

Falcon Flyer



Fletcher Elementary School

340 School Road, Fletcher, Vermont

February 2020

BE RESPECTFUL BE RESPONSIBLE BE SAFE BE CARING SOAR LIKE A FALCON

UPCOMING EVENTS

February 24-March 3
February Break
No School

March 3
Town Meeting
9:30 AM

Movie Night
March 20
6:00 PM

April 15
5/6 Play—Mulan
1:30 PM
Dress Rehearsal
6:00 PM
Evening Performance

April 20-24
April Break
No School

May 26
Spring Concert
1:30 p.m.
(No evening performance)

*Follow Us On Social
Media!!!*

*Twitter:
@FletcherFalcon*

*Facebook:
Fletcher Elementary
School*

Global Day of Play

*By Kathleen Pellegrino, Grades 1/2
Teacher*

Ms. Pellegrino's class had a lot to celebrate last week! Wednesday, February 5th, was *Global School Play Day*. Along with 563,283 other students from 75 nations, we took a break from academics for a chunk of our morning and simply played! It was totally unstructured and fun to see what each student chose to do. We made bracelets, played with Legos, played "school", and built perler bead creations. I enjoyed it just as much as the students did! We also celebrated the 100th day of school with all kinds of activities, including my favorite, "When I am 100 Years Old" writing and using an iPad app to see what we'll look like at 100! This week, we exchanged valentines and went to the Flynn Theater to see *Rainbow Fish*.



Hip-Hip Hooray for the 100th Day!

By Sarah Tucker, K-6 Special Educator

Students in Ms. Godin's third and fourth grade class celebrated the 100th day of school last Thursday with three activity

choices with the help of Ms. Tucker and guest teacher Mr. S. Students were able to choose what activity they wanted to do.



***Hip-Hip Hooray
Cont'd on page 7***

Building Community

By Nancy Hurt, Grades 1/2 Teacher

100 links: Students worked together to link one hundred numbered paper strips in counting order to make a Rainbow Chain!



***Building Community
Cont'd on page 9***

Sauerkraut, Anyone?

By Tracey Godin, Grades 3/4 teacher



On December 19th, Farmer Angus from Three Crows Farm in Jeffersonville, and Rachel Huff, from the Healthy Roots Collaborative, visited our classroom and made sauerkraut with the students. Last week, Rachel came back with the bubbling fruits of our labor for a taste test. It was a resounding success! The students loved it and everyone brought home a jar of the delicious goodness the next day. Later this month, Angus will be bringing some sauerkraut that he and his wife make at Three Crows Farm and our students will be going class to class educating peers on the making of sauerkraut and doing a taste test.

Collecting for a Cause!

By Chris Dodge, Principal



Fletcher students have been collecting used holiday card fronts to donate to Saint Jude's Children's Research Hospital where they will be up-cycled into new cards and sold to benefit cancer treatment and research.

Thanks to all of you, we collected over 5,500 cards that were counted by kindergarten through second grade students recently by first sorting them into piles of 10 and then 100. This was a perfect math activity leading up to the 100th day of school on Thursday last week! I'm so proud of our students for thinking about how they can help others and being so caring.

It's No Joke!

By Phyllis Quarles, Speech-Language Pathologist

Did you know that telling jokes and appreciating puns are excellent language activities that expand your child's language? Joking is playing with words. It highlights the different word meanings, such as synonyms. Hear the pun in the following joke that makes us chuckle? "Why did the cookie go to the doctor? Because he felt 'crummy!'" When I work with kids on vocabulary, we talk about the literal and figurative meanings of puns. We tell jokes. Another one of my favorites is: "Why was six afraid of seven? Because seven 'ate/eight' nine!" Knock knock jokes are great for the same reasons and are a bit more conversational. Kids like to make up their own jokes, too.

Jokes aren't just fun, they are a huge part of language development. They call attention to WORDS, and WORDS ARE FUN! No joke - telling jokes is serious language play.

Hockey, Anyone?

