

Fremont School Board  
C/O SAU 83  
Ellis School  
432 Main Street  
Fremont, NH 03044

Presorted Standard  
US POSTAGE PAID  
Fremont NH 03044  
Permit NO. 7

### SAU 83 Newsletter

'Sharing positive information about  
Ellis School with the community'

#### Save the following dates:

#### Budget Committee Hearing on School Budget

- Monday FEB 9, 2009  
(meeting starts at 7:00 PM with hearing to follow at 7:30 PM)

#### School District Meeting

- Saturday, March 14, 2009 @ 5:00 pm



#### GO GREEN GO HEALTHY FAIR

Ellis School will be hosting our first 'Go Green Go Healthy Fair' on February 7, 2009 @ 9 am to 1 pm. Please join us for a morning of information, and demonstrations that will focus on healthy and environmentally wise choices and options. Details will follow in January.

For more information in the interim please contact Emily Dawn Lewis at 895-2511 ex 422 or [elewis@sau83.org](mailto:elewis@sau83.org)

#### HANDS ON LEARNING IN THE GREENHOUSE

John Herrmann Interview - Laurel Eernshaw - PG Committee

Last April a large greenhouse was erected as part of a grant from NH-based Timberland Company. Since then, science teacher John Herrmann, who masterminded the structure, has incorporated lessons at the greenhouse in the curriculum. In fact, this fall his students have enjoyed fresh salads beginning with organic, pesticide, and homemade Caesar dressing. And that's just the beginning.

While some get new outside, at least will come flowers and vegetables to grow inside. In addition to sampling the grown produce, students will share some of the bounty with the Fremont Senior Club for use in town gardens. As a special project, they may build a small stand to sell the creations.

What has been the most rewarding aspect of the greenhouse to date? John says that the wise students who wouldn't dream of eating Swiss chard or a radish are now enjoying them. Along with a growing sense of ownership, they're learning how to turn a seed in a produce. That their stomachs are happy. Perhaps most exciting of all is that the hands-on gardening experiments conducted in the greenhouse may produce a new crop of young gardeners in Fremont.

#### GRADE REPORTING AT ELLIS - AN UPDATE

MIDDLE SCHOOL - Bill Marston - Interim Middle School Principal  
We are making progress towards the development of a report card for the middle school that will meet the requirements of standards based learning. This report card has been underway since last year.

In order for teachers to accurately assess a student's progress in a subject at any point in a semester, "bench marks" for each Grade Level Expectation - GLE - are being identified. These "bench marks" will identify that body of knowledge students are expected to have learned at various points during the school year as each works towards "meeting expectations" - ME - or "exceeding expectations" - EE - in each subject. We will continue working to develop a final report card model to submit to the Fremont School Board no later than the end of this current school year.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - Dawn Lewis - Elementary Principal

The elementary school has been making great progress in developing a reporting system for grades K-4. We have developed new progress reports, report cards and parent guides for every grade level - each grade level aligned with the NH Grade Level Expectations (GLEs). Our next focus is to have parent information meetings and further refine and finalize our system of data collection and intervention strategies.

Report cards are based on common assessments for reading, writing and math, and other core academic subjects with benchmarks to tell us how children are progressing toward the GLE. Benchmarks will tell our teachers when to provide support or enrichment interventions. We will continue to refine our teaching strategies and lesson planning.

Parent communication is paramount. We believe the new reporting system will be very informative and provide more accurate and meaningful information about your child's education.

Fremont School District website  
<http://www.sau83.org>

Fremont Town website  
<http://www.fremont.nh.gov>

Ellis School: 895-2511

SAU # 83: 895-6903

First Student (bus): 778-6900

#### ATTENTION COMMUNITY MEMBERS - IMPORTANT NEWS REGARDING THE FUTURE OF FREMONT SCHOOL DISTRICT

This is a critical time in the Fremont School District as we work together to develop a Strategic Plan which will serve as a benchmark for improving the School District, and conduct a search for a Middle School Principal for the next school year. Please visit our website to view the details and time lines for these items at: <http://sou83.org/schoolBoard/events.html>

Normand Tanguay - Superintendent Fremont School District

#### GETTING TO KNOW THE PARA-EDUCATORS ON OUR SUPPORT STAFF

As the face of education changes to keep pace with our modern world, one thing is clear: today's teachers encounter challenges that didn't exist even a few years ago. With new state and federal mandates governing how our children are assessed, a teacher's workload can at times be completely unrealistic. Enter the para-educators. These certified classroom aides play a vital role in helping our teachers teach and our students succeed.

