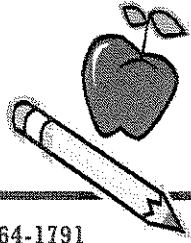


FRIDAY



FLASH

EDMUNDS  
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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

March 22, 2013

## From the Principal's Desk

We all know that children are not born knowing appropriate social skills. We've all had to correct a child who has said or done an unkind thing to another. As adults, our job is to teach appropriate social skills so that our children can successfully navigate in the community. While the vast majority of children are reasonably successful socially by the time they reach elementary school, they are not perfect by any stretch. The range of social skills is very wide, within classes and even within individual students. Students can be both capable of great empathy, kindness, and oblivious to their impact on others or even the need to consider others at other times. All students understand justice as it relates to them, but many do not consider how their actions might impact another, unless they are specifically directed to think about their actions from the other's perspective. Children make mistakes. They make poor choices and those choices can hurt others:

As a society, we have become acutely aware of the damage that bullying can and has done to individuals. Parents are understandably sensitive to the issue as it could impact their children. As a result, I have found that many parents, when reporting a wrong their child experienced use the term "bullied". Any behavior that hurts another, whether physically, socially or emotionally is wrong and is misbehavior. It is important that we all understand that, while bullying always includes misbehavior, misbehavior is not automatically bullying. I want to emphasize however that all misbehavior is subject to correction by the school.

**So what is bullying?** By legal definition, in order for behavior to be considered bullying, *it must target an individual, be repeated over time, have the intent to ridicule, humiliate, or intimidate the student, and it must interfere with another student's rights to access educational programs. All of those conditions must exist for behavior to be bullying.*

Every day, children do things to each other that have the impact of making another child feel badly. This isn't exclusive to school. It happens between siblings too. That said it is pretty rare for an elementary aged student to meet all the criteria for bullying. Consider the question of targeting or intent. How often you have asked your child, "Why did you do that?" and they say, "I don't know". Young children rarely plan or consider ramifications of their actions. Most children who hurt other students treat everyone the same way. Some only know retaliation as a strategy for handling a situation because that is what they have been taught by adults. Some have very poor impulse control. Some have no awareness of their size as compared to their classmates. They flail around, hurting kids in their wake. All of these things can be changed through teaching, coaching and practice.

## Upcoming Events

- Mar. 25 Harp and Soul - VSO visit to EES
- Mar. 25-29 Parent Teacher Conferences by appointment
- Mar. 28 Early release day (11:30) for Conferences
- Mar. 29 No School
- Apr. 16 Art Show and Concert

Behavior impacts education and school climate and we have instituted **Positive Behavior intervention Supports** as a means to establish school-wide expectations that are taught and re-taught throughout the school year. The expectations are adjusted for each setting, to match the activity, and the language is known by all the children. Where the research based program goal is to have a minimum of 80% of students be able to meet school-wide expectations, EES is at 84% based on 0-1 office discipline referrals. This year we are piloting Second Step, a Social Skills curriculum, school-wide. The curriculum teaches Skills for Learning, (how to listen is not a skill all arrive with), Empathy, Emotional Control and Problem Solving. We have a Behavior Support Team that meets weekly to address the needs of individual students struggling with behavior to put interventions in place to re-teach and re-enforce appropriate behaviors at a more intensive level. Our social worker and counselors help to get students the counseling they need, teaching them how their thinking impacts their actions to help them to make better choices.

Just as important to working with the misbehaving child, is working with the children who have experienced an injury. We work with students to equip them with self-advocacy skills such as assertiveness. The reality for all of us is that there will always be people who do mean things - whether verbally, through social media, or physically. We need to have the personal resilience to cope with those things and move on.

It is never ok for kids to hurt each other, whether physically, or emotionally. We address each case of misbehavior that is brought to our attention, whether by a student, a classmate, a teacher, or other staff member, a parent or trusted adult. It is always difficult for parents to not learn what the consequence was to the child who injured their child. We are legally not allowed to discuss what happens to another child. There are consequences, up to and including suspensions. This takes time, just as with reading, writing, and math, but it does lead to changes that improve the climate for all students. It will always be a work in progress for us because as one child learns the skills, new children arrive who need the lessons.