By Doug Young, PE Teacher

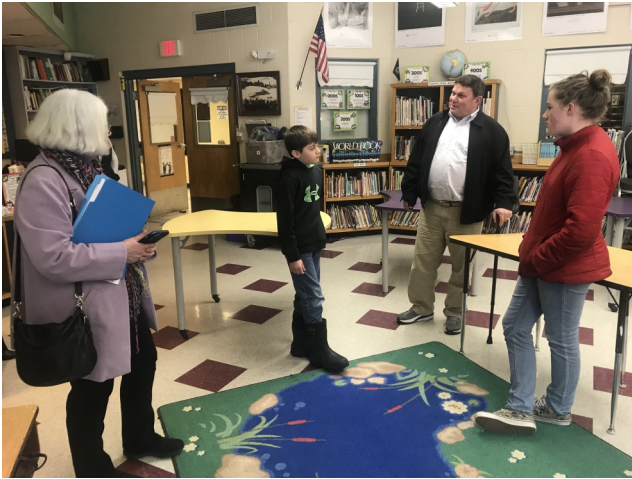
During the Month of February, students have been working on floor hockey skills. Students have been showing responsibility by playing in their position or space. They have been respectful when they pass and support their teammates. They are caring when they help a friend rotate to a new position. They are being safe when they use their sticks for passing and shooting. These are all skills that are part of our school-wide expectations.

We might get outside for some snowshoeing in the next couple of weeks depending on the snow conditions.

I hope everyone enjoys the winter break and see you in March.

Timeless Learning Authors Visit F.E.S.

By Chris Dodge, Principal



On Thursday, January 23, best-selling education authors Ira Socol and Pam Moran visited Fletcher Elementary to learn more about how our school is innovative and encourages student voice. The two authored the book, *Timeless Learning*, which outlines how schools can further these areas. During their student-led tour, they visited the art studio and a variety of classrooms, and learned about our new outdoor classroom, PBIS and our work with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. As they left, Pam said, "If we evaluated schools on the number of smiles we see, Fletcher would take the prize! We're so impressed!"

Learning About Air in Preschool

*By Rebecca Jackson, Preschool Teacher
and Chelsea Asher, Paraeducator*

This month in Four Winds the preschoolers learned about air with Mrs. Locke and Ms. Sal. We got to do some exciting and fun experiments with air. For our first experiment, we all tried to blow a piece of tissue into a glass bottle, but every time the tissue blew back out. We learned that the bottle was filled with air, so when we tried to blow more air in, the air inside pushed the tissue out! Our favorite was the experiment where Mrs. Locke made a tiny fire in a glass bottle and put a boiled egg on top and the vacuum created by the hot air sucked the egg inside with a loud POP! We also helped make parachutes and took them outside so we could drop them from the climber and find out which one went farthest.

We have been continuing our music studio in the classroom and the children are enjoying learning, singing and playing new songs together. One very cold day when we had to stay inside we had a marching band, and this week we played a game where each child took a turn to be the guesser while a teacher played an instrument and the rest of the group practiced being a quiet audience. We will be making our own instruments soon, so if anyone has empty tissue boxes, paper towel tubes, or plastic bottles, we would love to have them!

The preschool has a new classroom token board to help us learn about our School-Wide Behavior Expectations. Teachers have been noticing and writing notes when children are respectful and caring and responsible and safe, and now the children are starting to notice and give positive feedback on their own and each other's actions that follow the expectations.

Cards are King in Preschool

By Blythe Baskette, Preschool Special Educator

Over the last month, I have had fun playing card matching games with several different children in the Pre-K. We have played shape matching games and number matching games up to the number five. These games are a lot of fun and provide children with a play-based opportunity to practice memorizing rote information such as shape names and numbers. It is also a social time for the children to practice taking turns and following the rules of the game. The best part is the games are highly engaging and fast-paced, which means it is an appealing activity to most children.

If you are looking for a fun way to spend time with your child such games as Go Fish and Old Maid (if necessary, with modifications) are a fun and appropriate way to be together free of screen time.

