

# ATKINSON ACADEMY - September, 2007

17 Academy Avenue, Atkinson, NH 03811

(603) 362-5521

## NEWSLETTER

### *FROM THE PRINCIPAL:*

Dear Atkinson families,

We are pleased that another school opening has gone smoothly. It was great to see so many of you at our first parent night last week. We are looking forward to our next parent night for grades K-2 on October 10<sup>th</sup>. By that time we hope to be showing off our new kindergarten classrooms.

Despite the construction delay, we found space for our kindergarteners in the computer lab and music rooms. I'm going to miss having them right across the hallway! Watch your shuttles for a ribbon-cutting date for our new addition. The program has gotten off to a great start, and we are already looking forward to seeing the changes that our first grade teachers will see next fall.

Café Services has been a welcome addition to our lunch program, although we are still working out a few kinks. Please remember that after October 1 our meal payments will always be cashless. For more information you can go to our school web site, [atkinsonacademy.com](http://atkinsonacademy.com), click on lunch menu at the side, and review the letter that was sent out in August with details about payment. We would encourage you to

limit checks with small amounts as the processing is cumbersome. Unlike past practice, we do encourage you to send in a larger check or online payment for a period of a week or more.

By now you have all signed the sheet that was sent home saying that you have reviewed the school handbook and district discipline policy online. I encourage you to take a few minutes to look these over, as they are updated every year. Our school runs smoothly when everyone, including parents, knows the rules.

I would also like to encourage everyone to be aware of the new school board wellness policy. We prefer that sugary treats not be sent to school for birthday celebrations. Students love the cut-up fruit trays that are occasionally sent in, or also appreciate class treats such as a pencil for each student.

Best wishes for a successful school year.

Heidi Webster  
Principal

## FROM THE ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

The start of the school year always signals to me a new beginning. This year we welcomed over 480 students, including our first kindergarteners. How exciting to see their smiling faces as they entered our building for the first time!

One of the most important things you can do as a parent is to get your child to school on time everyday. The start of the new school year is a time to develop good attendance habits.

Since education is an on-going process, school attendance is critical for optimal learning. School vacations are scheduled periodically throughout the school year to give the children a break from the daily routines. Please don't plan a family vacation when school is in session. A family vacation is not an excused absence. According to TRSD policy, teachers will not provide work in advance and are not required to provide make-up work upon the student's return.

I wish everyone a wonderful and productive school year.

Kathie Dayotis  
Assistant Principal/Curriculum Coordinator



## FROM THE GYM

Welcome new students and parents, and welcome back to all returning folks. I hope you had a relaxing and active summer. For those of you who are not familiar with me or how I teach, I would like to take this opportunity to give you some information about our program.

Our newly revised elementary PE curriculum is based on state and national standards. I meet with the students for 45 minutes once a week. I will try to hold my classes outside, on the upper field, as late into the fall as the weather allows.

In all of my teaching lessons and units I emphasize learning and practice of skills through individual, partner, and small group play. Students each have their own piece of equipment (i.e. soccer ball) to work with whenever possible. I try to make my lessons fun for those of all ability levels. In addition to listening, following directions and rules, and participating safely, I ask each student to "try your best" no matter what game or activity we are doing that day. I also ask that everyone come to class properly dressed. Please help your child remember to wear sneakers to PE class. Crocs, sandals, boots, and dress shoes are not safe or appropriate footwear.

If you have any questions concerning your child, please don't hesitate to drop me a note, call (ext #305), or send an E-mail. Thanks for your support.

Jeff Goddard  
PE Teacher

## LIBRARIAN'S REVIEW

### THE LIBRARIAN'S REVIEW

Every month, the Media Specialist, Ms. Beckwith, will review a recently published picture book and chapter book. Hopefully, you may find this helpful in assisting your child in the selection of good, quality literature.

#### **Pirates Don't Change Diapers**

Written by Melinda Long

Illustrated by David Shannon

The author of How I Became a Pirate has written another winner in this book. Jeremy Jacob reunites with Captain Braid Beard and his crew, but he won't allow them to dig up his back yard in search of buried treasure until they have helped to calm down his baby sister, Bonney Anne. Thoroughly entertaining, the pirates try their best to change a diaper, feed Bonney Anne strained spinach, and rock her to sleep. Illustrator David Shannon, of No, David! Fame, provides the perfect comic paintings with exaggerated actions that add to the hilarity of the pirates' predicament.