## Placement for 2014 and faculty changes

A letter regarding placement for the upcoming school year is attached. If parents want to provide information for consideration in the process, please complete the form and return to us by April 2.

We will have a few changes in personnel. After 44 years, Janice Case is retiring! We'll be sure to celebrate with her as the end of the year approaches. Kara Quinn is moving to first grade. Lauren Fagan is taking a year leave of absence. Melissa Nutting will continue to job share her first grade position but Penny Stearns will be returning to her full time math coach position for the district. We are confident that we will have highly qualified and skilled professionals for all of the openings for 2014.

## Parent/Teacher Conference Scheduling

Please click on the following link to access the teachers' conference schedules. If you cannot access the link directly, please cut and paste the link into an Internet browser. If you need assistance, please contact Mrs. Monica Gragg at 864-1791.  
[http://ptcfast.com/schools/Edmunds\\_Elementary\\_School](http://ptcfast.com/schools/Edmunds_Elementary_School)

## TWO VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO PREP FOR ART SHOW ON 16 APRIL

EES Art Teacher, Anne Lamont, needs a couple of volunteers to help her hang our children's art pieces in the cafeteria for the Art Show. She needs help around 3 pm on Tuesday, 16 April. Please contact Anne ([alamont@bsdvt.org](mailto:alamont@bsdvt.org)), if you are able to help.

## Calling all future Kindergarten Parents!

**Please alert your friends with children who will be Kindergarteners to come to one of our Kindergarten tours.**

We hope to have as many kindergarten students registered as possible by the end of this school year. Help us to reach out into the community and bring our kindergarten students to us so that they and their moms and dads can participate in our Kindergarten Orientation in May!

Kindergarten tours are as follows:

- Thursday, March 28<sup>th</sup> 8:20 - 9:20 am
- Thursday, April 4<sup>th</sup> 1:15 - 2:15 pm
- Tuesday, April 16<sup>th</sup> 8:20 - 9:20 am
- Tuesday May 7<sup>th</sup> - 8:20 - 9:20 am
- Wednesday May 22<sup>nd</sup> - 1:15 - 2:15 pm

RSVP's are helpful. Call 802-864-8473 extension #1

## SAVE THE DATE: ART SHOW AND SPRING CONCERT - 16 APRIL, 5:45 - 7:30 PM

View your child's art in the EES Cafeteria at 5:45 pm, organized by Anne Lamont. Listen to our children sing by grade group in the Edmunds Middle School Gym at 6:30 pm, organized by Christina Norland.

## 5<sup>th</sup> Grade tackles Soda Tax issue

Students in Ms. Lane's language arts classes have been reading and researching the proposed sugar sweetened beverage tax H.234. How do you stand on the tax? Two letters, one advocating for and the other against the bill are attached. They are great examples of the quality of writing at EES!

## FRIEND 2 FRIEND COMPANION WORKSHOP: UNDERSTANDING AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS ON 25 MARCH, 7 - 8 PM

As parents, we want our children to know about navigating the challenges and benefiting from the perspectives of classmates who think and behave in ways that differ from their own. We have heard in the media about the increasing numbers of children with Autism Spectrum Disorders, ADHD, and other identified or non-identified conditions which affect social and communication skills. But what do we know about the reasons and purposes underlying some of the "unexpected" behaviors our children may be seeing at school? What kinds of support do our children need for developing the necessary skills for accepting, playing, learning, and developing mutually beneficial friendships with classmates who think differently? How do we, as parents, help our children navigate this increasingly complex social environment? Simply put, sometimes as parents we don't know how to talk about this stuff with our kids!

Next Tuesday (3/26), thanks to a gift from People's United Bank, *Puppets in Education* will spend the day at Edmunds Elementary presenting their Friend 2 Friend (F2F) program with 10 classrooms. The night before their visit they are offering a free companion workshop for parents. Participants will get to see the Simulation Game that will be presented to 5th grade leaders, and will have a chance to ask questions about how to talk with their children about this and the puppet presentations with the younger children. Participants will leave with a deeper understanding about Autism, knowledge of the 7 Friendship Tips, and some ideas for answering questions and engaging in discussion with their children at the dinner table on Tuesday night!