Practicing Emotion Regulation

By Lisa Coale, School Counselor

Part of the Second Step curriculum for all students includes a unit on emotion regulation, or calming down when you notice you have uncomfortable feelings. Every year in January and February, Fletcher students learn about the parts of their brain where emotions come from, and what to do when they have strong or uncomfortable feelings. This week, Kindergarten students drew feelings faces and talked about what those feelings feel like in their bodies. In the next few weeks, all classes will be practicing mindfulness and relaxation techniques to support their learning and emotion regulation.

Thanks to Betsy Lesnikoski



The Fletcher Elementary School community would like to thank Betsy Lesnikoski for 18 years of dedicated service as a member of the Fletcher School Board. Betsy has served in countless capacities including Board Chair, as well as a representative to the FWSU Executive Board and on a variety of committees. Her tireless advocacy for students, staff, and the balance between quality education and fiscal responsibility has been admirable. Thank you, Betsy, for all you have done for our school and children. Your work is very much appreciated.

Fifth and Sixth Graders at STARBASE

By Lorrene Palermo, Grades 5/6 Teacher

Mrs. Palermo coordinated a visit with Gen. Knight at STARBASE for fifth and sixth graders.



Fifth and 6th graders launched their rockets on Wednesday, February Fifth.



Music Notes

By Jennifer McConnell, Music Teacher

When I started teaching at FES last year, I brought a program with me that I have used at my other school for many years: Instrument Karate! This is a highly motivational tool that encourages band students to practice and which gives them steady goals in their instrument study.

Within the method book, I have strategically selected 9 belt testing songs which require students to be able to play and perform the essential skills for that level. There are 9 belts: White, Yellow, Orange, Green, Blue, Red, Purple, Brown, and Black. The black belt coincides with the end of the first method book; once students have earned their black belts, they move on to Book 2 in the band method series, and they can earn 3 belts in that book: Bronze, Silver, and Gold!

Congratulations to 5th graders Serein Marcotte & Madison Weaver, who recently earned their black belts! Way to go!

If your child is a band student, ask them which belts they've earned and what they're working on next! They're all doing great!

News from the Library

By Rebecca Cardone, Librarian and Academic Interventionist

Red Clover Book Award Program for 2019-2020
Each year, the Red Clover Book Award Committee chooses ten picture books as nominees for the prestigious Red Clover Book Award. Students in grades K-4 may participate in the program by reading or hearing at least five of the books from the list of nominees. In the spring, eligible students can submit a vote for their chosen winner.

Recent Red Clover Read Alouds:

Friends and Foes: Poems About All of Us

by Douglas Florian

A collection of 25 original poems on the many emotions of friendship, good and bad. Simple, col-

lection of 25 original poems on the many emotions of friendship, good and bad. Simple, colorful illustrations in crayon and colored pencil accompany the text



Hawk Rising

Maria Gianferrari, illustrated by Brian Floca

This insider's view of a hawk's life follows a red-tailed hawk as it hunts in a suburban neighborhood while two sisters observe from below. This lyrical nonfiction picture book provides insights into predator-prey relationships and also gives readers new perspectives toward avian species.



YMCA After-School Program Assistants Needed In Fletcher

The YMCA After-School Program at Fletcher Elementary is hiring program assistants to work weekdays from 2:30 PM to 6:00 PM. By working closely with the site director to be a leader and role model for school age children, you can make a difference. Perks of working for the YMCA include an individual membership, along with program discounts, camps, events and classes. Training is provided. Starting pay is \$12.00/hour. Send a cover letter and resume to:

ALAVERTU@GBYMCA.com.

Sledding Safety

*Submitted by Tara McMahon, RN
Reprinted from the National Safety Council*

Most people can agree that kids on slippery saucers careening down an icy hill at upwards of 25 miles per hour can be dangerous.

