

COFFIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PRINCIPAL'S NEWSLETTER

Issue Six 2013 – 2014

February 2014

Dear Coffin School Families,

I hope this finds you well and enjoying the remaining days of our unexpectedly extended February break.

This week I spent some time reading Robert P.T. Coffin's *Coast Calendar*, originally published in 1947. In addition to learning more about Robert Coffin himself, his writing afforded me an opportunity to slow down and reflect on the cyclical nature of things in our unique Midcoast Maine ecosystem. Coffin evoked for me a certain level of reassurance in the seasons, knowing at least on some levels the patterns and beauty that each month brings in our natural world.

At Coffin School, March promises to be a month of parent/teacher conferences and continued exponential learning. In our District (and across the State), it will be filled with intensified work on school budgets as well as a focus on multiple learning initiatives - both ongoing and anticipated. The coming months seem to be some of the busiest times of the school year, coupling these happenings with all the wonderful extracurricular activities that will soon fill our calendars and sports fields.

In the midst of all this activity, one thing that seems to be increasingly clear is that we will be at the existing Coffin School site as a K/1/2* school for at least the next 3 -5 years. Knowing this, one of our Coffin teacher committees is actively working on identifying short-term, mid-range, and long-term targets for clearly articulating and demonstrating what it means to be Coffin School. This is both important and fun work and is all steeped in the realm of possibility – exactly where we want to be as a K/1/2 school! We'll keep you posted as these conversations evolve.

In the meantime, let's keep our fingers crossed for continued beautiful weather and blizzards only on the weekends.



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*we currently have 17 second-graders @ Coffin School and are exploring the possibility of expanding our multiage programming which would increase this number

Coffin Calendar

February

Friday the 28th K -5 Trimester Ends
Tuesday the 25th – CFC meeting @ 7:00 PM
Wednesday the 26th - Budget Meeting
Friday the 28th – Walk/Bike to school



March

Monday the 3rd - Community Read Aloud
Wednesday the 5th - Budget Meeting
Wednesday the 12th - Jump Rope for Heart Jump Rope Demo
Friday March 7 - Coffin Concert, 9:30 AM & 2:00 PM
Friday the 14th - No School, Professional Day
17th to the 21st - Jump Rope for Heart
Tuesday the 18th – CFC meeting @ 7:00 PM (corrected from 25th)
Wednesday the 19th - Budget Meeting
Wednesday the 26th - Early Release @ 1:10* (staff development)
Wednesday the 26th - Budget Meeting
Friday the 21st – Walk/Bike to school

April

Wednesday the 2nd to Friday - the 4th, Book Fair
Thursday the 10, Coffin Identity Assembly - 2:45-3:05
Monday the 7th - Grade 1 Kinderkonzert
Tuesday the 15 - CFC meeting @ 7:00 PM
Wednesday the 16th - Budget Meeting
Friday the 18th Walk/Bike to School
Monday and Tuesday the 28th and 29th - Helene Coffin visits
Wednesday the 30th - Poem in Your Pocket Day
Wednesday the 30th - Budget Meeting

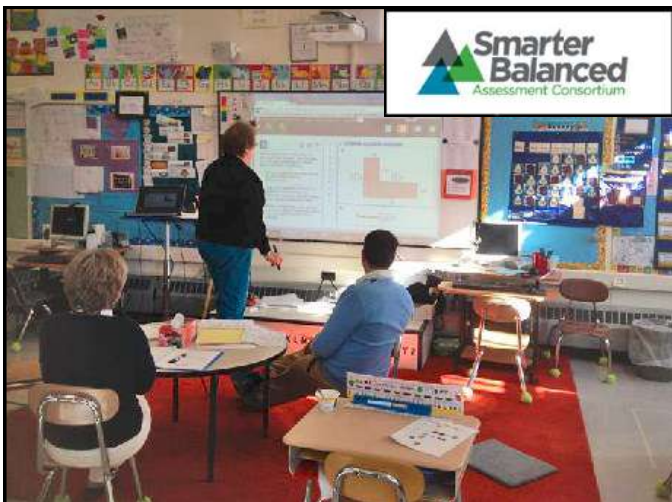
***REMINDER-** Coffin Early Release times have shifted by 10 minutes to accommodate parents with children @ HBSS and Coffin.



Kindergarten classes celebrate the 100th day of school by participating in a 'number' of 100's centers set up in the cafeteria.

A community of learners founded on safety, gentleness, kindness and the pursuit of quality work.





One of our first grade Professional Learning Groups spends a session studying the Smarter Balanced assessment. This assessment is tied to the Common Core State Standards and will be formally administered to all Maine students in Grades 3- 8 starting in the spring of 2015. If you'd like to try out the test for yourself, visit this site:
<https://sbacpt.tds.airast.org/student/>



More 100th Day activities.



February - "It is a cold month, a snowy month, and the ocean is locked up tight. But days are lengthening out, the sap is flowing up in men and maples. The world is a promise of growing."

- Robert P. Tristram Coffin *Coast Calendar* 1947- images and text reprinted with permission of Down East Books



Many staff recently attended the first of a three-part after school professional development series offered by Lori Watson, Coffin School Behavior Interventionist.

