



From the Desk of the Principal

Greetings!

As we begin the second half of our school year, I'd like to take this opportunity to report on the restructuring initiatives that are being implemented this year. Our Restructuring Plan outlines goals in the areas of teacher leadership, communication, lesson planning/instruction, technology integration, curriculum alignment, job-embedded professional development and data driven decision making. Following are some descriptions of the things we're doing to advance our goals.

Teacher leadership: We now have both grade level teacher leaders and department teacher leaders. All teacher leaders completed 5 days of training this past summer and became certified in leading teacher work in professional learning communities. Our teachers set agendas and keep minutes for all meetings and use standard protocols for analyzing both student work and teacher work.

Communication: We continue to use the MMS on-line grading system to keep parents and students up-to-date with classroom progress. We continue to strive for consistency and timeliness in posting assignments. We solicit feedback through our parent/student/faculty surveys and our goal is for teachers to communicate with every parent two times during the school year. Internally, the administration prepares a weekly administrative memo to communicate with the staff. A goal this year is to host two parent roundtable events to share the work we are doing and get your feedback. We held a Homework Roundtable in November and we are planning an event to highlight the curriculum and technology this

spring. We are also planning a Green Fair along with our PTO. More information will be forthcoming as planning gets under way.

Lesson Planning/Instruction: We continue to focus on incorporating the Marzano Best Practices into our instruction. Teachers are observing other classrooms, collaboratively designing lessons that focus on these techniques. All teachers use a lesson plan format that we designed to incorporate the best practices. This year, we are highlighting "setting objectives and providing feedback." All lessons begin with a learning goal for the day, which is posted in the classroom and addressed at the start of the lesson. In all classrooms, students are setting targets for their learning and monitoring their progress.

Technology Integration: We have made great strides in this area. Mrs. Marcotte and Mrs. Pearson are being trained to be technology leaders in the building through a grant we received. We received another mini-grant to train a group of seventh and eighth grade teachers to use Flip video cameras and GPS systems to work with students and the community to trace the history of many of the landmarks in our three towns. A geocach scavenger hunt will be made available to the community when this is complete. We've also used grant money to purchase four interactive white boards, laptop computers and LCD projectors. Teachers are using technology to instruct in the classroom as well as to run professional meetings. We also obtained additional sets of "clickers" which are used to engage all students in responding during a classroom lesson.

Curriculum Alignment: New science and social studies curricula are being implemented at all three grade levels.

Teachers are working to set assured learning expectations for each grade level and are developing common assessments. This is a work in progress. Our goal is to identify gaps as well as areas of overlap and eliminate them by reworking what needs to be taught at each grade level. Teachers are engaged in curriculum mapping in order to identify where changes need to be made. This work is done after school on Wednesdays, as well as professional days during the year and in the summer.

Data Driven Decision-Making: We've formed a school-wide Data Team that meets for a half day each month and is facilitated by our Data Coach, Alicia Gardner. This group collects and examines data to assess what's working well and to identify areas in need of improvement. The focus is always on what we can do to improve student achievement. The Data Team posts data on the Data Wall outside the library. Please take a look next time you're in the building!

Please feel free to contact me with any questions you may have about the work we are doing. I am pleased with all the hard work that I see everyday in our classrooms! I do believe it is making a difference!

Sincerely,
Pamela Miller
Principal

Notes From the Assistant Principal

Winnisquam Regional Middle School is proud to announce that Deb Jurta, Grade 8 Social Studies teacher, earned first place in our region and third place for the State of New Hampshire for the VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher Award.

Congrats to all WRMS girls basketball players that worked hard and won first place in the Laconia Christmas Tournament!

Reminder to all parents that drop off their student(s) in the morning: all students must be dropped off at the stop sign and not at

the front doors. All students are outside in the mornings, unless they are eating breakfast. The back library doors will open at 7:30 for students to enter for breakfast. As always, safety is our primary concern and staff supervision is not available in the school building until the bell rings. Thank you for your assistance in this matter and remind your student(s) to dress warmly. Students are always outside unless the "AccuWeather Real Feel" (www.AccuWeather.com) temperature dips below 10 degrees.

Students playing sports or attending school functions later than 2:30 need to make sure that they have made arrangements for supervision until the start time. I encourage students that have transportation dilemmas to sign up for an after school club or speak with their coach regarding supervision. Students may not be in the building or outside the front doors. If you have questions or concerns, please call me at 286-7143 or Jeff Cloos, Athletic Director, at 286-4531, ext. 186.

