



Bonny Doon School

Superintendent/Principal's Newsletter

December/January 2018

Life Skill for December: Empathy

"Empathy is about finding echoes of another person in yourself." Moshin Hamid

Life Skill for January: Innovation

"For good ideas and true innovation, you need human interaction, conflict, argument, debate." Margaret Heffernan

Empathy followed by Innovation

With the short school attendance month of December, this edition of your school newsletter is combined with January's. After nearly an entire semester under my belt as your new Superintendent/Principal, I would like to share how these two life skills impact our work with your students, you, and one another. My work as an educator, leadership coach and consultant illustrate for me the importance of these two life skills.

Later this month, we will be sharing last spring's Parent/Guardian survey results and analysis with the community through our web page and the December Board Meeting. As the staff explored the survey data and comments, we employed empathy, consciously focusing on the responder's experience and perspective to understand the feedback and what it is telling us. It is easy to look at the survey responses and make judgments; however, we worked hard to understand what experiences might have influenced our parents and guardians to respond in a particular manner. While approaching the survey results in this way, we were able to move beyond a response to the responses, and explored underlying causes before choosing actions.

As educators, we are constantly innovating. Unlike many professions, teaching and learning does not provide a definitive road map as each individual learns in a unique manner. At our school, regardless of our team's years of classroom experience, we are innovating our instructional practices. This year (and the next few years), we are focused on innovating our reading and writing approaches with the Lucy Calkins program, our math program by incorporating more problem-based instruction, and science program through the implementation of Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), materials and activities. These innovations are and will be embedded in our positive school culture and climate; it's what we do with our students, not to them.

Have a Wonderful Winter Break! (And read on, please)

Appreciations

Our December Board meeting will be the last for three out-going Trustees: Amy McCabe, Lise Bixler, and Jim Keller. In January, Trustee Robyn Cooper will be reigning from her position on the Board. On behalf of the entire Bonny Doon School community, I'd like to sincerely thank each of them for their engagement, commitment and support of our district/school. Please join me in wishing them our best.

STARS November Mission: Word Work

Study habits * Time management * Accountability * Resourcefulness * Success

Writing conventions such as spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and grammar help make our writing clear and understandable. These conventions are built upon as children get older and advance through school. This month, STARS work and goal setting will focus on correct spelling, punctuation use, capitalization and grammar in ways that are most appropriate for each grade level. Centers, projects, games and activities around this mission will help students gain confidence, independence and mastery around these very important foundational skills.

Library Mural Project & Committee

Have you noticed how much wall space we have in our library with white paint and a green stripe? We are looking to create a "growing" mural to add more life to the library. Just prior to leaving for Thanksgiving, our librarian and parent, Mari Hubbs, parent artist Bliss Aquarius, and I met to discuss possibilities. We are seeking interested parents and community members to help us plan the first phase of our "growing" mural, which will be completed this spring. Each year, the mural will grow with additional pieces as we add to the mural.

Responding to Teasing, Local Author to Host Assembly & Parent Night

We will be hosting a parent night with local author Karen Gedig Burnett. She will share approaches to support your/our student(s) with life skills such as handling teasing and put-downs, respect for all, acceptance, and perseverance—all themes that emerge in her book, "Simon's Hook", on Monday, January 28th. On Wednesday, the 30th, Ms. Burnett will share her strategies with our students during the January STARS Rally. Teachers will be reading "Simon's Hook" to their classes prior to the assembly. We hope to see all of you at the parent night as we work to develop our students' repertoire in responding to conflict. We will share more information in the near future.

Science and Garden Updates from Kate Sommer, our Science Specialist

The students in 4th-6th grade are busy embarking on their science fair projects. I will be offering after school science fair help on Wednesdays 12:30- 1:30 in January. Mark your calendars for our Science Fair Night on Thursday, January 31st from 5:00-6:30. We will also have a performance and chemistry demonstration by Peter Weiss and the Earth Rangers. We are still looking for science fair judges from outside the school family community. Also I'm still looking for help in the garden if anyone has even an hour or two. Our native plants are thriving in our greenhouse as they mature for a restoration planting at Davenport Landing. Another thanks Stacey Murphy for caring for chickens over Thanksgiving break. If you are interested in chicken care over winter break let me know! Thanks for your support.

From Our Parent Club

Our next Parent Club Meeting will be 12/4 at 6:30 pm. Child care will be available. Save the Date 12/11 from 5:30-7:30

Our Annual Holiday Crafting Fair will be held in the Multi. Join us for a fun family night and create some decorations and gifts!

Dining for Dollars fundraiser at Casa Nostra In Ben Lomond in January 15th.

Like us on Facebook. Email Casey at bduespc@gmail.com

Acknowledgments

- Thank you to the students for their hard work, humor, and kindness
- Thank you to our Student Council and Casey Harmon, their advisor, for leading the annual Food Drive and Adopt-a-Family
- Thank you to the Parents' Club for their help with our Book Fair, Book Fair Family Night, and Bagels & Books events
- Thank you to the teachers, for working so hard to meet the needs of our awesome students
- Thank you to the Ladies of Bonny Doon Club for their financial donation to our school (\$200)

December-January Calendar

Tues. Dec. 11	5:30-7:30 Holiday Craft Fair	Multi
	6:00 Foundation Mtg.	Staff Room
Mon. Dec. 17 th	5:30 Board Mtg.	Library
Mon. Dec. 24th-Sun. Jan. 6th Winter Break		
Tues. Jan. 8 th	6:00 Foundation Mtg.	Staff Room
Mon. Jan. 14 th	5:30 Board Mtg.	Library
Tues. Jan. 15 th	Dining for Dollars: Casa Nostra in Ben Lomond	
Mon. Jan. 21st MLK Jr. Day—No School		
Wed. Jan. 28 th	6:00 Parent Presentation by Karen Gedig Burnett on Teasing	
Tues. Jan. 29 th	9:00 Library Mural Project Meeting (all welcome)	Library
Thurs. Jan. 31 st	5:00 Science Fair Family Night	Multi

Brief Announcements

- Entertainment Coupon Books Are Back! Get yours in the school office. Back by popular demand, we have the popular 2019 entertainment coupon books for sale in the office at \$20. *Save money while supporting our school! And, these make great holiday gifts and they keep on giving all year long!*
- Notice About Drop In After School Care—drop in care must be pre-arranged to ensure there is space available. Please contact Beth at least 24 hours in advance (427-3860).

Repeated Items

Take the Bus

Have you considered sending your child to and from school on the bus this year? The bus is convenient, inexpensive, and environmentally friendly. Plus, you won't have to deal with parking and traffic at school! A few years ago, we calculated that if you live more than one mile from the school, you will save money over the course of the year if you send your child on the bus. John is a wonderful bus driver; he's safe, cautious, and he truly cares about the kids who ride the bus.

In addition, students love riding the bus! It is a great time for them to hang out with friends, relax, and socialize after a day of school. Please call John in the transportation office at: 427-2144 for more information.