



WOODSTOCK NEWSLETTER

Date: September 28, 2007

WOODSTOCK SCHOOL OFFICE

Dear Woodstock Families,

September has flown by! We had a very smooth start and time has zipped along! I want to thank you for getting all of the beginning of the school year paperwork back so promptly. That helps us so much as we have October 1 deadlines for many of the items on that paperwork.

Soccer Teams are very busy. The 4th and 5th grade team has played three games. I am so proud of their great teamwork and positive attitude. They work together so well. Our K-3 teams are learning new skills and having a lot of fun. Check out the October calendar for upcoming soccer game dates. The kids would enjoy your support.

It was great to see all of you at **Open House**. What a great turnout! We enjoy having friends and families in to visit our classrooms. The students and teachers work so hard and it's nice to share their efforts with you.

We had our first **Friday meeting**. The fifth graders presented and did an awesome job. We had a lot of parents and grandparents here for the meeting. Please remember that you are always welcome to attend these meetings. One of the goals is to make the children comfortable presenting to an audience.

October is an unbelievably BUSY month here at school. Please Put the calendar on your fridge or bulletin board and refer to it often. I'll quickly outline a few things.

October 4th is our **WALK TO SCHOOL DAY!** We start our day by having the busses drop us off at Gerry and Ginny Johnson's house at the Route 232 end of Rumford Ave. There we have muffins, milk and juice, and then say the pledge of allegiance. We talk about the importance of getting exercise to keep healthy and then we walk by class to school. Our awesome fire department monitors traffic on the road to keep us safe. Parents who drive their children to school should drop them off with us at the Johnson's. The whole staff will be there to walk with them.

It is **Fire Prevention Month** so we will have a full response drill on October 10th. The Greenwood and Woodstock fire departments will both respond to our school. They always have fire safety reminders and prizes for the kids. We appreciate their efforts a great deal.

On October 19TH, we will have our annual **Grandparents and Special Friends Day**. It will begin at 1:00. The children will put on a show and then our guests are invited to have

some refreshments and visit classrooms. We hope to have a big turnout of special people that day.

The PTA has their **Craft Fair** on October 27th. The students will have crafts there to sell and we are hoping for a lot of craft tables. Last year there were nearly 30 tables, as well as a great raffle table. Mark the date!

For **Halloween**, the PTA sponsors a party on the 31st. We have a Halloween costume parade and whole school party in the multipurpose room. Please get your costume together and come join us!

Please come join in some or all of the fun!

Sincerely,

Jolene M. Littlehale

Teaching Principal

KINDERGARTEN - Miss Wilkey

The Kindergarteners are off to a strong start. They are quickly learning how to be a part of Woodstock Elementary. They are excited to be here!

We have begun the year by learning the routines of the classroom and getting to know one another. The students talked a lot about their favorite things to do and see. We played games to get to know facts about each other. Many students have pets, mostly cats or dogs, and most have a brother or sister. We have been doing a daily greeting in order to learn names. It took a few weeks, but now everyone seems to know all of his or her classmates' names.

The Kindergartners have learned to sort and are getting quite good at it. They have been sorting by color, shape, size, type, and various other rules. They have enjoyed being sorted themselves and then having to guess the rule. Coming up next in Math is patterns. We will learn to recognize, describe, extend, and create patterns using many different types of materials.

In Literacy, students have been working hard to learn the letters of the alphabet and their corresponding sounds. They have also been working on learning to rhyme. We have played many fun rhyme-matching games. We have read familiar nursery rhymes as well. Rhyming will continue to be a focus as we move on to exploring word families. We also have a Letter of the Week each week. So far we have done A and B. The students do activities involving recognizing, writing, and hearing the sound of the letter. Some of the activities that we have enjoyed are apple printing and making bear puppets.

We are finishing up a unit on trees this week. The Kindergarteners have learned that trees are living things. They have explored the differences between living and non-living things. They are also working on describing the needs of living things. We went on a nature walk to observe trees and other living things. We then enjoyed examining items we had collected with a magnifying glass.

Next month we will learn about health and safety. We are excited about Fire Safety Week and having the firefighters come to our school!

GRADE ONE - Mrs. Wentworth

Our year has gotten off to a great start. What a wonderful group of children! They are having fun getting reacquainted with each other and making new friends like Morgan who joined their class this year. Everyone seems to be adjusting to the new routines and expectations of first grade.

I can't believe how busy we have been already. Much of our time has been spent reviewing basic concepts and completing some preliminary testing. Everyone has worked hard and done quite well.