I have spent some time discussing the Academic and Behavior Non-Participation List and process with every team of teachers in our school. There is a general feeling that it would be in the best interest of students, teachers, parents and extra-curricular staff if the Academic NPL returned to a set schedule of three published lists per quarter. Students would still be granted the one week "warning" status to work with their teachers without interruption of their activities. The exact details and dates will be posted on the WRMS website by the first day of Quarter Three. Behavior NPL will continue to be run on a weekly basis. Please call me with any questions or feedback you may have to share. Additional Reminder: Parents are still encouraged to regularly check online grading.

It is hard to believe that we are already moving into the second half of the year. I would like to take this opportunity to thank EVERYONE for helping me transition to my

position as Assistant Principal. It has been a rewarding experience and I am thankful for all the terrific students, staff, and parents that I get to work with every day!

~ Mrs. Kruger
Assistant Principal

GRADE 6

Mrs. Hewey's Reading Classes

All three blocks are currently reading Rick Riordan's The Lightning Thief. This book is rich with Greek Mythology, so we are studying various Greek Gods, Goddesses, and myths as we encounter them in the book. To help your child review the story so far, ask him/her: Who is Percy? Who is Percy's Dad? What is the setting of the story? What is the conflict (problem) in the story?

~ Mrs. Hewey

GRADE 7

Social Studies

In social studies, we are presently studying Latin America. The students are now familiar with a majority of the countries and physical features of this region. We have also established some of the differences between developed and developing countries. The situation in Haiti really brought to light some of the differences. It was nice that a lot of the students were keeping up with the news on Haiti and sharing their information in class. We have discussed the GDP and the students have gained a general understanding of this term. Next we will learn about the major civilizations of this region and the European influence there.

~ Mrs. DiNardo

Science

In our latest unit, we have been studying the characteristics of plant life. So far, the students have done well, and seem to have a good understanding and interest of the subject. We have performed a few experiments to expand their understanding of seed parts and growth. One of the experiments we performed explained the differences between photosynthesis and

plant respiration. We also dissected lima beans to show how seed plants reproduce. They have taken descriptive notes, and have created a study guide to use for a future quiz. If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact me.

~ Ms. McKenney

Seventh Grade Math

Students in CMP math have just completed the geometry unit (Stretching and Shrinking) on similarity of figures. Students did a great job on their scale houses. The next unit will be Comparing and Scaling which will have them applying the concepts of ratio, proportion, and percent. How to calculate and apply tips, taxes, and discounts will be learned. How to increase and decrease recipes and mixtures, and comparisons of data groups will also be learned. Students will have a mid-term exam covering the information learned in the first-half of the year. Each student has been doing daily warm-ups to refresh his/her understanding and to re-teach where necessary. These warm-ups are discussed and corrected in class and form the basis of the study guide for the mid-term. As we review, students are beginning to note that they have learned a lot of mathematics in the first half of this year. They definitely have, and they have another half-year of learning coming up very soon. Grades and assignments are current in the on-line grading program as well as individual comments when there is information to share on a student's work or behavior.

~ Mr. Saltmarsh

Seventh Grade ELA

The 7th grade English classes are currently involved in the survival unit. Students have completed universal traveling kit commercials. We are currently introducing the novels, Woodson and Winterdance. Students will be reading the novels with a focus on investigating and exploring the problems Gary Paulsen faces during his competition in the Last Greatest Race on the earth, the Iditarod. While reading the

novels, students will be researching the Iditarod and the Alaskan race course. Please feel free to participate in this wonderful exploration of American history. We hope you enjoy this unit as much as we have.

~ Ms. Simoes & Mrs. Morse

GRADE 8

Social Studies

8th grade social studies classes are studying WW II and learning about how the United States built its military and converted its economy to meet war time needs. This week we will take a close look at the devastation of Pearl Harbor, the events that led up to the attack and the reaction of the U.S.

~ Mrs. Jurta

Grade 8 ELA

Mr. Wyman's Pre-AP classes are reading The Grapes of Wrath. The other sections are reading short stories from the anthology book. All sections need to continue to read at home as well for Accelerated Reader points.

Mrs. Berry's classes just finished reading a play based on the novel Anne Frank. Since students are also studying WWII in social studies, they are gathering a lot of history. One student even mentioned that they saw in the paper that Meip, the lady who hid the family, recently died. She was 100 years old.

