

ATKINSON ACADEMY - October, 2007

17 Academy Avenue, Atkinson, NH 03811

(603) 362-5521

NEWSLETTER

FROM THE PRINCIPAL:

Dear Atkinson families,

On October 9th many students and staff members lined the hallway of the primary wing and applauded as we welcomed our kindergarten students on their journey to their new classrooms. It was a wonderful moment. If you haven't seen the classrooms yet, do stop by. They are grand! We are most fortunate to have had state grant money to pay for most of the construction. Other districts that are starting kindergarten now that it is mandated by the state have not been so lucky. Final thanks go to all Timberlane voters. Our kindergarten program is off to a promising start. We believe that it will make a significant and positive academic difference for our students over time.

We're looking forward to seeing a good crowd on Saturday at Fall Fest. Many thanks to Mary Beth Abate for agreeing to chair this wonderful event this year. Last year it was not held because of a lack of a coordinator. Thanks to all of you who are participating. While thanks are in order, we also appreciate your participation in the fall fundraiser. Your children will benefit because of the wonderful activities provided by the PTA fundraising.

I hate to take up space with minutia, but I am pleading with all of you to PLEASE label your children's jackets and sweatshirts. You would be astounded by the number of clothing items that are left lying around on a daily basis. They are an eyesore on the playground, in the cafeteria and in our overflowing lost and found box. A simple set of initials will allow us to locate the owners. With our cool mornings and warm days, hundreds of dollars of nice sweaters, sweatshirts and jackets are found each day. Thanks for your help with this seemingly small, but greatly annoying situation.

I hope you are enjoying this lovely fall and the beautiful colors as much as I am. See you at Fall Fest!

Best regards,

Heidi Webster
Principal



FROM THE ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

Many times teachers mention the frustrations they feel when children frequently misplace their work or receive a lower grade for a missed assignment. Some children seem to lack organizational skills.

How can you help as parents?

When your child comes home from school, spend time with them as they empty their backpacks. This is an excellent time to talk about the day and to look over notices or papers that are in their bag. While homework assignments for the week are sometimes given on Mondays, your child may need help breaking the work into small daily tasks. Using a calendar for the older children will help determine project deadlines. Work together to include activities that might affect their daily schedules. Knowing the expectations is an important contributor towards getting organized.

In the evenings after homework is complete, have your child put their assignments in their backpack for the next school day. You might include reading books, shuttles, teacher notes, sneakers or musical instruments.

Children need our guidance to become better organized; it doesn't always come naturally! Strong organizational skills will benefit children in the years ahead as they will develop daily routines, have less stress and better grades.

Kathie Dayotis
Assistant Principal/Curriculum Coordinator



FROM THE GYM

All grades started the year with classes that covered my expectations for them and rules for PE class. We also did several cooperative activities and games. In all of my lessons I stress cooperation, sportsmanship, and the need to give your best effort at all times. I try to accommodate all ability levels, challenge the students, and make every lesson fun for all.

Our first unit this year was soccer. All grades learned and practiced the basic soccer skills of dribbling, passing and receiving, trapping, and shooting. For much of the time, students each had their own ball to practice with. We also worked with partners and played small-sided games to practice the skills. The younger grades didn't get to the hardest levels in all of the activities and games, but they tried.

Our second unit this fall is football. Before we started the unit, I taught throwing and catching basics in one class period. We used yarn balls, bean bags, and tennis balls. We threw both underhand and overhand. I stressed the concepts of stepping with the opposite foot, stepping and following through "on an imaginary line between you and the target", and making sure that your partner is looking and ready before you throw the ball to them.

The first lesson in the football unit started with manipulative races. The children worked with a partner to run and exchange their football in different ways. Following a demonstration on passing and catching, everyone got to practice. The older classes were given the opportunity to choose their own way to extend this practice. Some of the choices were: keep-away, 500 (with a LOT more creative scoring options than I remember), and 2-hand touch. We ended with a

very old game called "rounders" that I learned in my history of PE class at UNH. I adapted it to fit with the football lesson. Next week we will do stations that will include kicking and punting, passing, and a keep-away game. We will end the unit with a game of "capture the football". We will not be playing a game of real football.

If you ever have any questions concerning your child or my class, please feel free to contact me. Thanks for your support.

Jeff Goddard
PE Teacher

LIBRARIAN'S REVIEW

The Bumpy Little Pumpkin
Written by Margery Cuyler
Illustrated by Will Hillenbrand

Now that fall and the Halloween season have arrived, Little Nell goes out to her garden to pick a pumpkin to carve. Her sisters, BIG Lizzie and BIG Sarah and her mom, BIG Mama have all picked out perfect pumpkins, but Little Nell has picked one with lots of bumps on it. She proceeds to carve the perfect jack-o'-lantern with lots of help from her animal friends. This is a wonderful "feel good" story that emphasizes the importance of differences in jack-o'-lanterns and people!