#### **Jack Plank Tells Tales**

Written by Natalie Babbitt

Here is another pirate tale for middle readers written by the author of Tuck Everlasting. Jack Plank is an "out of work" pirate who loves to tell stories. Living in a boardinghouse onshore while looking for work, nothing seems to quite suit his skills. But each attempt at a job reminds him of a story, which he relates to the other boarders. And each story is spun with appropriate exaggeration that should delight chapter book readers. Some stories are funny while others will leave the reader wondering what actually happened. In the end, Jack Plank does land the perfect job. This is the first novel in 25 years for Natalie Babbitt. She also provided the black and white illustrations in the book.

Ellen Beckwith  
Library Media Specialist

## FROM THE HEALTH OFFICE

I would like to remind parents of the footwear policy at Atkinson Academy. Flip flops; backless shoes and shoes with a heel over one inch are not allowed. This is for your child's safety. Many children are wearing the rubber shoes with a strap; one brand being Crocs. These are not a proper fitting shoe for most children due to their wide width. Please inspect how your child's foot fits in this type shoe, if they have them. I know they are popular but they are not the best shoe for your child to wear to school. There are many stairs and all children go out to recess daily to play. We are concerned with the student's comfort and safety while at school. Thank you for helping us keep your children safe.

Linda Tobin  
Nurse

## Music News

We have been moving to the beat, singing a Polish welcome song, playing singing games and name games, doing "The Freeze" and enjoying being back at school making music together.

Fourth and fifth graders have the option of singing in chorus. Two concerts are scheduled at the Performing Arts Center. Our first concert is Tuesday, December 4<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm. Chorus will rehearse once a week during school.

Joyce Peavey  
Music Teacher

# Band

A warm welcome to all Atkinson Academy Band members!

Here are some important things to remember:

- \* Remember which day your lesson is and set your instrument by the door the night before.
- \* Make sure you **ALWAYS** carry a pencil in your instrument case. (Musician's Law!)
- \* Try to practice at least 4 days each Week for a minimum of 15 minutes each day.
- \* Have your parents sign your practice journal on the inside cover of your Standard of Excellence band book.
- \* Play your instrument for your relatives and neighbors often!

Looking forward to a great year!

Debbie Lincoln  
Band Teacher



# Computer/Health

I am looking forward to an exciting new year. We have begun this year with health lessons for all students. When the kindergarten classes have moved into their new rooms we will start having technology lessons.

For now we are on our way to learning how to take care of ourselves and be healthy.

The first graders have been learning about good hygiene. After watching a video and talking about hand washing they are all happy members of the Scrubby Bear Clean Hands Club. Through the rest of the year the children will be learning about healthy eating, the importance of brushing their teeth and the dangers of drugs.

The second graders are learning about good nutrition and the new food pyramid. Through a program sponsored by the National Dairy Council they are learning about the five food groups. Later this year, in health, they will be learning about the dangers of drugs.

Third, fourth and fifth graders are learning drug awareness. We have had many thoughtful discussions about alcohol and nicotine. They are learning about the dangers of these drugs for young people.

Over the summer I have been working on a new website I hope you will look for it on the Atkinson Academy website in the next few weeks. It has some fun links and activities for your children.

Anna Lizier  
Computer/Health Teacher

# ART

Welcome back!

Our students have had a wonderful beginning in art. We have shared our favorite summer memories and put that event or activity into a picture.

Students from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> grade were allowed to choose the drawing or painting medium they would use and size of paper. Each grade level had to incorporate a different amount of detail in their picture to support the content of the drawing. A viewer should be able to guess their event or activity based on their details.

This drawing assignment supports our school art curriculum goals, and completes a story telling component. Students communicated their story through a visual means. Many of the drawings are displayed and parents will really enjoy recognizing family events.

Pam Alexander  
Art Teacher



## Counselor's Corner

Welcome back to a new school year. The winds of change are in the air here at the Academy. Kindergarten is in full swing, scheduling is new and this year I am starting a new program

delivery for the counseling and guidance curriculum. Starting in November I will have monthly themes and teach a lesson on that theme in each classroom, grades K-5. I am really looking forward to seeing ALL our students on a monthly basis. This system allows me the opportunity to touch base with all our students throughout the year as opposed to a 6-8 week block.

I am starting out the school year in Grades 1 and 2 with the traditional 8 week program. Lessons will cover topics including: self esteem, being unique, helping, friends, conflict resolution, I care language and safety. All information for the safety lessons are from the **Kids and Company: Together for Safety Curriculum**. I was trained in using this program with an officer from the Atkinson Police Department. My goal is to teach our first and second graders easy to use strategies that will keep them safe while using their "Kid Smarts."

