

FRIDAY



FLASH



EDMUNDS
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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

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From the Principal's Desk

The recent guidelines from the Departments of Justice and Education directing public schools to allow transgender students to use bathrooms matching their gender identity has resulted in some strong objections in some states. The logic behind issuing the guidelines is that transgender identity is covered by the provisions against discrimination in Title IX.

I would imagine that many may wonder why the issue of transgender identity has "suddenly" become so much of an issue. After all, it was never mentioned when we were in school. I would agree the vast majority of us were unaware, but that does not mean that those who were transgender didn't exist. Transgender individuals have existed as long as there have been humans, just as there have been individuals who identify as gay or lesbian. They may be a minority, but it is part of human existence. Those who experienced it were shunned, ostracized, bullied and closeted, many for their entire lives. Those who are secure in their gender identity may have a hard time relating to the impact of social stigma that those in the gender identify minority groups have endured, and the fear associated with being able to be oneself.

There have been several occasions where the issue of gender identity and questioning is discussed in school. Our guidance curriculum includes information about bullying and harassment. Harassment is bullying behavior towards protected categories which includes transgender, questioning, gay and lesbians, as well as race, religion and disability. The need to teach this information is based upon laws passed by both state and federal legislature. We are obligated to teach the information so that students can understand what the protected categories are, and behaviors that will not be tolerated.

In researching the issue, I learned that the suicide rate among transgender youth is horrifically high at 40% as opposed to 4.6% in the overall population. The Burlington School District has students who have identified as transgender in elementary, middle and high school. Gender and the changes associated with gender are especially confusing for adolescents. Providing information that makes gender selection safe for students is critical to insuring that students do not suffer unnecessary social or

Up Coming Events:

May 20 - Mayfair! 4:00 - 7:15

May 23 - Multi-Age Discussion: 6:30-7:30 EES Library

May 27 - 5th Grade Step Up Day

May 30th (Memorial Day) - No School

May 31 - VSO Musical Petting Zoo

June 2 - Field Days

June 3 - End of Marking Period

June 4 - EES Parent & Staff Night

June 8 - EES 5th Grade Celebration 6-7 PM

June 9 - Last Day of School

Whole School Assembly
May 25, 2016
Memorial Day - One Nation
Miss Fitzpatrick's Class Leading

(CONT)

emotional distress or resort to self-harm, or suicide because of treatment by their peers. It is equally important to arm our students who are not in these minority groups to know how to step in when they see harassment. Being armed with that information is preferable to grieving for the loss of a friend and the guilt that many feel in their recognition that they could have stood up for that friend but didn't because they didn't know how.

MULTI-AGE CLASSROOMS AT EES

We will be having a meeting to discuss the renewal of multi-age classrooms at EES on Monday, May 23 from 6:30 to 7:30 in the EMS/EES Cafeteria. Multi-age classrooms are not new to EES as we have had multi-age classrooms throughout many years. Last year we took a break because of scheduling changes and specific requirements by the district. The advantages of multi-age classrooms have spurred us to return to the practice.

VSAC SAVINGS PLANS

Did you know that Vermont has one of the highest high school graduation rates in the country? Unfortunately, it is one of the lowest college continuation rates. VSAC administers Vermont's 529 Savings Plan and would like to help families make college a reality for our children. To learn more about these savings options or to schedule an appointment, visit <https://vheip.org/>

CALLING ALL LIBRARY BOOKS!

Hard to believe, but the end of the year is quickly approaching which means: *it is time to return your library books!!* Please help out your children by making sure all of their books have been returned by Friday, May 27th. We send home a weekly reminder so please check backpacks for information on any overdue/lost books that your children are responsible for. Any books still out by June 1st will be considered lost and payment for their replacements will be expected. Contact Librarian Kathy Neil with any questions. Thank you.

TUESDAY MAY 31st: VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR VSO MUSICAL PETTING ZOO

Attention music lovers- we need your help! The musical petting zoo is a hands-on experience for kids in kindergarten and first grade to learn about the instruments that are part of an orchestra and get a chance to try to play them. We need parent volunteers to help hold the instruments and sanitize them between students. No musical experience needed. The schedule for the classes is as follows:

8:30-9:20 Weidman/Zeigfinger

9:25-10:15 Nutting/Goldsmith/Kilburn

10:20-11:10 O'Brien/Quinn

We need 8 volunteers present for each workshop. It is really helpful to have volunteers who are willing to stay for more than one session. A brief orientation will begin at 8:15. If you are interested in helping, please contact Bethany

Fitzgerald at bsaulpaugh@hotmail.com with your child's name and class, and what time slot(s) you are available to help. This is a great opportunity for grandparents as well. Thank you!

PTO LEADERS: Marni Slavik, Hollie Foley, and Clare Wool

PTO CONTACT: pto@eespto.org

EES FIELD DAY-THURSDAY, JUNE 2ND

Field day is a fun, outdoor, team-building, game playing day that the kids LOVE! It is a volunteer-run event, so I'm hoping you'll come have a great time with us. As always, we will have the music playing, break times for volunteers as well as snacks and drinks to keep you going. The morning session is for grades K-2 and grades 3-5 will play in the afternoon. Please visit the sign-up genius to volunteer to run an activity station, and feel free to contact me with any questions. I really appreciate the help.

Thank you! Kate Lekstutis; katelekstutis@gmail.com or text/call 802-238-2972.

<http://www.signupgenius.com/go/805094badaa2eaa8-field2>

EES COMMUNITY SOCIAL! SATURDAY JUNE 4: 6-9 PM

Come celebrate the end of the year together! All EES parents, guardians, and staff are invited to join in a fun evening with dinner, cash bar, and live music by Ann "Antara" Gatch. Event will take place at the outdoor terrace of the Champlain Room, Communications and Creative Media Building, Champlain College, 375 Maple Street, which is a beautiful space overlooking the lake. Suggested donation is \$25/person. Please RSVP to pto@eespto.org by May 25th. Checks payable to EES PTO or can be purchased online via PayPal at eespto.org. We hope to see you there!

PTO LEADERSHIP TRANSITION

Please consider becoming a PTO leader! The current PTO leaders, Marni Slavik, Hollie Foley, and Clare Wool, will be stepping down at the end of the school year. If you are interested in learning more about the roles of PTO leadership, please contact Marni at pto@eespto.org.