According to the Center on Injury Research at Nationwide Children's Hospital in Columbus, Ohio, more than 20,000 kids younger than 19 are treated for sledding injuries on average each year. Injuries often occur when the sled hits a stationary object or the child falls off. That's why parents would be wise to purchase sleds that can be controlled with a steering mechanism and brakes.

If you are planning on taking the kids to the local hill, don't just drop them off, especially if they're under age 10. Stick around while they sled, make sure all sledders wear a helmet – sledding injuries often include skull fractures – and be sure to share these important guidelines with them so they can enjoy tobogganing and sledding safely. Make sure all equipment is in good condition, free of sharp edges and cracks

- Sled on spacious, gently sloping hills with a level run-off at the end so the sled can safely stop
- Check slopes for bare spots, holes and obstructions, such as fences, rocks, poles or trees
- Do not sled on or around frozen lakes, streams or ponds
- Riders should sit or lay on their back on top of the sled with feet pointing downhill; never sled head first.
- Dress warmly, and wear thick gloves or mittens and heavy boots to protect against frostbite and injury

Frostbite/ hypothermia

Cold weather can be dangerous for anyone who enjoys outdoor winter sports, and people who work outdoors during winter must be particularly mindful of the risks.

Before venturing outside in winter, be sure to:

- Check the temperature and limit your time outdoors if it's very cold, wet or windy
- Bundle up in several layers of loose clothing
- Wear mittens rather than gloves
- Cover your ears with a warm hat
- Wear socks that will keep your feet warm and dry



Please Respect the No Parking Zones

Families parking in the school's no parking zones is becoming increasingly problematic. While the no parking zones, particularly the fire lane in front of the building, are a convenient place to park for pick-up or drop-off, even after school, doing so causes safety issues. In addition to blocking the lane for emergency vehicles, it obstructs the view of the crosswalk for other drivers and puts our students at serious risk. Please use the designated parking spaces, even when just doing a quick pick-up or drop-off, regardless of the time of day.

Thanks!

**Announcing James Tager
as
FWSU Superintendent of Schools**



Franklin West Supervisory Union (FWSU) is pleased to announce that James Tager has been selected as Superintendent of Schools effective July 1, 2020. Mr. Tager currently serves as Superintendent of Flagler Schools in Volusia County, FL. Prior to his current position he served many educational positions in Florida, they include Deputy Superintendent, Principal and Curriculum Director, Special Educator and many teaching positions.

The decision comes after the Franklin West Supervisory Union Board of Directors interviewed two finalists after day long interviews with students, faculty, staff, administrators and the board on February 11, 2020. The Board voted unanimously to offer James Tager a one-year contract from July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021.

Mr. Tager has an extensive background in education with accolades for his dedication to education such as Educator of the Year by the East Central Florida Chapter of Phi Delta Kappa, Secondary Visual Arts Principal of the Year, and Administrator of the Year by several Florida associations. He was also named Five-Star Coach for an International Special Olympic Gold Medal Team. Franklin West is confident that Mr. Tager administrative experience will continue to move FWSU with our vision in "A belief in what is possible". FWSU Board Chair, Tara Sweet said, "The FWSU Board is pleased to welcome Jim to our supervisory union. His vision and collaboration skills make him a great fit to help move FWSU forward with our belief in what is possible and in continuing to provide

the best possible education for all students within FWSU." Mr. Tager's family is excited for the move to Vermont and to be a part of our communities. Mr. Tager said, " You made my day. I am very excited for this opportunity."

***Hip-Hip Hooray
Cont'd from page 1***

They chose from: 100 Cup Challenge, the 100 Days of School Workout Challenge, or the One Hundred Days Word Challenge. The enthusiasm was contagious in the Fletcher Elementary Gym! Students engaged in academic practice, movement, and engineering skill practice within their third and fourth grade community. The students also practiced team building skills in small groups and partners throughout these activities. It was a fun-filled 100th day!

