

# LES School Committee Report

February 14, 2012

## Literacy Night

We had about 40 adults and nearly the same amount of children attend Literacy Night on Monday, January 30<sup>th</sup>. After enjoying pizza and juice as a family, adults headed up to the library to receive information related to reading as children stayed for game night with some high school helpers. Ms. Charlene and Mrs. Walker presented the AIMSweb testing which we use with children and how it is used to measure progress. Mrs. Darone and Ms. Graham introduced Book Baggies. Book Baggies are clear baggies that will travel home with Head Start, Preschool, and K-2 students. In the Baggies are books at each individual child's reading level for parents and children to share when they read each night. The reading level is determined using the Columbia Reading Test which is given regularly at school to measure the child's independent reading level. Parents also viewed a video created by Mrs. Puleri and Mrs. Fennelly starring many of our own LES family reading aloud to their children. This video demonstrates techniques for reading with infants right on through to second graders. In Michele's words, parents should "read early, read often, read every day". Another Michele, home-grown author, Michelle Cuevas, ended the night by talking about her love of books from an early age and how our kids can be authors, too. We were glad to have representatives from the Lee Library (Dan Paquette and Rosemarie Borsody) as well as a representative from the Literacy Network, Zoe Delhiem, sharing information, too. I do want to mention that the Literacy Team is a group of professional staff who is completely volunteering their time and working so hard to promote literacy by reaching out to our community. I am so grateful for their assistance and passion.

## BAT Formation

As the Wellness Strategic Planning Team and our Accommodations and Learning and Personal Growth Departments recommended, we began a Building Assistance Team which has met twice thus far. The team consists of myself, Theresa Callahan, Erin O'Brien, Diane Naventi, and Heather Lucy and meets 3 times per month. The team meets to formally and confidentially address social or emotional adjustment issues that students may be having and to plan for intervention when needed. This will be our mechanism for addressing any issues that may arise in a student's school life, such as bullying, family crisis affecting school success, poor attendance, psychosomatic complaints, and extreme or repeated poor behavior, to name just a few. The referral process for the BAT is informal and does not preclude any student from being referred to a Student Intervention Team meeting, which is a more formal meeting including

parents and a wider circle of concerned personnel with which to problem solve on a larger scale. So far, the planning and resulting follow-through has proven to “let the right hand know what the left hand is doing” so no student who may be struggling “slips through the cracks”.

## **Charles Neville**

Our Jazz Band will be holding a workshop with Charles and our entire student body will see him perform. We are grateful for the experience and all the planning that went into making this happen. Special thanks to the people who attended to the details, Joanne Nelson-Unczur, Pat Feldman, and Erin White.

## **Our Recent Community Gathering**

We had a very “rewarding” Gathering this month. It was rewarding for the entire school to learn that we had raised \$1,510.03 for the Pennies for Patients organization. I was proud to give the Principal’s Award to all the kids this month for raising such a fine sum! Our second Andy Bartini Award went to a student who lives by the “Golden Rule”, is kind to all, and a genuinely good person as Andy was. John Somostrada was chosen by his classmates to receive this award. We acknowledged many individual students as well. All our Geography Bee contestants got certificates and the school winner, Colin Finnegan, got a medal. He is in the running to go to the State competition in Boston if his score qualifies him. Our Robotics teams were congratulated on their hard work and asked to stand for wishes for good luck in their upcoming competition on March 24<sup>th</sup> at Lenox Memorial High School. As always, we honored our All Star Award recipients for this month. Additionally, we began giving “Zink the Zebra” coupons to students who were caught being good this month. One “Zink” recipient, Peyton Heath, was chosen by raffle to receive a special bracelet to wear to symbolize *respect*. Before the conclusion of the event, Kindergarten students treated us to some songs and chants they use to remember how to read and spell Sight Words such as c-a-n, m-y, and t-h-e. Once again, the Gathering was a memorable event!

## **Short and Long Range Planning**

We are making small bits of progress on smaller projects using some of teacher’s Common Planning Times. Ginger Armstrong will be coming around to work with grade-level teams throughout the day on Valentine’s Day to answer any questions and address any issues with the AIMSweb system. Kate Olender will be coming around on February 28th. She has the desire to connect with all the classroom teachers and make them aware of what she can do to support

their efforts in the regular classroom and planning for it. I rescheduled my visit to get feedback about the Attendance Policy for March 6. I will have some questions to guide us and some research I have done on my own to share. I will be looking for ideas about what we should and shouldn't tolerate for student absences and what consequences we would like to set.

For the long term, we are trying to get ahead of any budget considerations we may need to make for instruction here at LES for September 2012. We do not have our last AIMSweb ELA or Math benchmarking scheduled until late May. Also, we only have our Lee Public School Mathematics Benchmarking tests in grades 3, 5, and 6 to be given in the 1st week of March (and the MCAS , of course) . This relative lack of new data to go over frees up some valuable Full Team Meeting time for purposes other than placing children in appropriate interventions. For the March and April Full Team meetings, I propose that we use the time to look over data in comparison to past years to determine if our "departmentalizing" pilots have been successful or need to be tweaked, what staffing needs we may foresee, and discuss needs for materials to move intervention ever forward.

Good thing February Break is upon us so we can rest up for all the coming work!!

Respectfully Submitted,

Kate Retzel

Principal