~ Mrs. Berry

ELA and Read 180 - Grades 6, 7 and 8

Sixth Grade English Language Arts

Students are finishing up their unit on Overcoming Obstacles. The last book we are reading in this unit is The Young Man and the Sea by Rodman Philbrick. Students are reminded that second quarter closes on Wednesday January 27th. All Accelerated Reader tests need to be taken by the end of that school day. Our next unit will be Life Lessons and we will begin the unit with a piece from Carlota by Scott O'Dell from our literature books.

Seventh and Eighth Grade Read 180

Students continue working on their individualized computer programs, open response prompts, R-book and Flex book workbook exercised and guided and independent reading. Students recently took The Scholastic Reading Inventory test which gauges progress made in the Read 180 program since the beginning of the school year. I've seen some very impressive gains from students.

~ Mrs. Anderson

Seventh and Eighth Grade Pre-Algebra

This week in class, the students have reviewed for the Chapter 3 Test, Multi-Step Equations and Inequalities, which they took on Wednesday. At the same time, they are also getting ready for the mid-year exam which will be Tuesday the 26th.

MAP testing will be on Wednesday the 27th for all Pre-Algebra classes. This is the 52 multiple-choice problem assessment taken on the computer by all students at WRMS. Our next chapter will be on Factors, Fractions, and Exponents.

~ Mrs. O'Donnell

Unified Arts

Art Education

Mark your calendar now! The 2010 Lakes Region Arts Alive is coming. Winnisquam's opening will be March 11th from 5PM-7PM at the Belknap Mill in Laconia. More information will be coming soon.

~ Mrs. Johnson

Health Education

Health classes for this quarter are coming to a close.

Students in grade 8 are presenting their long-term health projects this week. Most students chose the sleep deprivation project, which generally gives students a new appreciation for the need for sleep!

Grade 7 students have completed their Health Board Games. The presentations are interesting in that a variety of health topics are researched for the project. The culminating activity includes students playing each other's games which is the "real test" for success on this project!

Grade 6 classes have recently completed a unit on tobacco and are currently involved with their last unit of the quarter on puberty.

All classes will rotate to the next quarter of Unified Arts classes next week. It has been a pleasure working with these groups and I look forward to my classes for the next quarter.

~ Mrs. Kemmerer

Music Education and Chorus

General Music students in 6th grade are finishing up the quarter with projects based on "The Music Man". These will be presented in class next Monday and Tuesday, Jan 25 and 26.

7th grade is finishing up their hard work on the keyboards (ask them to play you a song!).

8th grade is finishing up with "West Side Story".

I look forward to starting a new quarter on the 28th!

Chorus students are working hard learning new music for the spring concert! The spring concert will be on Tuesday, May 18th at 7 pm at the high school cafeteria. We're focusing on some upbeat, jazzy tunes to keep our audience entertained!

~ Ms. Grover

Nurse's Corner

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Just a reminder, paperwork was mailed home regarding the H1N1 vaccine clinic on January 28; this clinic is only open to students and

staff. Permission slips were due back to me by January 14. You will receive verification of your child's vaccination in the mail. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at 286-7143 ext 204.

Thank you,
Bobbie LaBranche, RN
School Nurse

Library/Media Center

Imagine living in New York City where you are constantly reminded of being safe and your best friend has just been bullied and you are receiving notes in odd places. The notes contain information that is only known to a few. This is Miranda's mystery to solve in When You Reach Me by Rebecca Stead. I challenge you to discover how Miranda unlocks the unexplainable and will she do it in time?

Mrs. Jurta's classes researched the fascinating decade of the 1940's with war, economic challenges, exciting cultural changes to music, fashion, and the way Americans coped with the shortages brought on by the World War II.

Mrs. DiNardo's 7th grade social studies classes are looking for information for individual presentations on the subject of Mexico and South America. Ms. Chapley presented an overview of sites to use for research.

Please take a look at the middle school library website located on the district page with a link to the middle school. The library catalog may now be accessed via the Internet. This will allow students to search from home for books and find the details for completing a works cited page. Thank you, Mrs. Pearson.

~ Mrs. Chapley
Media Specialist

Memory Books

Order forms were recently passed out. Books need to be ordered before the end of March when the book is submitted.

See Mrs. Berry or the office for a form. We hope to set it up so it is on-line soon as well.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Jan. 27th: Quarter 2 Grades Close

Jan. 28th: H1N1 Vaccinations

Jan. 29th: Spelling Bee (1st Round)

Feb. 2nd: Spelling Bee (2nd Round)

Feb. 5th: Report Cards go Home

Feb. 22nd - 26th: Winter Vacation