Deep and Dark and Dangerous: A Ghost Story
Written by Mary Downing Hahn

Thirteen year old Ali discovers an old photograph in the attic. She knows that two of the people are her mother and her Aunt Dulcie. The mystery is - who is the third person - the one who has been torn out of the family picture? When Ali goes to Maine to visit Aunt Dulcie, she

figures she will get the answers to her questions. There she meets Sissy, who is mean, spiteful and a poor influence on her cousin Emma. Sissy keeps talking about Theresa, who drowned under mysterious circumstances years ago and whose body was never found. At first Ali thinks that Sissy is just trying to scare her. Then she finds out the real reason for Sissy's anger. Mary Downing Hahn expertly weaves suspense and a little bit of the supernatural to make this a spine chilling tale that older readers will find hard to put down.

Ellen Beckwith
Library Media Specialist



Music News

It is so good to have the music room back! We have been enjoying the instruments and music books that are readily available. The acoustics and piano are so much better for our singing. The Kindergarten and first graders have been excited to come to the music room and play the pitched and non-pitched percussion. I'm sure that the instrumental students are enjoying their room without all of the general music room's contents that had been stored there.

Joyce Peavey
Music Teacher



Band

Hello parents of budding musicians!

I have recently sent home, (in your child's instrument case), a "Music Department Information Sheet" that I would like your help in filling out. Please send it back to me with your band student, pronto!

Mark your calendar for our Holiday Concert on Tues., Dec. 4, 2007, 7:00pm at the PAC.

Check this out! Band members are trying to earn the 10 letters that spell the word EXCELLENCE. In order to earn each letter, students must complete 3 pages in their Standard of Excellence book as well as 5 assigned songs (from the chart on pg. 47)

Congratulations go to the following students who have earned their next EXCELLENCE letter(s).

Connor Mills, Sam Consitt, Meg Miller, Sarah Cole, Samantha Powell, Sam Consitt, Emma Laveson, Destiny Clark, Matt Tomasi and Wesley Clapp.

Special congratulations go to Meg Miller who recently completed her 2nd book and has received her second EXCELLENCE medal for outstanding oboe playing! Also Kudos to Sam Consitt, trumpet player extraordinaire, who earned all 10 letters and his red EXCELLENCE medal in September! Yippee!

Debbie Lincoln
Band Teacher 🎵

Computer/Health

It's hard to believe that the first quarter is almost over. It's been a pleasure to see all the familiar faces from last year as well as meeting all the first graders and new students to Atkinson Academy.

In the past few weeks the first graders have been learning about dangers of poisons and the importance of talking to adults they trust when they find an unknown substance. Ask them about "Don't Eat the Candy" song. Many of them have been singing it to me when I see them in the hall. They have also discussed when to use 911 in case of an emergency.

Second graders are just finishing up a unit on nutrition. Check with your second graders about the five food groups and their health benefits. You will be surprised at what they can share with you!

In the upper elementary grades we have been learning about the dangers of drugs, especially to young people. We have also had discussions about peer pressure and how to make good decisions.

The exciting news is that with the kindergartners in their new rooms we have our computer lab back. All the students will be starting technology classes with me in the week of November 5th. Some of the classes are already going into the lab with their classroom teachers. Not only do we have our computer lab up and running but we also have new computers! It should be an exciting year!

Anna Lizier
Computer/Health Teacher

ART

Our kindergarten students are wonderful! I have really been enjoying them and we have had fun creating art projects together. We have started kindergarten art with 4 discover lessons that focus of a different skill, for example, cutting, painting, gluing, and tracing. In each art class there will be a different focus for developing skills and enthusiasm. I have also been visiting the kindergarteners each week in their classroom to get to know and work with them more.

Our new first graders have also been working on new skills such as identifying and using shapes to create objects. Last week we talked about geometric shapes and this week we are learning about organic shapes.

Second graders are creating skeletons for the Mexican Day of the Dead Festival. This Mexican cultural tradition honors the memory of loved ones who have passed. It is a joyous festival that teaches the importance of life. It is an integrated art project with social studies curriculum.

Third graders are now finishing up their front portrait drawings and fourth graders are finishing their side portrait drawings. Third graders will move on to symmetry and fourth graders will be making colonial crafts.

Fifth graders have started a unit on texture and pen and ink. They are learning 6 different drawing techniques that they will use to create a final drawing based on their outside sketches around our school.

