

POSITIVE SCHOOL NEWS – FEBRUARY 2022

WILLIAMS-CONE SCHOOL

During the week of January 31st, third, fourth and fifth grade students enjoyed some extended outdoor time snowshoeing, hiking and/or snow tubing under the direction of Ann Martin, the Williams-Cone School Physical Education teacher, with support from other staff. Students had a grand experience utilizing the trails located in the Highlands-owned woods behind Williams-Cone School.

Second grade students participated in special activities celebrating that they were in second grade on 2-2-22. Activities included creating time capsules that will be opened on 3-3-33 as well as wearing T-shirts with the caption “I was in 2nd grade on 2-2-22” designed by the second grade teachers.

Fourth grade students successfully participated in the National Assessment of Educational Progress on February 3rd. The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) provides important information about student achievement and learning experiences in various subjects. Team members from the National Assessment of Educational Progress highlighted the respectful and responsible behavior that each Williams-Cone School student demonstrated during the testing.

The Williams-Cone School fifth grade class sponsored a fundraiser in conjunction with Sherman’s Bookstore in Topsham on February 8th. 25% of the store’s sales between the hours of 3:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. were donated to the fifth grade class for its upcoming end-of-year activities.

Over 150 students completed the Winter Break I Principal’s Reading Challenge. This challenge involved reading for 20-30 minutes daily for ten days during the break. The prize for completing the challenge is a choice of a book from Scholastic. Another Principal’s Reading Challenge is being held during the current Winter Break 2.

HARPSWELL COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Students in Harpswell Community School have earned well over 2,500 “claw slips” so far this year. Claw slips are earned by being extra safe, respectful, or responsible. Our school-wide goal for the end of February is 3,000 claw slips; and we’re on track to get there. Students voted on the school-wide award. We’re going to celebrate with PJ’s, stuffies, and hot cocoa.

Julia McLeod from the Harpswell Land Trust returned to Harpswell Community School on February 17th to continue with our nature-based play. Our students built and explored snow caves and the science involved in them.

Harpswell Community School fourth and fifth graders had a virtual field trip shortly before February vacation. They worked with Central Maine Power’s “Safety City” learning about electricity and how it travels as well as important considerations around electrical lines and devices.

BOWDOINHAM COMMUNITY SCHOOL

At Bowdoinham Community School we honor the learning in all subject areas, including “specials.” Every month the specials teachers – art, physical education, music, and Learning Commons – highlight one student from the school for his/her exceptional work in class. In January, third grader Celia Rollins was recognized by Mrs. Stack as the “Uncommon Star in the Learning Commons.” Not only did Celia check out, read, and return the most books from the library in January, she was also recognized for always offering to help organize the headphones, and being kind and helpful every class. The specials teacher makes the announcement to the whole school over the PA system, and the school gives a big cheer in celebration. We do this for all the specials classes each month and have a permanent display of the month’s current Specials Stars. Not only is it fun to celebrate these students, it also promotes consistency of behavioral expectations across all parts of the school. The program was initiated by the specials teachers, and Jessica Fournier, the school’s Behavior Strategist.

WOODSIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Students and teachers at Woodside Elementary School are making the most of the winter weather by getting out in snowshoes to explore the land around the school. While the snowshoes are available for use by any classroom, students in fourth grade had a particularly interesting “first-hand” snowy science experience. Students learned about the adaptation differences between White Tailed Deer and Snowshoe Hares by taking a scientifically-themed walk in the deep snow in the back fields. Students each were outfitted with one foot in a snowshoe and one foot in just a bare boot. They measured the different depth impacts of their footsteps and talked about what they noticed. Ultimately, the students had a great experiential opportunity to understand how animals adapt to their environment; and the students all left knowing exactly how the Snowshoe Hare got its name!

Woodside Elementary School hosted its annual musical for the first time since the Pandemic started. On February 16th and 17th Mr. David Pietrowski directed Woodside Elementary School students in a production of “the Point.”