The Friend 2 Friend lead presenter also happens to be Edmunds parent, Karen Newman, M.Ed., who has served as Master Puppeteer and Program Director for Puppets in Education, and as a teacher over the last 20 years, has had a special focus on issues around inclusion.

**What?** Friend 2 Friend companion workshop

**Who?** All EES Parents/Caregivers

**When?** Monday, March 25<sup>th</sup> from 7:00- 8:00

**Where?** EES Art Room *Childcare provided.*

**PINOCCHIO PERFORMANCE: THANK YOU TO ALL**

Thank you to all the performers, families, community members, staff and teachers, and Don Wright and his Very Merry Theater crew for supporting the arts in our community. Thank you to the Edmunds Elementary Community for working together on *Pinocchio*. Our children are the future of this rich tradition of drama at our school.

**TEACHER APPRECIATION WEEK IS 25-29 MARCH**

To show our gratitude for our teachers and staff, we are planning a week full of special treats. We are asking each class to be responsible for a particular day, so that we make sure the week is full of goodies! Below is a list of class assignments. If you can help, please email Peggy O'Neill [peggyov@burlingtontelecom.net](mailto:peggyov@burlingtontelecom.net) with the day and item that you can contribute, and if you would like to coordinate food for the week.

Also, if anyone could help with set up on Monday morning that would be great!

**Monday: Breakfast - Kindergarten**

**Tuesday: Lunch - 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Grades**

**Wednesday: Desserts - 3<sup>rd</sup> Grades**

**Thursday: Desserts - 4<sup>th</sup> Grades**

**Friday: Breakfast - 5<sup>th</sup> Grades**

**PTO MEETING AND COMMUNITY SOUP DINNER:**

**APRIL 9<sup>th</sup>, FROM 5:45 - 8:00 PM**

Join us for an EES community dinner with soup and bread on **Tuesday, 9 April at 5:45 pm in the EES cafeteria.**

5:45 - 6:15 pm Soup and Salads (in the EES cafeteria)

6:15 - 8:00 pm Edmunds' vision with Dr. Mathias. Please bring your ideas to share. PTO Leadership plans will also be discussed, as we're looking for parents to lead our teachers and parents for next school year (in the third floor Resource Room).

**Childcare will be provided after the meal in the Library.**

If you are able to bring something to supplement the meal, please see the list below for suggestions.

**K and 1st grades: drinks**

**2nd and 3rd grades: desserts (fruit and cookies)**

**4th and 5th grades: dressed salads**

**RSVP to Peggy O'Neill ([peggyov@burlingtontelecom.net](mailto:peggyov@burlingtontelecom.net))**

**with the number of adults and children who will be joining us for dinner.**

**From the Community (the following are offered as a community service and are not endorsed or sponsored by this organization.)**

**LITTLE LEAGUE BASEBALL SIGN UPS**

It's time for 2013 Sign-Up and Indoor Practice! If you live **North of Main Street**, you play for **CENTER CITY LITTLE LEAGUE**

**\*\*Boys & girls aged 9-12 (Kid Pitch)**

Memorial Auditorium

Wednesdays, March 13, 20 & 27 from 6 pm - 7:30 pm

**\*\*Boys & girls aged 6-8 (Coach Pitch)**

I.A.A at H.O. Wheeler

Fridays, March 15, 22 & 29 from 6 pm - 7 pm

**\*\*Boys & girls aged 4-5 (T-Ball)**

S.A. at Lawrence Barnes

Saturdays, March 23 & 30 from 9 am - 10 am

For more information or to volunteer, contact Christine Dodson at 881-6457, or visit [www.centercityllburlington.org](http://www.centercityllburlington.org)

If you live **South of Main Street**, you play for **BURLINGTON AMERICAN**. If your child will be 9 by April 30th, he/she is eligible to tryout for the major leagues. If they wish to play in the majors and have not done so in the past, we will have two tryouts. Players only have to come to one but can come to both if they wish.

Tryouts will be held on Sunday the 24th and Saturday the 30th at the UVM indoor track from 8-10AM. Players who are younger than nine are welcome to attend and practice as well.