First graders had a great time preparing for Open House. They had fun singing some apple songs, reading apple poems, and making applesauce for their parents. I'd like to thank all of the families who participated in our estimating and graphing questions. (There were 30 apples used to make the applesauce and the favorite apple food was apple crisp. *Yum, Yum.*) We have been (and will continue) to do a lot of graphing this year. So far, we have done a couple, simple venn diagrams, some bar graphs, and a pictograph. Through these graphs the children have been learning how to analyze data and describe the results by using math terms such as greater than, less than, equal to, mode, and frequency. They have also been working on counting and writing numbers 1 – 20, as well as counting by 2's to 20, and by 5's and 10's to 100. Calendar skills are part of our daily routine also. Great job, kiddos. In the coming weeks, we are going to focus on addition facts to 8.

In reading, the children have been enjoying some poems and songs about school, friendship, books, apples, and animals. Theme activities have included dramatization, singing, overhead reading, rhyming, illustrating, cooking, and drawing. They have also had opportunities to participate in a couple of book browses, choral read with a partner and enjoy some quiet time to read to themselves. It has been fun listening to their conversations about books as they share favorites with their classmates. We have completed two read aloud chapter books already. The first one was *Junie B. First Grader (at last)* and *Barkley, Come Home*. Morgan and Kaylee made a poster of the first book for our reading gallery. Josie and Bradley will be working on another one for *Barkley*. The new read-aloud we are enjoying is called, *Buddy*, another dog story.

As first grade parents already know, I began sending books home with children this week. The goal is to have them spend 10-15 minutes each night reading to an adult. Studies show this is the most important thing we can do with our children to help them learn how to read. Everyone is very excited about having "homework finally." ☺

In writing, we began the year with journals. Through mini lessons, students review and work on the mechanics of writing, such as spacing, capitalization, and punctuation. They are also learning some strategies for spelling unknown words and brainstorming topics for entries.

Writing workshop is up and running. Also through mini lessons, students will brainstorm different ways to get ideas for writing, look at a variety of authors and writing styles, and think about what kinds of books they can/want to make this year. I can already tell that we are going to have some creative stories written.

We spent time in Social Studies talking about citizenship, rules, and communities. After some brainstorming, the class came up with a “Classroom Constitution” and agreed to follow the guidelines they have established for learning and safety.

Our first unit in Science is on organisms, which focuses mainly on plants and animals. Students determine what animals and plants need to survive, learn about their different habitats, and choose an animal that they want to research. Thank you parents for sending in those pet pictures for our display. To go along with our first unit, we have a couple of field trips coming up in October. The first one is on the 2nd and we are traveling to the Sunday River Alpaca Farm. First graders went last year and had a great time. Then on October 24th, we are going to the Maine Wildlife Park and Chipman’s Pumpkin Land. We always have a lot of fun at both of these places.

Other events coming up in October include Walk to School Day, Grandparents Day, fire safety, the PTA’s Annual Craft Fair, and a Halloween party. It sounds like it’s going to be a whirlwind fall to me. I hope you get to enjoy some or all of these activities with us. Have a great weekend everyone.

GRADE TWO - Mrs. Meisner

The Second Grade is off to a wonderful start! They are such a great group and such interested and hardworking students!

Second Grade, of course, always starts off with “Insects” every year. We have already watched several chrysalises turn into butterflies and released them. We have lots of other students bring in things for us also. A really big and fat, yellow caterpillar was brought to my door today for us to observe!

Naturally, we are observing our mealworms go through their life cycle and turn into that lovely, brown beetle. Our first assessment is on “Life Cycles” and part of the written piece is comparing two life cycles. It’s exciting!

My hermit crab died so we have a fiddler crab to take its place. He moves around a lot faster and is a little more interesting to see. He has already shed a complete skin showing every little detail!

Betty, the Beta fish, is back again and doing well, so far!

We had a wonderful field trip to the Oxford County Fair! We did miss not having the horse and wagon rides, but we enjoyed everything else. Thank you to the chaperones who went with us: Elissa Lufkin, Leana Piawlock, Tove Westleigh, and Evelyn and Dick Bodemer.

We also had a great turnout for Open House! Wow! I'm always so impressed with the interest and support these kids get from their adults!

The kids have been reading a lot at home and bringing in their book slips so I have a lot of "stars" on the bulletin board. We will be counting them each quarter to see how many we get! Keep up that great reading!