February also saw us welcoming back the Woodside One-Wheelers Camp over February vacation. Members of the Woodside One-Wheelers circus arts group (as well as any student in Grade Two and above) were invited to apply to the camp which is being held from February 21-25 this year. We are very excited to be able to offer this again and want to make sure that community members know that we also offer a summer camp program open to any student in any town (Grade Two and above) in July. Students participate in juggling, balance activities, unicycle riding and other introductory circus arts skills right in the Woodside school gymnasium. For more information you can reach out to Mr. Dedek in the Woodside School office or Physical Education teacher Eric Pulsifer.

BOWDOIN CENTRAL SCHOOL

On Wednesday, February 9th, we had Maine author Mary Cerullo in to work with second grade writers. She also worked with Grades 3, 4 and 5 virtually while being with the second graders in-person. Mrs. Cerullo is an accomplished children's non-fiction author who is helping our students build their skills of non-fiction reading while engaging their interest in the Maine marine wildlife, like sharks, seals, and octopus.

The Bowdoin Parent/Teacher Club continues to support our learning mission by enriching the lives and experiences of Bowdoin Central School students and teachers. Examples include \$100 teacher grants for all teachers, a book for every student during the Book Fair, carnations for every person on Valentine's Day, Winter Carnival shirts for every student and staff member, classroom grants for recycling boxes for disposable masks, healthy snacks, and much more.

Bowdoin Central School continues to work with the Maine Math and Science Alliance to support our practice as educators in helping students build math fluency skills. Educators worked this summer with a coach from the Maine Math and Science Alliance to better understand the details of math fluency and math learning in elementary students. We have been working throughout the year to incorporate math fluency games into our classroom practice. We will continue to work on improving our teaching of math fluency.

MT. ARARAT MIDDLE SCHOOL

On January 26th, all teams at Mt. Ararat Middle School had their second "Team Day" of the year. During these days, team teachers, with the help of student leaders, design activities with the purpose of supporting social-emotional learning, building relationships, and giving back to the community. Team Merrymeeting worked with the organization, ***The Final Flag (www.thefinalflag.org)***, a non-profit that provides previously-flown United States flags for all United States veterans being cremated. These students triangle-folded 687 American flags. One of our special education programs folded an additional 54 flags for a total of 741 flags for veterans. Team Merrymeeting also held a hat fundraiser, raising \$90 for the Midcoast Humane Society.

MT. ARARAT HIGH SCHOOL

The Mt. Ararat High School choirs performed their winter concert on Thursday, February 3rd, their first concert since before the start of the Pandemic, and wowed the crowd with their beautiful performance. In preparation for Valentine's Day, Mt. Ararat High School students created "Valentines for Vets; and these notes of love and positive support for veterans at the VA Togus Medical Center were delivered on Valentine's Day.

Sophomore Rose Tuttle was Mt. Ararat High School's school-wide Poetry Out Loud contest winner; and she advanced to the regional finals where she performed the poems "Anthology of Rain" by Phillis Levin; "Self-inquiry Before a Job Interview" by Gary Soto; and "Envy" by Mary Lamb.

In athletics, it's been a particularly busy and successful stretch. Congratulations go to the Mt. Ararat/Brunswick Wrestling team which won the Class A State Championship on Saturday, February 19th. Special congratulations go to seniors Brycen Kowalsky and Spencer Leclair for winning their weight classes. Congratulations also go to individual State Champions in indoor track – Mikaela Langston in the triple jump, Grady Satterfield in the 2-mile run, and Ben Keleher, Parker Libby, Gavin Rowe, and Grady Satterfield in the 4x800 meter relay team. All of these students won their events at the Class A State Championship meet on Monday, February 21st. Finally, congratulations go to the Girls Ice Hockey and Basketball teams for their deep runs into the State Championship tournaments.

Many thanks to our staff, administrators and students for the excellent work they do every day in our schools.

Sincerely,

Robert J. Lucy
Interim Superintendent of Schools

/bb/positivenewFeb2022