For more information, contact Dave Jenemann at [djeneman@uvm.edu](mailto:djeneman@uvm.edu) or

<http://www.burlingtonamerican.com/league/>

***This is not a PTO-sponsored event/activity.***

**BURLINGTON SEAHAWKS LACROSSE SIGN UPS**

Interested in Lacrosse? The Burlington Seahawks Youth Lacrosse is looking for boys and girls, grades 3-8 to play lacrosse this spring. All players are welcome regardless of experience. Practices will be held twice a week beginning the first week of April. Games begin in May. Boys play on Saturdays and girls play on Sunday.

Sign up with Burlington Parks and Recreation: 864-0123 or:

[www.enjoyburlington.com](http://www.enjoyburlington.com)

For more information: [www.btvoyouthlacrosse.com](http://www.btvoyouthlacrosse.com)

**GLOBAL ROOTS: MONTHLY FILM SERIES FROM THE COUNTRIES OF NEW AMERICANS LIVING IN VERMONT**

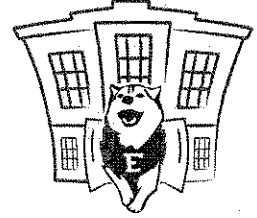
Starting April 14 - Second Sunday Of Every Month, 5pm North End Studios -294 N Winooski Ave, Burlington

Free (Donations Accepted To Support Vtiff 2013)

Snackbar Available, or bring your own food and beverages. Note: Films Not Suitable For Small Children. More About The Series

At [www.vtiff.org](http://www.vtiff.org)

GROW with DIGNITY



# EDMUNDS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

## Home of the Mighty Timberwolves

Dr. Michelle Mathias  
Principal

299 Main Street ~ Burlington, VT 05401  
(802) 864-8473 (Office) ~ (802) 864-2166 (Fax)

Monica Gragg  
Admin. Assistant

March 22, 2013

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Your child's teacher and other faculty members are beginning work on next year's placement. Teachers weigh a variety of factors when developing the recommended class lists they submit to me for final approval. The overall objective is to balance class makeup. Special services, guidance or counseling, parent input, boy/girl ratio, high and average achievers, and classroom philosophy are all factors that are taken into account. The intention is to assemble balanced classes that allow for good models and enough students in different ability groups to provide for the best instruction. No student is served best when their class is comprised of a narrow band of abilities. Parent input regarding their child's strengths, challenges, and interests is a valuable part of this equation.

On the reverse side you'll find a form to share your concerns and thoughts on next year. Please complete the form and return it to school in your child's Friday folder. Forms need to be returned by April 2th. You'll note that we are asking for characteristics of your child and the learning environment in which you think they will be most successful. We will take this information into consideration as we work to configure and balance classes.

Please do not include teacher requests on the parent input form. Due to the fact that these requests hinder objectivity during the placement process, all specific teacher requests will be whited out from parent input forms before reaching the placement teams.

This form will serve as the primary way for you to communicate your thoughts to us in regards to placement for your child next year. Parent Input forms will be sent to all parents of students presently in Pre-K-4. Students in grade 5 have already received similar forms for the transition process to the middle school. Notification of placement will occur on the last day of school with Step Up day. At this point it looks like the last day will be June 14<sup>th</sup>. If you have any questions about the process please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Shelley Mathias".

Dr. Michelle B. Mathias

Edmunds Elementary School  
Parent Input Form

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Present Grade: \_\_\_\_\_  
Present Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

1. What are your child's strengths and challenges?  
(academic, social, physical, emotional)
  
2. What are your child's interests?
  
3. How does your child learn best? (examples: hands-on, book learner)
  
4. What other information should we be aware of when assigning your child a class next year?
  
5. Do you consider your child an independent worker? Please give an explanation either way to support your response.

**Please Return to EES BY April 2<sup>th</sup>**

Placement Team	Principal	Second Check/Placement

For 13-14 School Year

3/13/13

Dear Representative Ram,

My name is Emma Goodwin and I live in Burlington, Vermont. I have developed an informed opinion after listening to the news, reading articles, and listening to experts speak about the sugar sweetened beverage (SSB) tax. I believe that you should vote against bill H.234, the SSB tax.