We LOVE our Art Buddies

*By MC Baker, Art Teacher
and Cathy O'Brien, Kindergarten Teacher*

Our Art Buddy program was launched this year with our oldest artists at Fletcher Elementary School and our Kindergarten artists. This is a very special program that is in its third year. Each young artist has one (or in some cases, two!) friend that is only theirs. These friends get together during their art time. It is a chance to practice social skills, relationship building, cooperation, and teamwork. So far it has been a HUGE hit.



Fletcher Students Experience “Out of this World” Learning at STARBASE

By Chris Dodge, Principal

Science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) learning just doesn't get any more exciting than watching a pair of sleek F-35 jets thunder off into the horizon. Or, does it? How about building flatulence molecules (yes, that's a fart!) to learn about the periodic table of elements or designing actual working rockets that travel more than 200 feet into the air to accelerate one's knowledge of Newton's laws of motion? These adventures, and more, are being experienced by Fletcher's fifth and sixth grade students.

The class has been on the Vermont Air National Guard base in Colchester as part of a five-day program called STARBASE. An affiliate of the U.S. Department of Defense, STARBASE focuses on teaching students about physics, chemistry, technology, engineering, and math, with an emphasis on possible careers in those fields. Students spend 25 hours in the STARBASE facility and the instructors also teach lessons at the school.

"Programs like STARBASE are important because it gives learners opportunities to see how science, technology, engineering, and math can be applied to everyday life," Fletcher's fifth and six grade teacher, Lorrene Palermo, said. "Since STARBASE is located at the Air National Guard base it also allows for students to see these important life skills in everyday careers. We had the opportunity to visit the Fire Department on base and made many great connections to student learning that we experienced at STARBASE."

It was Amelia Earhart herself who once said, "The most effective way to do it, is to do it." In many ways, this has become the teaching mantra at STARBASE Vermont, where the lessons are hands-on and include everything from exploring jet technology in the hanger and flying planes using flight simulators, to studying gravity through cooperative games and learning about air pressure by experimenting on marshmallows.

But, the program teaches much more than science. Its mission includes fostering collaboration and healthy choices, exposing children to cutting-edge technology and building a sense of community. Each "Starbaser," as they are called, selects a "call sign" like a pilot. The call sign represents them personally and they are referred to by that name throughout the STARBASE experience.

"STARBASE has been my favorite part of the year. The science is just really fun to do. They teach it to you in creative and fun ways like designing a space shuttle that protects an egg when launched, fifth grader Collin Lucci said.

"They explain the lessons in a way that is fun and interesting," sixth grader Sabrina Nadeau said. "They go over everything step by step to make it easier and it's just fun to do things like design space vehicles on the computer and doing coding. It's a fun place to be."

STARBASE opened its doors in 1994 and reaches more than 1,300 Vermont students annually. There is no fee for schools to participate. The program even offers schools financial support with transportation. During the program's physics component, students learn Newton's Laws of Motion through hands-on experiments that include building and launching model rockets. Other topics include fluid mechanics and aerodynamics, much of which is learned through experiments and observations of military planes that enter and exit the base on which STARBASE is housed.

"I liked building different shapes on the computer that helped me design my own space shuttle," fifth grader Fletcher Simonds said. "Math and literacy are still part of STARBASE, but with explosions in a tube and other cool stuff it's very exciting."

"It was really cool to get to see planes taking off right outside the window. The whole time we're there it's about science and testing out our theories and learning about the work that scientists do," fifth grader Maddie Weaver said.

Students also had the opportunity to meet and speak with Brigadier General Greg Knight, the Adjutant

General for the State of Vermont, who is responsible for the recruiting, administration, equipping, training, maintenance, and readiness of the 3400 Vermont National Guard soldiers. Knight spoke about the importance of school and taking every educational opportunity they were given.

Building blocks of matter, physical and chemical changes and atmospheric properties are all taught as part of the program's chemistry strand. Additionally, technology innovations including the latest in mapping, nanotechnology, robotics, and chromatography (a method for separating organic and inorganic compounds to determine their composition) are features.

