animals for poor families so they can eat better and become financially independent.)
- This year's "One Book, One School" was also launched and all classes are reading and discussing Beatrice's Goat, to coincide with our Read Across America theme. This book is about a girl and her family in Uganda who receive a free goat from Heifer International and how it changes their lives. The book also illustrates the positive character traits of kindness, generosity, perseverance, honesty and respect.
- Staff members raised \$150 for "Stomp the Monster" by participating in our "Jeans Day" fundraiser on January 12, 2018.

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

**PK – The** month of January has been a busy time in preschool! We are continuing our “Clothing Study” and the children have enjoyed sharing some of their favorite holiday moments with one another. In Math, the children are learning different ways to count. They are counting by tens, using tally marks and charting numerical information on graphs. They are also exploring some 3-dimensional shapes that we see every day! In Science, the students continue to investigate textures of clothing as well as the many ways to fasten and wear them. In addition, a recent experiment helped them to tie dye materials. They even became “fashion designers” as they created their very own sketches for shirts that they will make and put on their life size models. As we continue through the month, the students are hard at work writing their first names and recognizing both uppercase and lowercase letters as they practice finding these letters in environmental print. They are excited to now be reading to raise money for families in villages who are hungry and poor and know that by doing so, they are helping in a big way!

**Grade K** – December was an exciting month for all of the kindergarten students! We were blessed to have a tremendous amount of parent participants that brought holiday crafts to make with all of the children. We have been working on many foundational skills that include: writing first and last names, the letters of the alphabet, numbers, sight words and simple sentences. The children have been reading many emergent readers and have been identifying characters, settings, events and have been learning the meaning of vocabulary based on books that are read to them. They have also been taking turns to answer questions based on books for reading comprehension. We have also been focusing on rhyming words. In math, we have been exploring 2-dimensional and 3-dimensional shapes. The children can identify the names of these shapes and how many sides, vertices, curves and faces that shapes have. The students have been putting shapes together to create new shapes and making pictures with shapes. The children are also completing assessments on all of the things they have learned. Our computer time has been filled with sessions focused on reading books on Raz-Kids, Moby Max learning programs, paint and STARS assessments. Everyone has been discussing the signs of winter and has been graphing the weather each day with our science program. We are looking forward to our special Read Across America Program “Read to Feed” to earn money to purchase an animal to help others in need of life’s simple necessities. It is a very rewarding program!

**Grade 1** – The first grade began the year with winter activities. The children are reading winter and snow related stories and writing about living in a snow globe. We are continuing to use Daily 5, Morning Meetings and “Words Their Way” as part of our language arts program. In Reading, we are continuing to work on fiction and non-fiction stories discussing story elements such as the setting, characters and their feelings and relationships. We are also working on retelling stories in a logical order using a graphic organizer. In phonics, we are reviewing long and short vowel sounds/spellings as well as continuing to review and learn blends and digraphs to help the children to identify and read unknown words. The students have been enjoying writing while working on personal narratives, informational writing, and fantasy stories about a snowman. In Math, we are practicing different strategies for adding and subtracting and will be moving onto ways to count and model numbers. Our classes have completed the STAR Assessments and they took a test on Performance Matters. Some of our science themes have been sound, light, the Earth and moon. Social Studies themes have been learning about maps, natural resources, weather and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. We continue to communicate with our parents through Homework Now, email, and one-to-one conferencing.

**Grade 2** – January is an exciting time for second graders - their goal to learn cursive handwriting is finally about to be realized! In reading, the children are learning inference and character analysis in fictional stories. They are also close reading nonfiction articles, marking the text to provide evidence of main idea and details, using text features, as well as comparing and contrasting the most important facts to answer text-based questions. This month, in collaboration with our Media Center Specialist, the children begin a research project on famous African Americans during Computer Lab period each week. They will use online encyclopedias and library books to complete research, and then present their report

using Google Slides. Other writing projects include procedural pieces about how to make a snowman and how to make hot chocolate. This month they will also write opinion pieces about the winter season: providing three reasons why it is a popular season. In math, the students are completing a unit in two-digit addition and will begin learning two-digit subtraction. Individual work on Moby Max in math continues to give students the ability to learn at his/her own readiness level and pace, maximizing their learning. The children have been studying the properties of matter in science. Just this week, they were delighted to make oobleck, and experiment with its most unusual properties! Before the month is over, we will complete mid-year MAP and STAR assessments. Finally, we are all looking forward to our Read Across America Program this year, using our love for reading to partner with Heifer International in a fund raising drive titled, North End Reads to Feed the World. The sponsors' donations will be used to purchase animals for families in need to help lift them from poverty. The students will learn that they have the power to make a difference in the world.

**Grade 3** – We ended 2017 on a high note while learning about Hanukkah, Kwanza, and Christmas, and are now off to a great start in 2018. Our third graders have begun to measure area and perimeter. They have created and measured in real life situations, and are really enjoying it. In ELA, the students were locating the main idea and details in nonfiction pieces of writing about the Arctic since it so closely related to our weather! Speaking of weather, in science, we have also been studying the weather. The children are discovering and investigating what meteorologists do, and are learning about how the water cycle works. They are even creating their own meteorologist weather reports! Finally, we have started our “Read to Feed” mission for Read Across America. The children have listened to the story “Beatrice’s Goat,” and have learned how one simple goat gave a family enough support and income to survive and live a better life. They are very enthusiastic to read at home and earn money to help others for just reading a simple book.