Cathy Toomey and Pat Kelly are two "paras" from Ellis School. Cathy, the president of the Para-educators at Ellis, and Pat, a well known local resident, have both been at Ellis for many years. They spoke to me about how the Paras assist the teachers by closely working with the students in the classrooms.

Pat mentioned that the Paras form relationships with the students, which enables them to assist the teachers with identifying special education needs and development of Individual Education Plans (IEPs) for those students who need them. Paras also assist with making sure that those IEPs are followed.

Cathy views the Para role as being an "extension of the teacher," and with many schools like Ellis being fully inclusive (educating all children, including those with diverse needs), the job description is always changing. Paras are required to clock 50 hours of training (which includes attending workshops and classes), and they also have to fulfill a portfolio that meets goals established with the superintendent as part of a three-year plan.

As well as aiding in the classroom, many of our Para-educators are also involved in reaching out to the surrounding community, organizing such programs as "Child Find", a service that helps identify possible special education opportunities for children at a pre-school level. Cathy herself promotes extra-curricular community service with some of her 7th and 8th grade students, partnering with local community groups like the gardening club to complete projects around our town.

Our para-educators play an integral role in helping to develop well-educated, well-rounded students. With so many new directives being handed down to our public schools, it is gratifying to know that we are well-served in our classrooms by these dedicated individuals.

Martha Abney - PR Committee

#### FREMONT SCHOOL BOARD AND ELLIS SUPPORT STAFF AGREE TO PROPOSED CONTRACT TO BE PRESENTED FOR VOTER APPROVAL AT MARCH 2009 DISTRICT MEETING

The Ellis Support Staff contract presented at the last School District meeting in March 2008 failed to pass voter approval. Consequently, the School Board and the Support Staff Union renegotiated and the new proposed contract will be presented for voter approval at the next School District meeting in March 2009.

It is important to note that Ellis Support Staff have received no pay increase since 2007 and will not receive any increase until a contract passes voter approval. Further information regarding the proposed Ellis Support Staff Contract and the tax impact will be provided in an upcoming newsletter. In the interim, for more information on the proposed contract please see our website: <http://sou83.org/schoolBoard/events.html>

Christine Kenneway - Fremont School Board

#### SCHOOL BOARD CONTACT PROTOCOL

The Board recognizes its obligation to be available to the public. However, all complaints, except those that directly concern Board actions or Board operations, must be referred through the proper administrative channels for solution before investigation or action by the Board can occur. The proper administrative channel for resolution is as follows:

- Try to resolve the matter at the point of origin of concern i.e. the child's teacher. If not resolved successfully...
- Then contact the Principal. Make an effort to speak directly one on one to resolve the issue. If not successful...
- Speak directly to the Superintendent. If still not successful...
- Ask to be placed on the agenda to speak to the Board. If the issue meets the criteria for a non-public session, then that is where your issue will be placed on the next meeting agenda.
- If you are still not satisfied at the conclusion of the above process, your next step is to contact the New Hampshire State Board of Education and/or the Commissioner of Education's Office.

It is not appropriate for the Board to hear complaints from individual parents or guardians until the proper administrative channels described above have been accessed. Please Note: It is very important to the Board to work in a transparent environment and to follow the laws of public access. All e-mails sent to the Board become part of the public record. No discussion will take place via this e-mail process other than a response from the Chairman of the Board to offer direction as to protocol.

For the full body of RSA 91-A Access To Public Records And Meeting (Right-To-Know Law) go to:

[http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/csa/html/VI/91-A/91-A\\_mcg.htm](http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/csa/html/VI/91-A/91-A_mcg.htm)