We are writing stories and making books to share and we've been doing a lot on the computers. We are also keeping a science journal and writing about the things we are observing. Now that we have finished most of the testing we need to do we are really getting into our subjects!

September has flown by so fast and now it's almost October! Check your calendar of events because there are many activities coming up that you won't want to miss!

GRADE THREE - Mrs. Burke

For students the month of September has been one of getting to know the routines and expectations of third grade. For me it has been getting to know each of the third graders as unique individuals. We have spent a lot of time doing assessments that have helped me to learn more about the strengths and needs of each student. Now we are ready to get down to the business of learning.

In math we have been learning about place value, and practicing the three ways of writing numbers; standard form, expanded form, and word form. We have also spent a lot of time reviewing some basic math vocabulary such as digit, sum, difference, product, greater than, less than, equal to, odd, and even. This week we worked on 5 digit numbers (ten thousands), and next week we will continue on to 6 digit numbers (hundred thousands).

Our new spelling program is getting off to a good start. Each day we take at least a few minutes to do some type of activity that is geared toward helping the students really understand the basic patterns of spelling, and we have also done quite a few short writing assignments that involve using the words that we are studying. The idea is to make the learning of spelling tied to using it in the process of writing.

All students have finished spelling and reading the Frye words, and just this week we also completed the DRA reading assessments, which means that we will now begin reading groups in earnest. The reading that is being done at home, and the accompanying logs, seem to be working out pretty well. We have made a few adjustments that I hope have helped. As always, please send a note or give me a call if you have any concerns.

Our science/social studies time has been spent on learning about the individual rights that are guaranteed by the Constitution to all US citizens. We even wrote letters thanking Thomas Jefferson for writing the Declaration of Independence, and telling him what we liked about the country that he helped to build.

Cursive writing is another big focus in third grade, and the students are doing wonderfully. I expect that we should be ready to start using cursive in our daily work shortly after the new year.

In third grade there is homework every night, so please help your student to develop good homework habits by setting up a time and place to get it done. If there is a genuine reason why your child cannot get his or her homework done, please send in a note.

We have been having a lot of fun adding the Take Time program to our schedule this year. Ask your student about these activities. Some are just to help us get the heart pumping and the blood flowing. Others are a bit more academically based.

As you can see, we are off to an exciting start to third grade. We still need a room parent, so if you are interested, please let me know.

Hope that you get a chance to get out and enjoy the beautiful autumn weather, and the spectacular foliage that comes with it. We are so lucky to live in such a lovely place.

GRADE FOUR - Mrs. Ferland

September was a fast month! Fourth graders are settling in nicely and getting use to the expectations of a new classroom. We started the year with many assessments so that we could see where everyone's abilities were. After all the tests were over, we got down to business.

In reading, we read about Fudge, a spirited, mischievous 3 year old child that likes to bother his older brother. Many fourth graders could relate to the characters. Then we started reading *Lost on a Mountain in Maine*. After reading this book for 10 years, I still love it. As an adult, if you have never read this book, you should. It is amazing how a 12-year-old boy survives the woods alone on Mt. Katahdin for 9 days. This story is a great way to start talking about our first social studies unit, Maine. Although, we already know a lot about Maine, there is so much more to learn. We will learn about the regions, natural resources, agriculture, history, famous people, and government. We also will do a Powerpoint presentation, too.

In science, we started the year with energy! We learned about the different types of energy sources and the best one for our environment. We shared our posters at Friday meeting. We also have done some experiments with magnets. Next, we will learn about electricity and how it works.

In math, we are reviewing concepts that are needed to learn more complex math. So far, we have done rounding, comparing numbers, place value, counting change and a few other skills. We also do a Mad Minute test everyday. The purpose of Mad Minute is to practice our math facts and become very quick at them. Most students are working on addition facts now, but will be moving to subtraction facts soon. Keep practicing at home! It will make a difference.

Soccer has started and they are doing a great job! Keep it up, Woodstock Wolves! Instrument lessons have started. Lessons are every Monday and Thursday, so students need their instruments. Don't forget to practice at home, it makes a difference. The year is off to a busy start and it only gets busier in October. Check those calendars for all the events going on in October.

Have a great weekend.

GRADE FIVE - Ms. Wilson

We had a busy start to the school year!. Right away, fifth grade headed out on a new adventure to Camp Susan Curtis. The goal of our time at camp was to learn about teamwork and how to develop leadership skills. Our class had a wonderful time, because they already know how to work well together and respect one another. We have many leaders in our class, but we also have leaders who are willing to let others lead when needed. By the end of the two days, it seemed that we had made progress working together even better as a unit, and students set goals for themselves and our class. Overall, the experience was powerful and positive.

