



Dawn M. Lewis
Elementary School Principal

John Safina
Middle School Principal

February 5, 2010

Internet School Ranking

I recently attended a Title I coordinators meeting for Seacoast Schools. At one point, the director asked for a show of hands from schools that are not currently a School in Need of Improvement. To be a "School in Need of Improvement" you have to have NOT made Adequate Yearly Progress in accordance with No Child Left Behind. I was honored to be one of only SIX out of 25 schools that raised my hand. After the mocking "boos and hisses" from the jealous crowd, we were congratulated. I was extremely proud, but at the same time, perplexed. Since I arrived at Ellis School, I've heard about Ellis being ranked poorly against other schools on websites like SchoolDigger.com. I decided to do some digging of my own to figure out how schools are ranked on these websites. According to Schooldigger.com they rank their schools by this process:

We rank schools based on the most recently reported test scores. Our ranking system for most states is as follows: we take all the schools that have test scores for Math and English. We take the average Math score across all the grades, and the average English score across all the grades, and add them together to make a combined score. That combined score is then sorted. The highest combined score is ranked #1, the second highest #2, and so on.

Schools on this site are put into 3 categories: Elementary, Middle and High School. Ellis School falls into a fourth category: PreK-8. However, we are classified as an Elementary School. As I perused the site, I found that many of the schools that were K-8 were ranked very low. Why? You are basically comparing Apples and Oranges. Some of the schools we are being compared to only have test scores for grades 3 and 4. It is a statewide statistic that there is a 10% drop in math scores between 3rd and 8th grade. They do have filters to select certain grades to rank schools. You may ask yourself, "Why would you rank an entire school by only one grade's test scores?". Remember, these are not educational websites; they are used to sell real estate. If I'm looking to buy a home in Fremont and my child is going to enter 4th grade, that's the information I'm looking for. I want to make it clear that I am also not a statistician and am giving you my personal feedback about these websites. If these rankings were accurate and in line with Federal and State standards, we would already be designated as a "School in Need of Improvement". It is important for us to use the standards put forth by the Federal Government and the State of New Hampshire. According to them, we are doing pretty well.



Dawn M. Lewis
Elementary School Principal

John Safina
Middle School Principal

SASS

March 3rd and 4th, S.A.S.S. will be in the classrooms to present the following: In 6th grade, the session will discuss bullying and sexual harassment. Students will play a game using scenarios to clarify the definitions and behaviors of playing, flirting, bullying, and sexual harassment. Laws and school policy on harassment will be discussed, as well as what actions students can take to make their school safe for all students.

In 7th and 8th grade classes, students will examine positive and negative uses of power and how this influences their interactions with others. During the Power Game, students identify passive, aggressive, and assertive response, and discuss the consequences of their choices. Emphasis is placed on the use of voice as personal power, standing up for oneself and others, the great potential of bystanders to effect change, and the importance of seeking help.

For more information visit: www.sassnh.org

Parent information night will be held February 16th at 6:00 p.m at Ellis School.

iPods and Other Electronic Devices

It has been an increasing problem with students using iPods or Mp3 players at inappropriate times. They may only be used during independent work time as designated by the teacher. For safety reasons they may not be used in the halls, cafeteria or recess. It seems Santa did one stop shopping this year at the Apple Computer Store. We are now overrun with students using iPods at inappropriate times, like when instruction is happening. Please stress to the kids the importance of following this procedure as I have already.

Local Resources

DC4K-Divorce care for kids meets at People's United Methodist Church 363 Main Street, Fremont NH, Saturdays 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. For more information or to register call Dawn at 603-702-1943. www.DC4K.org.

Stepping Stones-A free bereavement program for children and teens starts Thursday, February 4th and ends Thursday, March 25th. 6-7:30 pm at the Congregational Church 2013 Elm Street, Manchester NH. For more information contact Gary at 603-663-4005



Dawn M. Lewis
Elementary School Principal

John Safina
Middle School Principal

Families First presents on February 17th online bullying and harassment at the New Outlook Teen Center, 20 Front Street, Exeter NH at 6:30. There is no charge to attend but advanced signup is required. Call 778-3933. www.familiesfirstseacost.org.

Middle School Website

Don't forget to check out the middle school portal from our district website. You will find all pertinent information about the middle school including schedules, newsletters, helpful links and announcements that are read to the students over the intercom.

Upcoming Dates

February 8—School District Budget Meeting Town Hall 7:30 pm

February 5 - Parent Forum 5:00 Ellis School

February 16—SASS Parent Information Night

February 22-26—Winter Break

March 12—Second Trimester Ends

March 13—School District Meeting at Ellis School 9AM

April 15-16—Wizard of Oz

John Safina,
Middle School Principal





Dawn M. Lewis
Elementary School Principal

John Safina
Middle School Principal

432 Main Street Fremont, New Hampshire 03044
Telephone Number (603) 895-2511 Fax Number (603) 895-1106
www.sau83.org