The first safety lesson is on stranger safety, strategies when lost in a store, review of calling 911, the Buddy System and Check First. The second lesson will cover OK-Not OK touch, private parts of your body (the parts of your body covered by a bathing suit), No-Go-Tell and swell or tell secrets.

You as parents are a key part in safety. Please emphasize to your children the importance of going places with a buddy and to always check first with an adult in charge before they go anywhere. I am always delighted when I teach these lessons to find so many of our children have already been taught these basic skills at home.

If you have any questions or concerns, don't hesitate to call me at 362-5521x313.

Mary Beth Ditoro  
School Counselor

## Reading Specialist's News

A new year offers a promise for new growth! As we begin this school year, we look forward to celebrating the literary accomplishments of our students. They enjoy the time spent in language arts classrooms because they read quality, distinguished authors and illustrators, and they write authentically, from their hearts. When we come together as a community of readers and writers, I am inspired when I hear insightful responses to novels, or when I read beautiful images the children create with their own language. As a staff dedicated to the process of learning, we will continue to help our students understand and cherish the power of the written word.

We look forward to working with you and encourage you to nurture your child's literacy in the following ways:

- Read to your child. Even fifth grade children love *listening to* the language of a good author. They will begin to recognize such language in their own reading and will use it in their writing.
- Talk about books. Don't interrogate, but share your thoughts and find out what your child is thinking.
- Read different types of books. Find your child's interests and passions.

Enjoy the beautiful language of a book!

Arlene Amendolara  
Reading Specialist

## MISCELLANEOUS

- \* Please note the new Monday Morning Meeting start time of **9:15 am**.
- \* The Fire Department will be holding their annual Open House on Sunday, October 21<sup>st</sup> from 10:00-2:00 pm.

### Don't forget to:

- Call the school absence line, 362-5521 (x303) when your child will be absent (this saves us a phone call to you!). **PLEASE NOTE:** The nurse's new extension for other calls is **314**.
- School hours are 8:30-3:00. Please do not drop off students before 8:15.
- Send in a note when your student will be dismissed early (please, no later than 2:30).
- Send a note when your student is taking a bus other than his or her assigned bus (change in going home forms can be found online at [www.atkinsonacademy.com](http://www.atkinsonacademy.com)). Please include the student's full name, teacher name and date.
- Update phone numbers and emergency contacts promptly.
- Drop items off at the office and we will deliver them to your child. Please do not go to the classroom directly.
- Sign in and wear a visitor pass if you are going beyond the office.
- Put names in your child's jackets, sweatshirts and other belongings.

**CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

- 9/28 - Night Owl's Ice Cream Social, 6:30-8:00,  
Dyke Auditorium
- 10/2 - 10/19 **NECAP Testing**
- 10/8 - No School - Columbus Day
- 10/10 - Open House, Grades K-2, 6:30 pm
- 10/17 - Early Release, 1:00 pm  
NO PM Kindergarten
- 10/23 - Fire Prevention Assemblies, 9-2
- 10/24 - Fire Prevention Assemblies, 9-2
- 10/25 - Picture Retakes
- 10/27 - PTA Fall Festival, 2:00-6:00

**LUNCH SCHEDULE**

The following schedule should help you with plans for lunch with your students:

1<sup>st</sup> Grade

- RECESS 11:45 - 12:05
- LUNCH 12:10 - 12:30

2<sup>nd</sup> Grade

- LUNCH 11:45 - 12:05
- RECESS 12:10 - 12:30

3<sup>rd</sup> Grade

- RECESS 12:15 - 12:35
- LUNCH 12:40 - 1:00

4<sup>th</sup> Grade

- LUNCH 11:00 - 11:20
- RECESS 11:25 - 11:45

5<sup>th</sup> Grade

- RECESS 11:00 - 11:20
- LUNCH 11:25 - 11:45

*Important Dates to Remember*

**EARLY RELEASE DAYS (1:00 dismissal)**

- \* Wednesday, October 17
- \* Thursday, November 15
- \* Tuesday, December 11
- \* Thursday, January 10
- \* Wednesday, February 6
- \* Tuesday, March 4
- \* Wednesday, April 9
- \* Thursday, May 15

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**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAYS (no school)**

- \* Tuesday, January 22
- \* Tuesday, March 11