Our math times this month have focused on the factors and multiples of numbers. Using these terms, we have learned about square numbers, prime numbers, the order of operations, and how to group numbers using compatible clusters to make problems easier. We have really been focusing on mental strategies, and learning how to clump numbers by simple groups in order to perform math operations. Students have been successful with this. I have asked students to keep math notebooks, and they have learned what is expected of them. Math notebooks are an important tool, since we do not have a math text to work from for the unit we are working on. As a bit of enrichment, we have also been working with exponents a little here and there. This is not a standard that is expected of fifth graders, but many students have been ready for this challenge.

During our literature block, we have been analyzing the author's point of view while reading a piece of non-fiction about wolves. Students have been asked to find opinions, facts, and compare their knowledge of wolves to what the author has presented. Students have also been analyzing types of comprehension questions, and learning about how to tackle certain types of questions. Our enrichment reading group has been working with articles on wolf education from the internet to learn more about certain breeds of wolves. Using this information, they are working to prepare a proposal to the Nevada state government to explain why they think the Mexican wolf should be reintroduced into that are of the country. These students are working on persuasive writing, as well as being able to analyze and interpret the point of view of the internet articles form the International Wolf Education Center. As a final activity for all students, we will be analyzing fairy tales that contain wolves as characters, and comparing their personality traits to the traits of real wolves. Students will then be writing a fairy tale with a wolf as a character, using only true wolf traits. This will assess how well they understood the positive point of view of wolves that the authors of all of our readings have had.

Students have also been writing narratives this quarter. Since we are studying Native Americans in our social studies time, we are writing legends in the same style that Native

Americans used in their oral traditions. Students have been working on developing their characters with descriptions and dialogue to help explain character motivation.

We have been using a different spelling program this year. The program, Sitton Spelling, focuses on word knowledge integrated with writing and language skills. Instead of having specific lists of words to learn, students learn about commonalities amongst words, and how to use parts of words to solve spelling quandaries. Students are asked to edit regularly, and use spelling in context. So far, it has been a lot of fun for us to dive into.

In science, we have learned about the different biological kingdoms, and we have focused specifically on the plant kingdom. Students have been learning about the parts of a plant, the function of the parts, and how a plant is important to the ecosystem. Students are currently drawing and labeling plant parts as part of an assessment of what they know. They will have to be able to explain how a plant is different from an animal, and also describe how a plant makes its food through photosynthesis.

Our social studies times have focused on reviewing geography skills and learning about Native Americans. We began by learning about the purposes of different types of maps, reviewing latitude and longitude, going over compass directions, and reading maps. Since then we have learned about the land bridge from Asia, and how the first Native American cultures migrated to North and South America. We are currently learning about the oldest known Native American cultures.

Overall, it has been a great start to the year. Having a motivated and cooperative class is a lot of fun, and I have gotten to know each of them well. They are a hard working bunch. As a class, they enjoy challenges, and I look forward to providing those challenges throughout the year.

RESOURCE ROOM - Mrs. Robinson

Things have been very busy in the resource room. A lot of the students have finished up one level of their various programs and started in another. They should be very proud of themselves.

We have had lots of interesting discussions and writing going on, due to the activities that many of the students have been taking part in this month.

In the next couple of weeks I will be sending out letters for parent teacher conferences that will be taking place from November 13-20, 2007.

I would like to thank all the parents who stopped in to see me during Open House. It was nice to talk to you all.

Have a wonderful October.

ART - Miss Ingraham

It has been a great start to the school year in Art class! Kindergarten has been working on using line to create drawings. We have been discussing the various lines you can use to describe objects and feelings. There are nine lines we have been working with: Straight, curved, long, short, thick, thin, dotted, loopy, and zigzag.

First grade started the year creating a colorful cactus with markers. Each student created a cactus with stacking shapes and then filled the shapes with various lines and colors. We then glued bright triangle shaped paper around the outside of the cactus for the spikes.

Second grade has been drawing insects! Each student filled a piece of paper with a variety of insects. This project really helps each student work on his or her observational drawing skills.

Third grade looked at artwork by Henri Matisse. Matisse is well known for his abstract collages. Each student created a collage using geometric and free-form shapes cut out of paper.

Fourth grade created Illuminated names. The art of Illumination started during the Medieval time period. Manuscript were decorated with bright colors to light up the page. Each fourth grader decorated his or her name with decorations or turned the letters into objects.

