

FRIDAY



FLASH

EDMUNDS  
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

299 Main St, Burlington, VT 05401 • 864-1791

December 5, 2014

## From the Principal's Desk

I've been listening to the news and as we approach budget season, we are once again hearing from the legislators and the governor about how education has to control costs and how statewide enrollment numbers have gone down.

Burlington's numbers have not gone down but if enrollment had gone down, it goes down across grades rather than focused in one grade. A school can lose 20 students, which numerically is one whole classroom, but the 20 students will be spread across all the grades in the school - making it very difficult to actually reduce the faculty without resulting in very large classes.

Enrollment is only one part of what drives costs. It is frustrating to listen to how educators should control costs knowing how much of our costs are dictated by the decisions of legislators at the state and federal levels. To continue to add to the work of education without believing that there will be a corresponding increase in costs is illogical and naïve. Unfortunately, politicians, with the help of the media, have been very successful in their strategy of passing on the blame for rising costs to educators and local school boards.

Homeowners and contractors offer us a good analogy to our current situation. Let's consider this scenario. A homeowner contracts with a builder to build a 3,000 square foot house of average quality. The contractor gives the homeowner a price of \$100 per square foot for a total of \$300,000 and the homeowner agrees. The contractor begins the work. The homeowner decides to reduce the house to 2,700 square feet but the changes don't stop there. The owner decides on high end appliances, marble countertops in the kitchen and bathrooms, increases the number of bathrooms from two to four, including high end fixtures, custom cabinets and light fixtures in the kitchen and bathrooms, hand hewn oak beams, hardwood floors, a movie room in the basement, and geothermal heat. The cost per square foot rises to \$175/sq. foot and the new cost is \$472,000. So while the size was reduced by 10 percent, the additional features increased the cost by 57%.

This is precisely what has happened to the cost of education over the past two decades. For example, the legislature recently passed a dual enrollment law enabling a high school student to take a college course and get credit at both high school and college. The college tuition must be paid. A new preschool law requires that all towns provide 10 hours of preschool to 3 and 4 year olds in their town. Both of these ideas have valid reasons and are good for our society and both will impact local property taxes. This summer, I got a listing of the laws passed impacting education since 2000 and the package I received was a half an inch thick; page after page

### Upcoming Events:

Dec. 17 EES Chorus at Burlington Square Mall 11:00am

Dec. 19 Winter Break Begins

Jan. 5 Return from Winter Break

Jan. 6-9 Auditions for Narnia

Jan. 19 Martin Luther King Day - No School

Jan. 30 EES to UVM Women's Hockey Game 7:00 pm

**Whole School Assembly**

**Wednesday, Dec. 10**

**8:10 - 8:30**

of legal requirements. So, where is the surprise? Where is the evidence that declining enrollments are sufficient to absorb the costs of increased legal and regulatory demands on schools? No one would fault the contractor for giving the homeowner a higher bill for what the owner asked for, yet that is what the politicians repeatedly do.

There are many who say, "We got on just fine without all these laws when we were in school." Perhaps *they* did, but too many didn't. Over generations, the U.S. produced many millions of functionally illiterate adults with a system that allowed students to fall through the cracks. Where it used to be possible for illiterate workers to earn a middle class existence in manufacturing, those jobs have disappeared. Workers need to be able to read and write in all sectors today. They need to have solid math skills. Allowing students to slip through the cracks, or to be tossed aside is not acceptable to society, and rightfully so. In the long run, education is a long-term investment with a return to society in terms of productive, tax paying citizens.

The laws and regulations adding to costs benefit society. Once the legislators pass them, they should have the courage to put the money where their mouths were when passing the laws and stand behind the resulting investment costs, defending them and encouraging taxpayers to support them.

### LEARNING TO GIVE STARTS EARLY - PJ DRIVE BY FIRST GRADE - PLEASE JOIN US!

Our First Grade Team would like to request your help in keeping children warm this winter. We are doing our second annual Pajama and Book Drive to benefit local children and families in need. We will be collecting new PJs of all sizes and new books in Ms. Nutting and Mrs. Goldsmith's classroom, room 211. We will collect pjs and books until Friday, December 19th. Thank you so much for your support of our community.

