



Dawn M. Lewis
Elementary School Principal

John Safina
Middle School Principal

December 4, 2009

Report Cards

Today you are receiving your child's report card. This is the first report card of the 2009-2010 school year. This new report card format is the culmination of much collaboration from teachers, administrators, students and parents. This report card combines the philosophy of standards-based grading and traditional letter grades. Your student's growth throughout the trimester is assessed and measured against the NH grade level expectations and is integrated with research-based and best instructional practices we use here at Ellis. The resulting product gives an accurate, detailed, overview of a student's progress toward the standards and their development as a member of the classroom and school community. A report card night was held back in October to explain the new format. The power point presentation from that evening is on our website at:
<http://sau83.org/schools/middle/happenings.html>

NWEA

Along with report cards you will be receiving a student progress report from our district testing program Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA). You will see the results of testing done this past fall. This report is also cumulative so scores from past year's testing will also be included. This will show you the growth over the years. The explanatory notes in the bottom right hand corner of the report will be a guide to reading your child's report. For more information you may visit their website at www.nwea.org.

Data Meetings/Response to Intervention

The middle school staff held their first data meetings on November 18 for grades 5 and 6 and November 24 for grades 7 and 8. These were day long meetings in which teachers looked at each child individually. Assessment data was analyzed and the learning needs of each child were discussed. This information will allow us to develop a formal Response to Intervention program and Title I program.

Response to intervention aims to meet the needs of struggling students through a pyramid of interventions, collaborative team problem solving, data for monitoring student progress, and customized interventions, which conveys that all students can learn, effectively master educational requirements, and become proficient learners.

Understanding Response to Intervention
Solution-Tree Press 2008

5th Grade Academic Groups

Our 5th grade students are "new" to the concept of middle school and having different teachers for different subjects. One of my goals for the year is to evaluate the 5th grade transition into middle school. As a result of our data meeting and analyzing student needs (also having gotten to know them for a trimester), the teachers have established new "academic" groups. These academic groups have been established to evenly space out our



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heterogeneous (mixed ability) groupings. Your child's homeroom will not change. However, they will attend their English, Math, Social Studies and Science classes with their academic groups. This will not affect Unified Arts in any way. The new groups will start on Monday.

Lost and Found

Hooded sweatshirts have taken over the Lost and Found! The next time you are at Ellis School, please take a few minutes to look through the rack of clothing. Unless a first and last name is written on the tag, clothing can not be returned to the owner. **All unclaimed items will be donated to charity on December 11th.**

Attendance

While reviewing report cards going home today, I noticed the same comment repeated "Attendance affects grades". Of course we are in the season in which we've had many sick kids. If your child is out sick please make sure students are meeting with teachers to make up anything they have missed. If your child is sick it is important they stay home, recover and get back to school ASAP. You have no control over illness; however, you do have control over your child being tardy to school. We have seen an increase in student's being tardy to school. It is important that students attend school everyday, ALL DAY. Even if students are a few minutes late they will miss vital information from homeroom and announcements that will also impede the transition into academics for them and the entire class. Our attendance policy in our student handbook states:

Tardy to School: Students who are tardy to school MUST be signed in at the front office by the parent/guardian. Three (3) tardies to school will be counted as one (1) day of absence and parents/guardians will be notified. After five (5) tardies each trimester, a loss of privilege for a school event will be assigned by the principal. This loss of privilege will include participation in an athletic or other co-curricular event. A student will not be eligible to participate in after school activities if he/she reports to school after lunch. The principal may make an exception if a parent/guardian presents appropriate documentation that, in the opinion of the principal, justifies the late arrival.

Important Dates

December 8 - Parent Forum - 5:00 School Library/School Board Meeting 6:30

December 9 - Chorus Concert at Sanborn High

December 11 - Grades 5/6 - Field trip to Seacoast Repertory Theater to see "A Christmas Carol"

December 23 - Ice Skating Trip grades 5-8

December 24-January 4 - Holiday Break - No school

And mark your 2010 calendars when you get them: April 14 & 15: Ellis School Musical "The Wizard of Oz"



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Applebee's Fundraiser

The pancake breakfast with Santa and Mrs. Claus at Applebee's was huge success. We had almost 300 people come to help the 6th grade class raise money for their trip to Ferry Beach in April. The Applebee's manager told us that there was a record number of people who attended the pancake breakfast. There were almost 30- 6th grade students who helped and 10 - 15 parents who also helped. The students did a fantastic job of waiting on the tables, serving the drinks and pancakes, busing the tables, washing the dishes, and then getting Applebee's ready to open for their lunch crowd. The 6th graders were asked to step up and become restaurant workers and they more then exceeded all of our expectations. We also held a 50/50 raffle at the breakfast and Scott Magnusson from Ellis school won the drawing. Congratulations Scott.

However, they are not done fundraising yet. Our next fundraiser starts this Sunday with a gift wrapping/bake sale at the safety complex. If you don't like to wrap holiday gifts or you just don't have the time; bring them to the Safety Complex on December 6th, 13th, and 20th. The parents of the 6th graders will be available to wrap them for you. The 6th grade students will be hosting a bake sale and a 50/50 raffle at the same time. So come and enjoy a complimentary coffee or tea while you have your gifts wrapped for you.

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