Fifth grade has been working on animal drawings. Each student created an outline of an animal. The hard part was making sure the outline described what animal it was. The outline of the animal was then filled in with an assortment of lines and patterns.

MSAD # HEALTH COORDINATOR – Ms. Russell

MSAD #44 was recently awarded another Healthy Maine Partnership (HMP) grant! The money will come out of the Fund for a Healthy Maine (awarded to the state through the tobacco settlement monies), and will be used to continue partial funding of the half-time School Health Coordinator position. This award will allow our district to improve and develop programs, activities and policies that promote the health and wellness of our students and employees, including the Coordinated School Health Program. Our district is part of the current River Valley Healthy Communities Coalition HMP.

For more information about Healthy Maine Partnerships and Coordinated School Health Programs, go to www.healthymainepartnership.org, or contact me at russellb@sad44.org.

FYI- October 1-5 is International Walk to School Week. Take time to walk to or from school with your child(ren).

INSTRUMENTS - Ms. DeVore

For the second year in a row we have broken our record for the number of children at the Woodstock School who are learning to play an instrument, 23 fourth and fifth graders.

We have eight fifth graders playing in the Second Year Band. They made their 2007 debut when they played "Hard Rock Blues" at School Meeting on September 21, and they are hard at work learning to play "Midnight Mission," the first real band piece they've played that has a different part for every instrument.

Fourth graders - and fifth graders who did not play last year - had several opportunities to check out the instruments. As a result, 13 fourth graders and two more fifth graders have joined the band. We should have an awesome WES band!

Band meets twice a week for both beginner and second year players, on Monday and Thursday. Please help your child remember to bring instrument and music to school on band days. And do remind them to practice!

MUSIC - Mrs. Stowell

All is going well in music classes at WES. K and 1 have been moving, hearing stories, and singing. They also played tambourines to a special song.

Grades 2-5 have been working every week on the names of the lines and spaces of the staff. They know how to find the lines by using their "hand staff", also the spaces. Every week they find a "word of the week" on the board and have to figure out what word the notes spell. This is great practice for reading music. I also put up a "rhythm of the week", which we speak and clap.

NURSE – Mrs. Chris Cole, RN

Please help keep our school healthy by remembering the following:

** Sick children need to be at home. Please keep your child home if they exhibit signs of illness or have a fever over 100 F. Your child needs to be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school.

**If we need to send your child home during the day due to illness or injury, please make sure we have the correct home and emergency contact information.

**If it becomes necessary to send medication to school, please contact the school nurse's office for the correct procedure. All medication must be sent in the original container and have a medication form completed.

**Teach your child correct hand washing and how to cover coughs and sneezes.

**If your child's health status changes during the school year, please let us know.

Best wishes for a happy and healthy school year.

Christine Cole, RN
District Nurse
824-2136 ext 312

PHYSICAL ED. - Ms. Russell

Kindergarten students have been practicing loco motor skills- jogging, running, galloping and skipping, and incorporating them into various tag games. The tag games also help the students develop greater spatial awareness by learning to avoid other players in a confined space.

Grades 1 students have been refining their skipping and galloping, by changing speeds and direction in our tag games. Evasion skills and teamwork have been our focus during very active Capture the Flag games in grade 1.

Grades 3-5 have been getting in lots of running during their preparation for a half-mile fitness run and their Capture the Flag games. We are working on agility, teamwork and sportsmanship. The students are beginning to see the value of using a team strategy and making positive comments to each other.

WPTA UPDATE – Mrs. Walker

The P.T.A. is off to a great start with 40 members, so far. Fall Fundraiser info will be coming home shortly. We are still looking for new members, and we are always in need of bakers and volunteers to pick up bottles. The next P.T.A. meeting is on October 11th at 6:00. Hope to see you there!!

MKA NEWS – Mrs. Penley

The Mahoosuc Kids spent the month of September preparing crafts for the Fryeburg Fair. The children decorated t-shirts using bowls, elastics, sharpies, and rubbing alcohol; just like tie-dye without the mess! Some of the children even made nature candles. You may check out our display in the 4-H building at the Fryeburg Fair from September 30-October 7.

New this year, to encourage reading after school, the children earn “money” to spend at our school store. We have prizes ranging from \$1 to \$10. The more books read, the more money a child can earn.

On October 18, 2007, in celebration of all after school programs, Mahoosuc Kids will be celebrating Lights on After-school. There will be games, pumpkin decorating and much more. Reservation forms will be coming home soon.