Thanks to each of you who shared your input on our recent dismissal procedure shift. Thanks also to Mary Caruso, a member of our Dismissal Action Committee, for reviewing and compiling a report on all this information



Included here is a very brief summary. For the complete report, please visit this site:
<http://www.brunswick.k12.me.us/sciembraoniewicz/files/2014/02/DismissalFeedbackJanuary2014PDF.pdf>

Overall:

- 99 surveys returned
- Generally very positive – some bus students even arriving home earlier
- Areas for future focus
 - Identified substitutes for staff
 - Parking for walker dismissal
- Most walker dismissal families like the centralized spot for a variety of reasons



At a recent Kindergarten team meeting, teachers review the health curriculum, discuss upcoming report cards and plan 100th day activities.

Community for Coffin

<http://www.brunswick.k12.me.us/cof/community-for-coffin/>



Thank you, Coffin Community!

CFC would like to thank the countless parents and supporters who have shared your time, talents and resources over the past couple months. Your contributions benefit our students and staff as well as our greater community.

We are grateful!



Guest athletes sharing their sports and the importance of healthy eating with a captivated Coffin School audience during Mrs. Peck-Moad's 5-2-1-0 Colors Week kickoff assembly. Thank you to Shane Hutchins (basketball player and Coffin Physical Education teacher), Steve Hill (ultra-marathoner) and Matt Shoemaker (year-round cyclist).

Colors Week enthusiasts greeting students before school.

Pictured are Molly Berberich, Tracey Peck-Moad, Nancy Richards.



Over 200 pounds of food from our Holiday Donation Drive, ready for delivery to Mid Coast Hunger.



Family Movie Night co-chairs Denise Zavitz and Sarah McPherson handing out free popcorn.



A few Movie Night attendees!

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Nurse's Notes

February 2014

The Flu

Flu season has arrived at Coffin School. Influenza or simply, "The Flu" is a viral illness that typically occurs during the winter months. According to the Maine CDC, influenza is characterized by the sudden onset of symptoms including fever (100 F or greater) and muscle aches, headache, severe malaise (or general bodily weakness, discomfort and tiredness), a non-productive cough and/or sore throat, and runny nose. Influenza is easily spread from person to person through coughing and sneezing of infected persons.

Keeping ALL students healthy and safe

As you can imagine one infected person could spread the virus to several people through the course of a school day. If your child has a fever of 100 degrees F or higher ***please*** keep him/her home from school. A fever is a sign that the body is fighting an illness. Please ***do not*** medicate your child for the fever and send them to school. Fever reducing medication will not prevent them from being contagious to others. A child's temperature must be under 100 degrees F for **24 hours *without*** the use of fever reducing medication such as acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Advil or Motrin.)



For some of our students whose medical condition or treatment weakens their immune system any illness can be dangerous. **Of particular concern are common childhood communicable diseases such as measles, mumps, rubella, chicken pox, and pertussis (also known as whooping cough)** to name a few. Since children who have been exposed to an illness, particularly those who have not been immunized can spread the virus ***before*** any symptoms develop it is very important that you notify me of any known exposure. If your child has been ***exposed to*** any of these illnesses, regardless of whether or not they were vaccinated ***please*** notify either me at 319-1957 or jrivard@brunswick.k12.me.us

Dress for the weather

Children should come to school prepared for outside play to ensure that they are warm and dry throughout the day. In winter weather children should come to school wearing ***a winter coat, snow pants, a hat, mittens or gloves, warm socks and boots.*** They should ***bring shoes to wear inside*** as boots can be very hot and uncomfortable when worn all day. It can be costly to outfit a child for winter. If you would like assistance in providing winter clothing for your child please notify Mrs. Bradley or me and we will be happy to help. Please note that the school does not keep a supply of extra clothing. It is strongly recommended that all children have ***an extra pair of socks and a change of clothes*** for those occasional times when they get wet.

Tips to stay healthy all year long

Get plenty of rest. Most experts agree children between the ages of 5 and 12 need 10-11 hours of sleep each night. Too little sleep can affect the body's immune system, which helps protect from illness. When the body doesn't get enough rest a child will not only feel tired and cranky but he or she may be unable to think clearly, making directions difficult to follow and school assignments a challenge to accomplish.

Drink lots of water. Cold, dry weather and dry, indoor heat causes our bodies to lose moisture. It's important to drink about 6-8 glasses of water a day (more with activity) to keep appropriately hydrated.

Get daily exercise. Regular exercise will not only help your body stay healthy but is a habit that will benefit you for life. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, physical activity can help ***ward off disease*** and other medical problems. Regular exercise ***prevents high blood pressure, strengthens bones, helps you maintain an appropriate weight*** for height and body build and also is known to ***relieve stress*** by causing physical changes in your body that help it react to and handle stress.

Wash hands several times a day with soap and warm water, or hand gel when water is not accessible, especially before eating and after using the bathroom.

Cover a cough or sneeze, into your elbow, if you please!

Stay home when you are sick. Symptoms are most severe and infection is most contagious during the first few days of illness. Children should not be in school if they have a fever and should return only when symptoms are improving and no fever has been detected for 24 hours. Your health and the health of those around you depend on it!

