

COFFIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PRINCIPAL'S NEWSLETTER

Issue One 2013 – 2014

September 2013

Dear Coffin School Families,

I hope this finds all of you well.

Our year is off to a great start and so far we've welcomed 365 students and their families back to school. Our Kindergarten class is made up of 177 students; first grade has 172 students; and second grade has sixteen. Within these numbers, we have a wonderfully diverse population of students who bring a wide variety of experiences and strengths to Coffin School.

September is one of those particularly critical times when teachers work their magic and set the stage for the year ahead. We are fortunate to have a gifted cadre of educators working with your children to create, nurture, and sustain positive classroom environments. Our teachers are weaving together diversity and variety into cohesive and collaborative learning communities. I call it 'magic', but have the privilege of seeing how much professional expertise, thoughtful collaboration and sustained hard work are behind our classroom successes.

Today I checked in with several students to get their take on how school is going. They love many aspects, some of which, so far, include: Recess, gym, morning meeting, recess, art, math, recess, reading, writing workshop, recess, library and working (I followed-up this last one and was told that it's 'reading work'). Good things are happening!

Thank you for sharing your joyfully curious and engaged children with us at Coffin School. Working together, there's a fantastic year of learning ahead for us all.

Most appreciatively,



Mr. C.
sciembroniewicz@brunswick.k12.me.us

Coffin Calendar

September

Tuesday the 17th - Community for Coffin* @ 7:00 PM

Thursday the 26th - Open House 6:00 - 7:00 PM

Friday the 27th - Arts are Elementary 10 x 10 Art Exhibit and Sale

October

Friday the 4th - Early Release @ 1:00 PM

Saturday the 5th - "Communities in Action" Children's Mental Health Symposium @ Bowdoin College

Thursday the 10th - Kindergarten curriculum Night 6:00 - 7:00 PM

Monday the 14th - Columbus Day - NO SCHOOL

Tuesday the 15th - Community for Coffin Meeting 7:00 PM

Saturday the 19th - CFC October Festival 2:00 - 4:00 PM

Monday the 21st - Picture Retake Day

November

Monday the 11th - Veteran's Day - NO SCHOOL

Friday the 15th - K-5 trimester ends

Tuesday the 26th - Early Release @ 11:30 AM - Conferences

Wednesday the 27th - Conferences - NO SCHOOL

Thursday the 28th and Friday the 29th - Thanksgiving Break

*additional CFC events on page 4



Mrs. Lucas and her kindergarten friends have been learning about letters. They read the big book; Chicka Chicka Boom Boom by Bill Martin Jr., made their own coconut tree headbands and paraded through the kindergarten classrooms and office in search of the 26 letters in the alphabet.



Welcome to Our New Staff!



Mrs. Eugénie Knowles will join our Reading Support team as a **Reading Strategist**. Her career in teaching has been in grades K through 5 in Brunswick and Bath. She is passionate about teaching literacy and dedicated to helping children become life-long learners. She is excited to join the Coffin staff.



Larena Carten is one of the new **Reading Teachers** here at Coffin. She has taught in Connecticut and Portland, has a love of all things related to literacy, and is excited to be a member of the reading support team!



Mrs. Jessica Sapp is joining the Coffin Staff as a **Kindergarten Teacher**. Last year she was with us for a long-term substitute teaching assignment. She moved to Maine in August 2012 and loves this small community of Brunswick. She is very excited to have her own classroom and is eager to get to know the students and families of the Brunswick School District.



Ms. Strait is so excited to be a part of the Coffin School Community as a **Kindergarten** teacher. She comes to us with eleven years teaching experience. She lives in Portland. In her free time she enjoys going to the beach, hiking and running.



Mr. Sam Bernier has spent the past two years as a substitute in the Brunswick Schools. This year he is thrilled to be a full-time member of the Coffin family as a **First Grade Teacher**. Mr. Bernier is also a familiar face at the Brunswick Rec Dept as a 10-year employee.



Barbara Burgess will be joining Coffin Elementary School. She has spent the last four years working in Special Education and is very excited to start her new journey as a **Kindergarten** teacher.



Ms. Dunn is thrilled to be joining the **Kindergarten** team at Coffin Elementary School as a first year teacher and recent graduate of USM's ETEP program. For the past three years, she has worked as an Ed Tech in Special Education in Cumberland. In her free time, she enjoys running, biking, and yoga.



Karen Feehan was born and raised in Brunswick. She attended 1st and 2nd grade here at Coffin School. She has worked within the **Functional Life Skills classroom** in Brunswick for the past 5 years.



Mrs. Dekker has been teaching students with moderate to severe special needs for 19 years with the last 6 here in Brunswick. Prior she has worked at the New England Center for Autism, the May Center and School Union 7. Early intervention is her passion and she will be running the **Functional Life Skills program**.



Natasha (Tasha) Read graduated from Unity College with a degree in Adventure Therapy. She has worked in both behavioral day treatment and residential programs. Tasha is very excited to be at Coffin Elementary School working in the **Functional Life Skills classroom**.

