



EDMUNDS
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

FRIDAY



FLASH

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

February 20, 2015

From the Principal's Desk

Once a month, the faculty throughout the Burlington School District have conversations concerning diversity. They are proving to be very interesting and provocative. This week we had a conversation that discussed being color blind or color brave. There is a really good Ted Talk by Mellody Hobson that I would highly recommend to all. Here is the link: http://www.ted.com/talks/mellody_hobson_color_blind_or_color_brave I would not presume to paraphrase what Ms. Hobson says, preferring to ask you to watch and consider her words. Taking action on what she says is the thing that we struggle with and yet taking action is what will move us beyond a society that continues to perpetuate a system of bias - unconscious or not. This leads me to ask uncomfortable questions starting with myself. What do I do to insure that I am reaching out; that I am not simply doing what is comfortable?

Our children play together, enjoy each other and share many experiences within school. I wonder, when it comes time to socialize, how many do so across the visible and invisible socio-economic, cultural, and ethnic lines within our school. If we as adults are somehow constrained in our own comfort in including people outside our own sphere in view of our children, are we not in danger of perpetuating a set of biases that we intellectually and philosophically would decry? Is the model of action that we take not what we can ultimately expect from our children?

I don't ask these questions lightly nor do I think that we will all be comfortable with what I ask. If we are to be honest with ourselves, I think we can agree that we will never really move forward without a level of discomfort. The status quo is very easy, and insidious when it comes to improving a society. We cannot expect our society to improve without being introspective about what we can do as individuals here and now, despite our own discomfort.

I know about being uncomfortable. I am very shy. I know that you are all thinking that that's a ridiculous thing for me to say but it is the honest truth. Every time I go into a new situation I have to force myself to go. I have learned though that the discomfort is usually worth the effort. It has gotten easier, but never goes away, but it *has gotten easier* and that's what matters.

It doesn't really matter what makes us uncomfortable. What is important is whether we allow that discomfort to rule us or we make a conscious decision to overcome and move beyond. If doing so is something that will help our children be better able to overcome the centuries of bias and racism that has plagued our nation, isn't it worth it? We can be the change, but only through a decision to act bravely.

Upcoming Events:

- Feb. 20 Report Cards go home
- Start of winter break
- Student Council Spirit Day
- Mar. 3 Don't forget to vote
- Mar. 4 Return from Winter Break
- Mar. 13-14 Narnia

Whole School Assembly
Wednesday, Mar. 4
Statehood Celebration
by Mrs. Flynn's 4th grade

Donors Choose for 2nd Grade Projects

Second grade teachers, Mrs. Bellavance and Ms. McMorris have created projects on donorschoose.org called "Catching The Wind: Science Projects and iPads" and "Making Mathematicians" (the links to the projects are below):
<http://www.donorschoose.org/we-teach/2810696>
<http://www.donorschoose.org/we-teach/2810697>

If you are interested in supporting this goal please take a moment to look at their projects on donorschoose.org. If you click on the "Catching The Wind" or "Making Mathematicians" title below the description it will give information about each project. Thank you for your support!

Donations made by the end of Sunday, February 22, will result in a match by Donors Choose so if you're thinking of doing it, please, do it today! The code is: spark

Racing to Read

EES Students read a total of 2,310.5 hours during the month of February during our Racing to Read celebration. The NASCAR themed month resulted in students at all grade levels logging their reading time at home and at school. The top finishers in the K-Grade 2 Category were:

43.5 hours for 1st graders in Mrs. Quinn's Class;
57 hours for 2nd graders in Ms. Fagan's Class; and 71 hours for First Graders in Ms. Paige's Class

The top finishers in grades 3 - 5 were:
318.5 hours for 3rd graders in Mrs. Flaherty/Ms. Palmer's class
328 hours for 3rd and 4th graders in Mr. Houchens class and top honors for went to the fifth graders in Mrs. Bonanni's class with a whopping 362 hours of reading over the course of the month of February! Way to go!

Don't Forget to Vote - March 3rd

BOOK SWAP A SUCCESS!

Our first ever book swap held in the library this week was a huge success thanks to our families who took the time to donate books so others could enjoy them. Students were extremely excited to select a book to keep for their very own and are looking forward to doing some reading over vacation! Thanks again to everyone who helped make this book swap possible.

FROM THE PTO**EES MUSICAL NARNIA UPDATE**

We need everyone who has a child in the musical to please help out in some way. Please visit the sign-up genius website at the following link and see what the needs are, email directly with the role you would like to provide, or ask what is needed most. We really can't put on the show without the help of everyone. Please see what you can offer. If you have any questions or concerns, please email me at kkworden@gmail.com <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e094aa8ac2faa8-20151>

NARNIA PERFORMANCE BAKE SALES - HELP NEEDED!

Every year during the intermission of each performance we hold a bake sale to help cover the costs of the annual musical. In order to make this fundraiser successful, we are asking for donations of food, baked goods, and drinks for both the Friday night and Saturday afternoon performances. We welcome participation from all families whether or not you have children in the musical. Your contribution makes a difference to our school. PLEASE sign up

www.SignUpGenius.com/go/30E0B44ACAB2BA57-narnia to help. Questions, contact Lisa Brighenti (lisa.brighenti@gmail.com or 999-2934)

ELECTION DAY BAKE SALE TO BENEFIT EES DRAMA TUESDAY, MARCH 3

We are in need of baked goods for the bake sale that will be held on Election Day (Tuesday 3/3) at the Ward 6 voting site (EMS gym). Please consider baking something or donating store bought baked goods or other items for this bake sale. All proceeds benefit the EES drama program, which help pay for the annual musical. One donation we are looking for is coffee, either someone to make and bring in carafes along with cups, milk, creamer and sugar, or donated from Dunkin Donuts or elsewhere. Other ways to help are to volunteer to help for an hour or more at the bake sale. We need your help to make this bake sale a success. Please email Clare Wool at clarewool@mac.com if you can help out in any way. Donations of baked goods or other items for the bake sale can be dropped off at Clare's house prior to Tuesday or directly at the EMS gym on Tuesday morning. Please contact Clare to coordinate.

THANK YOU: PARENT NIGHT SPEAKERS AND ATTENDEES!

Thank you to all who attended parent night and heard from speakers Howard Smith about the BSD budget and Johanna Straavaldsen about early sexual abuse education curricula.

NARNIA MUGS FOR SALE

Kate Larson will be selling mugs to celebrate and help pay for this year's school play: Narnia. Pick up a mug (or more) at the final play practices or at one of the weekend shows. Mugs are selling for \$8 each. If you have any questions, please contact Kate at kate.larson@mac.com. Special thank you to Korinna Hilleman for providing amazing sketches and costumes for so many years!



**Don't Forget to Vote - March 3rd.
Out of town?
Don't forget an absentee ballot!**



Still plenty of opportunities to help out with the play! This team is making paper mâché unicorn heads.

EES MUSICAL NARNIA UPDATE

If you have any questions or concerns, please email Kirstin at kkworden@gmail.com