**Grade 4** – January finds the fourth grade off to a great start for the New Year. In ELA, students are exploring text structure and how it can help their comprehension of non-fiction text. In writing, we are working on research simulations and learning how to analyze text in order to write a cohesive essay. We will also be working on developing our understanding of figurative language and integrating text on the same topic for purposes of writing. We have returned to Social Studies and an exploration of the Southeast region is underway. In math, we are spending time with fractions; adding, subtracting and problem solving are the order of the day. Finally, all of North End is buzzing with the excitement surrounding “North End Reads to Feed the World.” Fourth grades are particularly enthusiastic about getting to read to help lift others from poverty.

**Art** – We’ve entered the New Year, up and running, in the art room!! Kindergarten classes are building upon prior knowledge of iconic artist, Jasper Johns, in the creation of mixed media compositions involving their names. Students watched a video on Jasper Johns and made connections between prior art works. First grade students are investigating French artist, Georges Roualt, and are producing a fruit bowl still life composition using his “stained glass” technique. Second grade classes have designed very creative “enchanted” snow houses, using solid tempera paints, complete with snow glitter. Third graders have created still-life acrylic landscapes, featuring pine trees in the snow, focusing on the moon in the background. Fourth grade students have discussed St. Basil’s Cathedral in Moscow and have viewed multiple images of the architectural beauty. They are in the process of developing their own mixed media painting of this church.

**Media Center** – Preschool and Kindergarten students have been listening to and discussing books about winter. First grade has been reading independently, taking AR quizzes and listening to and discussing Brave Irene which has “rich language” to expand their vocabulary. Second grade has been reading independently, taking AR quizzes and listening to and discussing books about African Americans as an introduction to the upcoming research unit about famous African Americans. Third grade has been learning about how to find books in the library and have been studying the Dewey Decimal System to

aided them in being able to find books on their own. We have been using actual nonfiction books to look at the call numbers and have been using matching activities on the SMART Board. Fourth Graders did some exploration about national parks and sites, chose a national park to research and started to read about their assigned park or site.

**PE** – Kindergarten and first grade have been working very hard on correct throwing form and using that correct throwing form in games that focus on throwing at a target. Students in K-1 have gradually moved to a target that is at a greater distance and have been showing much success! Over the last few weeks, the students in grades 2-4 have been working on fitness games and activities with an eye forward to the physical fitness testing at the end of the year. It is a year-long journey to reach our fitness goals as a group and individuals! Looking forward into the coming weeks, grades 2 – 4 are very excited to begin working on our winter units such as basketball and hockey.

**Guidance** – In Kindergarten, first and second grade classes, we 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 throughout the remainder of the year. The first module is about feelings. The students are talking about how they feel when they are happy, sad, angry, jealous and nervous. In the first session, we were talking about happy and sad emotions. The students were learning how to cope when feeling sad. They came up with many strategies to use when sad. For example, they can drawing or do something they like such as building Legos. In the second session, the students picked feelings out of a box and then acted them out. The rest of the class had to determine what the student was feeling and the reason they were feeling that way.

**World Language** – Kindergarteners are continuing to practice their colores and their números. They will also be constructing their own hombre de nieva (snowman) out of construction paper, popsicle sticks and a paper plate. First graders will continue to practice their números (1-31) and their meses del año (months of the year). They will also make their own snow globe for the month of enero (January) using construction paper and cotton balls. Second graders will continue to work with la familia (the family) vocabulary words/phrases and start to learn about world geography (the continents/oceans/Spanish speaking countries). They will also be making their own construction paper diagram of la familia de pinguino (the penguin family), where they will cut/paste/label a family of penguins using their Spanish vocabulary words. Third graders are starting their unit on la clase (the classroom) and completing a mochila (backpack) project. Students will have these mochilas displayed in the hallway for all to see! Fourth graders are starting their unit on la comida (food) and discussing what they eat for desayuno, almuerzo y cena (breakfast, lunch and dinner). They will end their unit by making a small menu in Spanish using their Spanish/English dictionaries and classroom vocabulary!

**Music** – Kindergarten students are working on independent singing and improvisation in songs like “Here sits the Monkey” by Raffi. We practice moving to music and songs, dramatizing the emotions and sounds. First graders are reading and identifying quarter notes, rests and eighth notes. Our two new songs are “Frosty Weather” and “Frog in the Meadow.” We practice clapping the syllables, keeping a beat, and identifying/ clapping the rhythms. We follow this sequence by playing our songs on musical instruments, and working in groups to arrange musical phrases in the correct order that we sing them. We even make our own musical patterns! Second graders have begun their instruments of the orchestra unit. We learned the four families of instruments, and the instruments that belong to them according to their similar properties. We watched videos of these instruments and compared their sounds. Third grade started their composition unit. We all know 5 notes on our recorders, and have earned up to 4 or 5 belts in our recorder karate unit. We still practice our songs, but now we make our own songs writing notes and rhythms. Fourth graders have been finishing their unit on time signature, meter, and musical symbols. This week we learned “An Austrian went Yodeling” and “Tideo.” We bounced tennis balls to the strong beat of our songs, in triple and quadruple meter. Students took turns in Tideo, racing each other to the end of a

musical bridge/hand clapping game to mirror the melodic contour and lyrics. Tideo introduced the final notes we use in elementary school, sixteenth notes!

**Professional Development Staff has attended:**

- Teachers continued to attend Year 3 Conquer Math training.
- Our faculty meeting was held on January 10, 2018. The following topics were discussed:
  - Budget updates for 2018-19
  - Read Across America Theme – “NE School Reads to Feed to the World”
  - Performance Matters – Kathleen Danieli
    - Sharing a test with colleagues
    - In-line choice
    - Viewing/accessing reports
    - Features that coincide with PARCC preparation