I believe that the members of the Ways and Means Committee should vote against the tax because the tax could hurt Vermonters. One way that the tax could hurt Vermonters is that it will have an impact on lower income people. Since SSBs are fairly cheap, lower income people can afford them. Lower income people will no longer be able to afford SSBs if there is a tax. There would be one cent per ounce tax if the bill is passed. It is clear that even if a few cents are put on SSBs; many lower income people won't be able to afford them. Another way that the tax could hurt Vermonters is that it will drive shoppers across the border to New Hampshire. This is the biggest economic threat incorporated in this tax. Gov. Shumlin worries about this. He also opposes the tax. The evidence is in fact that since we've implemented sales tax in this state "...we've slowly watched retail business migrate from Vermont to New Hampshire," he said "And I don't want to give them any more love than we've already given them." One last way is that this tax will hurt Vermonters is that this will impact small stores. The VTDigger says that a proposed excise tax on sugary beverages will hurt businesses. This is because people will avoid the higher price. Economics Professor Art Woolf said, "The basic economics is quite simple. You make something more expensive, people are going to buy less of it..." Upon his visit with our class, he said that smaller businesses wouldn't shut down, but they would lose business. I agree, it would only hurt them.

Another reason why you should vote against the tax is because it is unfair. One way that it is unfair is that SSBs aren't the only contributor to obesity. There are other things such as microwaveable dinners. Economics Professor Art Woolf said that obesity started rising when microwaves were invented. This is because you can have a rather unhealthy meal in 10 minutes or less. The second reason that the SSB tax is unfair is that people can use moderation. In an article called *The Case Against Soda*, it states that "Having a soda now and then isn't going to hurt you." I agree. Many people are becoming obese. However, people who are obese aren't exercising enough. They may also be consuming too many calories.

As a Vermonter, I believe that you should vote against bill H.234

Sincerely,  
Emma Goodwin  
299 Main Street  
Burlington, VT 05401

March 14, 2013

Dear Members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Kaitlin Emerson and I believe that you should vote for bill H.234 to pass as a law. I have listened to both sides of the argument and it has taken me awhile to decide which side to agree with. However, I am writing to tell you that you should vote for the sugar sweetened beverage tax.

I believe you should vote for bill H.234, the sugar sweetened beverage tax, because obesity in Vermont is a problem that citizens are paying for, not just the person who is actually obese. So, how much are we paying? According to VTdigger, we paid about \$291 billion in obesity related medical costs in 2008. That's a lot of money! And it's not just adults that are obese. Only 7% of kids were obese in the 1980's, but in 2010, 18% of kids were obese! The percentage has more than doubled in only about 30 years. If this rate keeps increasing, pediatrician Dr. Shannon Evans stated, "a third of this generation's kids will be obese, and then half of this generation's grandkids will be obese." Also, a study done in 2012 estimates that the penny-per-ounce tax could prevent about 2.4 million cases of diabetes, 8,000 strokes, and 26,000 premature deaths over a ten year period nationwide, all caused by too many sugar sweetened drinks. Now imagine, a nationwide penny-an-ounce tax that all started in Vermont. Vermont could lead the way, everyone would have this tax, and nobody could complain about the tax because everybody has to pay it if they buy sugar sweetened beverages. As you can see, sugar sweetened drinks are a problem, and the tax might discourage buyers and help people make the right choice.

Another reason you should vote for the tax on sugar sweetened beverages is revenue. According to VPR News, "...the penny-an-ounce tax on sugar sweetened beverages...could raise about \$25 million". But where would all that money go, you might ask? The Alliance for a Healthier Vermont proposed to put it towards health care. While many people believe that this tax will be a burden on the poor, this quote from VTdigger says otherwise. "The poor stand to gain the most...as the money would be used to fund health care," says the Vermont Low-Income Advocacy Council. They agree because "...obesity is a leading cause of medical problems among low-income Vermonters." So, when people say that the tax will hurt low-income Vermonters, the facts are that the poor will benefit the most from the sugar sweetened beverage tax.

In conclusion, I am for bill H.234, the sugar sweetened beverage tax, and am requesting you to vote for it to pass.

Sincerely,  
Kaitlin Emerson  
299 Main Street,  
Burlington, VT 05401