Three-dimensional computer-aided design (CAD), along with information about the engineering and design processes, comprise the engineering elements of the program, while number relationships, measurement, geometry, and data analysis bring in the math. Among other projects, students used computers to design unmanned aerial vehicles.

"Place-based experiences such as STARBASE spark memorable learning opportunities for our young students," Fletcher's Instructional, Coach Denette Locke, said. "From these experiences we are apt to be in the presence of the future chemist or scientist who creates the next great cure or helps to come up with the solution to global warming. Perhaps the community partners on the base inspired a future firefighter, pilot or the next general. The Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematical learning will transfer back to their in class learning and that of future dreams, inspirations and careers."

During students' last STARBASE experience they launched their homemade rockets at the school.

Support Friends of Fletcher Elementary

F.O.F.E. will be holding a silent auction during Town Meeting. Do you have a product or service to donate? Contact fofevt@gmail.com.

Building Community Cont'd from page 1



Communication and patience was required while each student stacked five cups to create one structure of 100 cups.

The BFA Harmonics would like to invite you to join us at Sugar Season Spectacular A Cabaret Dinner Experience

When: Thursday March 26th, 2020
Where: BFA Fairfax High School Gym, 75 Hunt St, Fairfax, VT
Time: 6:30pm
\$5 Students, \$15 for an individual adult, or \$35 for a family

Your Dinner Experience will include – Musical performances throughout the evening by BFA students, a 3-course meal (Appetizer, Entrée, Dessert) and 1 raffle ticket per adult guest.

Only a limited number of tickets will be available per dinner seating, get your tickets now! We are accepting donations for the dinner and raffle prizes.

Contact: Katie Towle
ketowle@gmail.com or 302-258-6088

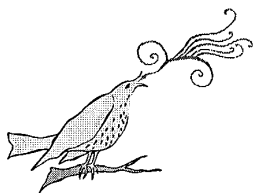
NATURE'S NEWS

From: Four Winds Nature Institute - www.FourWindsInstitute.org

A Newsletter for Parents, Teachers, and Students participating in Four Winds Natural Science Workshops

Topic of the Month:

The Nature of Sound



The ability to hear and distinguish among sounds and to produce sounds is crucial to survival for many animals. Sound, produced by vibrations, can warn of danger, attract a mate, and help to locate food.

Sound is created by a vibrating object causing the air around it to vibrate as well. Sound waves travel outward in all directions from the vibrating object.

When sound waves encounter an obstacle in their path they may go around, be absorbed or reflected, or travel through it. Sound waves can travel through many substances; moving at different rates through different materials.

Traveling sound waves cause membranes like eardrums to vibrate. Animal ears, in their many forms, receive and interpret vibrations providing the animal with valuable information about what's going on in its surroundings. Animals make sounds in different ways, and many use sound to communicate with others of their kind.

For humans, learning to recognize the sounds of the natural world can add great enjoyment to any outing.

OUTDOOR EAVESDROPPING

A little eavesdropping outdoors can reveal lots about who's around and what they're up to. Choose a comfy sitting spot. You could make it a regular "listening post" with a seat in a hidden place. When you are there, close your eyes and take a minute to focus on sounds around you. Try to distinguish between sounds made by animals and sounds made by other means. When you hear animal sounds, can you distinguish between warning calls and other communication?

Go out at different times of day and after dark. Listen for sounds of movement, calls, songs, howls and hoots. Also notice sounds of silence, wind in the trees or grass, and rushing or dripping water.

Try writing a short poem by putting together words that describe the sounds you hear while at your listening post.



Four Winds Nature Institute
4 Casey Road
Chittenden, VT 05737
802.353-9440
www.FourWindsInstitute.org

NEWS FROM SCHOOL:

Does this month's topic *sound* fun to you? There are so many wonderful ways to investigate sound in nature and we hope you have fun with this topic at home.

If you have any pictures, videos or stories that incorporate sound and nature learning at home, please feel free to send them in with your learners or email them to me at dlocke@fwsu.org.

Thanks for "naturing" at home!!