**FROM THE PTO****EES MUSICAL NARNIA**

Open to all students in grades 1-5. Parents and students in grades 3-5 must fill out a permission slip by Wednesday, December 17 and return it to the Main Office. Chorus (grades 1-2) meets once a week on Mondays from 2:50-4:15. Chorus runs through the Burlington Kids after school program beginning January 12.

Students in grades 3-5 can participate in character roles, general cast, or crew. Auditions for grades 3-5 are on January 6, 7, 8 and 9 during lunch/recess. No rehearsals on Fridays. All day rehearsal for cast and crew on Sunday, March 8.

Performances March 12-14.

**Looking for parent volunteers for many different tasks.**

Contact Kirstin DiPietro Worden ([kkworden@gmail.com](mailto:kkworden@gmail.com)) or Clare Wool ([clarewool@mac.com](mailto:clarewool@mac.com)) if you can offer your valuable support. To sign-up via Sign-up genius, click the link: [www.SignUpGenius.com/go/30E094AA8AC2FAA8-20151](http://www.SignUpGenius.com/go/30E094AA8AC2FAA8-20151)

**EES APPAREL ORDERS DUE MONDAY, DECEMBER 8**

Just in time for our cold Vermont winter and the holidays! Order forms are available in the Front Office. Return the form to your child's teacher by Monday, December 8. Make checks payable to EES PTO. Merchandise will be delivered to the students in their classrooms during the week of December 15. Indicate on the form if it is a gift order. Those can be picked up in the front office. Contact Marni at [pto@eespto.org](mailto:pto@eespto.org) if you would like an order form emailed to you.

**SUPPORT FUND FOR SHELLEY SPINNER NOW UNTIL DECEMBER 11**

"Contributing to this fund will provide Shelley and her family with a bit of financial peace and will allow them to focus on what is most important: Shelley's recovery and family quality time." If you would like to donate, please go to the link below.

<http://www.youcaring.com/medical-fundraiser/support-fund-for-shelley-spinner/247918>

**WHOLE SCHOOL PICTURE ORDER DUE**

The whole school picture is available in a 10" x 20" size. For information on ordering and for the cost please email Marni at [pto@eespto.org](mailto:pto@eespto.org)

**(Picture is sample and does not appear as actual below)**

**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 12: JINGLE BELL WALK AND ROLL TO SCHOOL**

Make an extra effort to walk, scoot, bike, or bus to school on this day! Hot chocolate will be passed out by parent volunteers to celebrate our walk and roll efforts on a chilly day.

**NOW UNTIL WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 17: HOLIDAY GIFT CARD DRIVE**

During this holiday season, if you are looking for an opportunity to give to a family in the EES community, consider purchasing a gift card (grocery store, gas card, department store, etc.) to donate anonymously. Every year Ms. Hathaway (EES School Counselor) identifies families in need and works behind the scenes to solicit gifts and gift cards for the holidays. The gift cards can be sent to school in an envelope where they will be collected by the classroom teacher and given to Ms. Hathaway. In order to reach families before the December break, please send in gift cards no later than Wednesday, December 17. Thank you EES community for your generosity during the holiday season.

**FROM THE EES COMMUNITY****LOOKING FOR A CO-LEADER FOR DAISIES GIRL SCOUTS (GRADES K-1)**

Please contact Jennifer Jorgenson ([jjorgens@uvm.edu](mailto:jjorgens@uvm.edu)) if you are interested,

**PTO EMAIL UPDATES**

The PTO sends out weekly email updates. If you would like to be added to the PTO email list, please contact Marni Slavik at EES PTO ([pto@eespto.org](mailto:pto@eespto.org)).

For more information about PTO events visit:

<http://eespto.org/> or <https://www.facebook.com/eespto>.

**VERMONT COFFEE FUNDRAISER DUE TUESDAY, DEC. 9**

Give the gift of coffee for the holidays! Coffee will be delivered on Friday, December 12. EES makes \$6/bag! Order forms at Front Office and EES PTO website (via PayPal); Please note in PayPal "Purpose Box" number of bags and coffee choice. Contact Pam Moreau (802.999.4590; [pmoreaulawvt@gmail.com](mailto:pmoreaulawvt@gmail.com)) with questions.