Pam Alexander
Art Teacher

Counselor's Corner

Fall is here. The leaves are brilliant reds, oranges and yellows and there is a chill in the air. Halloween is around the corner and it is time to remind your children about Halloween safety. Children should only go to houses that they know and always trick or treat with a buddy. Candy should be checked before eating and anything unwrapped should be thrown away. Costumes should be short in length and have reflective tape on them and masks should have eye and nose holes large enough so they don't restrict vision or breathing. Glo sticks or flashlights are an option for children to use to help them see things more clearly. And most important of all: If approached by a stranger children should use the safety tip NO-GO-TELL. Don't talk to or go with a stranger, get away and tell a trusted adult what happened.

I am looking forward to visiting all the classes in November. I am busy preparing for November's guidance theme which is Friendship. The skill I am targeting is getting along with each other.

In Kindergarten, I will be reading a book to the children in the Learning to Get Along series. Then we will do a small art project.

In Grade 1 we will be discussing the relationship between behavior and forming friendships. We will be looking at the following animals: monkey, shark, snake, turtle, lamb and teddy bear and using analogies we will discuss what type of friend we are.

In Grade 2 I will be doing a PowerPoint presentation on How to Tend a Friend. The

objective is how to work at and maintain a friendship using trees as an analogy.

In Grade 3 we will be making Friendship pizzas while discussing the qualities necessary for being a good friend.

In grade 4 we will be looking at friends as attractors and repellers. We will be comparing the properties of a magnet to personal behavior.

In Grade 5 we will be looking at positive skills that promote supportive, healthy friendships.

Happy Fall to All!

Mary Beth Ditoro
School Counselor

Reading Specialist's News

Your children will grow as readers when they find material that motivates and inspires them. Readers are unique individuals with different interests, and as parents and educators, we need to know the reading tastes of our children in order to provide texts that engage them. Hours spent in the world of a good book are more valuable than hours lost in front of a television set.

Dr. Richard Allington, former president of the International Reading Association, states that children need to spend ninety minutes a day reading or listening to books in school. They need to spend another twenty to fifty minutes reading at home each night. Volume is important. Research shows that engagement with an actual text is the most powerful instructional tool for reading growth.

Children will increase their vocabulary in direct relation to the amount of reading they do. Dr. Janet Allen, author of Words, Words, Words, states that children who read widely will add 750 to 1500 words to their vocabularies each year. If you want your children to be strong readers, encourage them to read often.

As you enjoy this glorious season, keep a book as a constant companion!

Arlene Amendolara
Reading Specialist

Sign up for Ski Club will be Wednesday, November 7th in the Dyke Auditorium from 6:00 to 7:30. Ski Club is open to 3rd, 4th and 5th grade students. This is the only time for enrollment so if your child is interested in joining ski club, you must sign him or her up on November 7th.

Ski Club begins Wednesday, January 2nd and runs for six consecutive weeks (weather permitting). The students are bussed to Bradford Ski Area after school and return to the Atkinson Academy by 7:00pm.

Look for pricing and additional information in the shuttle on Friday, November 2nd.

If you have any questions, please contact Jennifer Suech at 362-9945.

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).
- 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). 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. We prefer that you 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

- 10/27 - PTA Fall Festival, 2:00-6:00 pm
 11/6 - PTA E-Board Mtg., 7:30 pm
 11/7 - PTA Fundraiser Pickup, 2-7 pm, Gym
 - Night Owl's Meeting, 7:00 pm
 - Ski Club Sign Up, 6:00-7:30 pm,
 Dyke Auditorium
 11/12 - NO SCHOOL - VETERAN'S DAY
 11/14 - 3rd Grade Field Trip-Plimoth Plantation
 - Multi-age Pot Luck, 6:30 pm
 11/15 - EARLY RELEASE, 1:00 pm,
 NO Kindergarten all day
 - Parent Conferences, 1:15-4:15 pm
 11/16 - Lip Sync, Grades 4 & 5, 6:30-9:00,
 Dyke Auditorium
 11/21-11/23 NO SCHOOL, Thanksgiving Break
 11/30 - Lip Sync, Grades 2 & 3, 6:30-9:00,
 Dyke Auditorium

LUNCH SCHEDULE

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

1 st Grade	RECESS	11:45 - 12:05
	LUNCH	12:10 - 12:30
2 nd Grade	LUNCH	11:45 - 12:05
	RECESS	12:10 - 12:30
3 rd Grade	RECESS	12:15 - 12:35
	LUNCH	12:40 - 1:00
4 th Grade	LUNCH	11:00 - 11:20
	RECESS	11:25 - 11:45
5 th Grade	RECESS	11:00 - 11:20
	LUNCH	11:25 - 11:45

Important Dates to Remember**LIP SYNC – NEW DATES**

Grades 4 & 5, November 16th
 6:30 pm, Dyke Auditorium

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Grades 2 & 3, November 30th  
 6:30 pm, Dyke Auditorium