

Kensington Elementary School

Principal's Report

May 2017

Teaching/Learning

The teachers at KES are continually refining their instruction and despite that there are only 7 weeks of school remaining this year, changes are happening! In our 5th grade classroom, Mrs. D'Agostino is about to launch a **Self-Guided Unit in Geometry** beginning next week. "I Can" statements have been identified and students will progress through these skills at their own pace. Students will have access to direct instruction from Mrs. D'Agostino, Khan Academy, IXL, Learnzillion and Everyday Mathematics resources as they progress through these concepts and skills. When they feel they are ready to move on to the next "I Can" statement, they will complete the *Demonstrate My Learning: Exit Slip* and move on! Mrs. D'Agostino was inspired by this new model of teaching and learning by a fellow colleague in the SAU and has customized the experience for our students in her classroom. I continue to be thankful that the teachers at KES are willing to take risks and make changes to their practices when they feel it is in the best interest of students. This is yet another example of the KES spirit of continually striving for best practices and wanting to meet the needs of our learners as individuals.

Health/Community

For the past few months, students have been raising and caring for brook trout in our STEM lab as part of the **Trout in the Classroom Program (TIC)** sponsored by the **NH Fish and Game**. While our culminating event has not yet occurred, students have so much to share about their knowledge of brook trout, the life cycles of fish, and the quality of water found in NH lakes and rivers. They can also tell you about some helpful fishing techniques thanks to special lessons provided by Assistant Superintendent Esther Asbell and Chief Sanders. Some of the "I Can" statements students have been tackling in STEM are:

- *I can construct an argument, with evidence, that in a particular habitat, some organisms can survive well, some survive less and some not at all.*
- *I can make observations to construct an evidence-based account that young plants and animals are like, but not exactly, like their parents.*
- *I can explain why clean water is important. I can design and build a filter that will clean polluted water.*
- *I can learn the basics of fishing and the importance of sustainability.*



Our students (and staff) have grown quite attached to those little fry but we will be wishing them well in their new habitat in the Exeter River next week! "Thank you" to the members of the **Exeter Sportsman's Club** who has graciously allowed KES to use their facility and grounds for our Trout Release and Fishing Expedition next week. I'd also like to say "Thank You" to the **PTO** for paying for our buses and the volunteers from **Trout Unlimited** who have graciously offered to assist our novice fishermen cast their lines into the river. Once again, the local community has rallied around our students to help them learn, understand and appreciate the natural world around them.

Design/Philosophy/Governance

Our microsociey units are just about complete with the final decision from our classroom communities being a vote on what to do with the proceeds from the products and good they sold at Market Day. After much conversation amongst students, here is what is being considered:

Kindergarten - \$235 going towards the Liz Pepper Scholarship, an engineering kit for the classroom and equipment to help them learn about the animals that live in Kensington

1st grade - \$133 going towards CrossRoads in Portsmouth, bus transportation to the Rockingham Assisted Living, and the Liz Pepper Scholarship

2nd grade - \$230 going towards the Liz Pepper Scholarship and bus transportation for another field trip

3rd grade - \$225 going towards the Animal Rescue League of NH, the Native American Rights Fund, and the Liz Pepper Scholarship Fund

4th grade - \$180.39 going towards Kensington Police Department and a special treat on hot days

5th grade - \$160 towards Cancer Research, the Liz Pepper Scholarship Fund and transportation to the Seacoast Science Center for a field trip

As you can see, our students at KES are kind and giving and support the mission of various community organizations. They recognize and see the value in helping others and they believe that their contributions CAN and WILL make a difference!

Respectfully submitted,

Becky Ruel
Principal