Lori Watson joins us as our new **Behavior Interventionist**. Lori has worked in the public school setting as a K-12 behavior consultant for more than 10 years. During that time, she has supported classroom teachers through individual and group planning as well as program development. Prior to consulting, Lori taught special education in both school and district-wide programs. She is enthusiastic about teaching the behaviors essential for school success.



Dr. Kristina Andren (right) and **Susan Jarmuz-Smith** join Coffin Elementary School this year to provide **psychological services**, including student evaluations, behavioral consultation, and intervention support. Kristina has been practicing as a school psychologist in Maine schools for 9 years, and served on the faculty at USM. Susan is completing her pre-doctoral internship in school psychology. They bring a collaborative approach to problem-solving and look forward to working with teachers and staff to help support student needs





In August, Midcoast Hunger Prevention kicked off their Backpack initiative with a press conference at Coffin School. Speakers included Senator Angus King and First Grade Teacher Meredith Sciacca. Since then, we are now actively working with MCHPP, providing valuable support to families experiencing food insecurity.



Here Mrs. Havener conducts a literacy assessment. Our Response to Intervention (RTI) team of teachers has just completed a universal literacy screening of our entire K-2 student population. This data will now be used to shape classroom instruction and target any specific literacy interventions.



One of our first grade Professional Learning Groups (PLGs) meets to plan literacy instruction.



Students from Ms. Lowe's Grade 1 / 2 multiage class creatively (and chorally) petition for a class pet. They're going to have a fish as part of their science curriculum



Library News

Mrs. Margy Soule and Mrs. Ruth Wilson

September Newsletter - Library

The Library is up and running in our new-to-us space. Margy Soule and several stalwart volunteers moved all of the books this summer. Carl Hanscom and his crew made our new space clean, fresh, and inviting. Thank you to everyone who made this transition as smooth as possible.

The children have been having library classes. They have been relearning about book care and turning pages properly (from the corners only!) as well as making a "helping hand" shelf marker so that they can enjoy taking books off of our shelves and returning them to the same spot.

First grade and multiage classes will start checking books out soon, and we hope to have kindergarten classes start checking out books by the end of September.

We need to make sure that each new student has a signed Library permission slip in the library before s/he may check books out.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED! We welcome volunteers to help in the library. You may sign up through CFC or you may contact Ruth Wilson at rwilson2@brunswick.k12.me.us Volunteers help in many ways: reading informally to an individual student, helping students find books on the shelves, reshelving books, checking books in and out, and minor book repair.

Be sure to stop by and see us during the Open House on September 26th. We're in the mobile unit on the right as you head to the cafeteria.

Margy Soule and Ruth Wilson

msoule@brunswick.k12.me.us or 319-1955



Community for Coffin

To all the Coffin community members who have generously shared your time and talents during these first weeks of school, and to the exciting number of parents and grandparents--both returning and new--who have expressed interest in volunteering and getting involved, we can't THANK YOU enough! What a fantastic year it's going to be!

Upcoming CFC Events and Programs

Gardening Day at Coffin School
Saturday, September 28
10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Snack Shack Opens
Monday, September 30 before school

Playground Door Painting Day
Friday, October 4
after 1:00 p.m. Early Dismissal

3rd Annual Read-a-Thon Fundraiser
October 7-18

Stay tuned for information about participating in our biggest fundraiser of the year by sponsoring our students to read books!

October CFC Meeting
Tuesday, October 15
7:00 p.m. in the Coffin School cafeteria
New this month: free childcare available during the meeting from BHS students!

Bus Driver Appreciation Day
Friday, October 18

Monthly Walk/Bike to School Day
Friday, October 18

Coffin Harvest Festival and Winter Gear Give & Take
Saturday, October 19
2:00 - 4:00 p.m.
Free fun for the whole family!

All Elementary School Craft Fair
Saturday, November 9
in the HBS School gymnasium

Monthly Walk/Bike to School Day
Friday, November 15

Scholastic Book Fair
November 18-22
in the Coffin School gymnasium

November CFC Meeting
Tuesday, November 19
7:00 p.m. in the Coffin School cafeteria

Would you like to learn more about Community for Coffin?

Join our mailing list and receive our weekly email newsletter: communityforcoffin@gmail.com

Join our private Facebook group: Community for Coffin (CFC)

Check out our Website:
www.brunswick.k12.me.us/cof/community-for-coffin/

Come to our monthly meeting in the Coffin School cafeteria:

Tuesday, October 15 at 7:00 p.m.
Tuesday, November 19 at 7:00 p.m.
Tuesday, December 17 at 7:00 p.m.
Tuesday, January 21 at 7:00 p.m.
Tuesday, February 25 at 7:00 p.m.
Tuesday, March 18 at 7:00 p.m.
Tuesday, April 15 at 7:00 p.m.
Tuesday, May 20 at 7:00 p.m.
Tuesday, June 3 at 7:00 p.m.

CFC information is also posted on our lobby bulletin board and we have a mailbox in the main office.