

SUNDERLAND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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SUNDERLAND SENTINEL

Mission: To ensure a positive, safe and respectful environment that inspires our children to realize, develop and attain their full potential in a school that values diversity and individual needs.



JANUARY 22, 2010

Principal's Message ~ Timothy Merritt

Inside this issue:

Dear Friends,

As February approaches it feels like we are deep in the throes of the school year. The December holidays feel like they happened...last year. Our fine staff and faculty are back to the work at hand and I'm sure you've noticed your youngster is busier than ever.

That's Enrichment For Ya

In this new year we continue to bring as much enrichment to our students as we can. We thank the PTO for their ongoing program of supplemental moments of music, art, and entertainment which they fund and facilitate—all for the enjoyment and cultural education of your children. February will be no different as we look to welcome Henry the Juggler and look down the road to a PTO-sponsored community project that will have all of us weaving a collective piece of art which we will become part of our permanent displays here in the building.

Assessments

It is at this point in the school year that we begin to fine-tune our assessments of your children's academic strengths and challenges. We do that by administering a battery of tests including the Aimsweb (math), the Dibels (reading) and the NWEA (both). This triangulation of assessments allows our professional educators to get a clearer sense of where your child's development is at this time. By taking this snapshot for the second time at this year, our teachers are better equipped to differentiate their instruction for your child—all with the goal of encouraging their growth and progress in acquiring a handful of fundamental skills. If you have any questions about this process, please don't hesitate to email your child's teacher and ask. We all stand ready to clarify the process and the results for you and your child.

Come and Say Hello

Please consider coming into the school and visiting with us whenever you have an opportunity. Better yet, seize the moment to stop by at one of our all school sing-a-longs or at the upcoming Café Sun performances during lunchtime on Tuesday the 26th between 12:00pm and 1:00pm. I can assure you, whenever your children perform for us and each other at these midday concerts, a good time is had by all. Come and be our guest. You won't be disappointed.

Stay in touch

February also brings with it continued cold temperatures and some inclement weather. Be sure to notify us if your phone number has changed. We'll want to get it on our Alert Now call list so you will continue to be notified whenever weather forces us to delay or cancel school.

Thanks

I want to thank so many of you for your generosity to me and the school during the December holidays. Your appreciation of this school and this staff is humbling. We hope you will continue to feel welcomed here at your child's place of learning. We surely love what we're doing.

While I'm at it, permit to publicly thank my staff of professionals here at SES who continue to work tirelessly on behalf of your kids. They are a committed group of educators whose willingness to give of themselves knows few bounds. Sunderland is fortunate to have such a terrific team working so tirelessly to educate its next generation.

Finally, I hope by now you've heard about the PTO sponsored Sweetheart Polka Dance with the Eddie Forman being held here on Saturday February 6 at 6:30-10:00pm. You don't have to know how to Polka to enjoy the excitement of Polka. Though, if you want to learn how to Polka, we can help with that too. So come join us on the 6th and bring your sweetheart.

Happy New Year. I look forward to seeing you at school soon.

Tim Merritt, Interim Principal

Principal's Message	1
PTO NEWS	2
All School Sing	3
Café Sun	3
Sweetheart Polka Night	3

UPCOMING EVENTS

January 2010

- 25: Budget Meeting with Selectmen @ 7P Town Hall
- 26: Café Sun for Kids—12:10P to 1:20 P
- 26: All School Sing @ 2:10P
- 27: UMass Basketball Day Grades 3-6 ~ 11A—3P
- 27: Report Cards Issued
- 28-29: NO SCHOOL ~ Teacher In-service Days

A Sneak Peek Ahead to February

- 4 PTO Program, Henry the Juggler, All School Assembly @ 2:00P
- 4 School Council @ 4P
- 6 Sweetheart Polka Night with the Eddie Forman Orchestra ~ 6:30P—10:00 P
- 8 John Gurney, Illustrator & Author of The Bailey Kids & A-Z Mystery
- 8 Public Hearing on FY11 Budget 6P SES Cafe
- 8 School Committee @ 7P SES Library
- 15-19 Winter Recess

NEWS FROM THE PTO

Dear Parents & Friends of SES,

Our school is hosting a Sweetheart Polka the evening of February 6th in our gymnasium and cafeteria. Many children and parents of SES have been preparing their polka skills by participating in lessons generously gifted to us by Deborah Zimnowski and her husband, Tom. A big "thank you" to Deb and Tom for helping us all get in the spirit. It's working!

There are two ways that our PTO is contributing to the event. The first initiative is being headed up by our very own Peg Bolte. Mrs. Bolte & team will be working on decorating the gym for the event. At this time, we are asking for donations from parents of weighted balloon holders, Valentine confetti, plants (all the same) as centerpieces, white mini lights (preferably on white wiring) to borrow, and red white or pink table coverings for round and/or rectangular tables. Mrs. Stahlek is working with our children to provide handmade décor for the evening. Additionally, Peg would love an energetic set up crew. Please contact her directly through school email at bolteP@ses.sunderland.ma.us to sign up for any aspect of the decorating effort.

The second piece of our commitment to Café Sun is to provide our guests with a nice variety of refreshments with a baked goods table. Many families have signed up to bake. If you are interested in contributing in this way, please sign on with Traci Sackrey at Tracisackrey@crocker.com. We are looking for coffee (reg & decaf), creamers (flavored & reg), juice boxes, **paper** coffee cups, and baked goods. It would also be great to have a small crew to sign on to set up and/or break down this operation.

Last but not least, we **WILL** be running our annual gift basket raffle, fund raiser this spring. Details of this collective effort will be provided to you the week of February 1st. If your grade does not have room parents, we really need to close in on this responsibility. It involves collecting the merchandise and donations to create your grade's gift basket. Please talk with your individual teacher to sign on. Not a gift basket guru? No worries. Each year we have a dedicated group of Moms who are able to whisk all of your collected items and donated basket into a merchandised masterpiece. Magically, your stuff will look fantastic!

Our February meeting has been re-scheduled for an early date in February. **Please join us Monday, February 1st at 6:30 pm** in the SES library. As always, free babysitting will be provided for those able to attend. Can't make it? We understand and would love it if you were able to sign up for a short volunteer commitment mentioned above. It's a great way to meet people and make new school friends. We don't bite and the teachers (who are very involved in our PTO) are fun to hang out with too! It's a very unifying experience that we're sure you will enjoy.

Sincerely,

The PTO Squad

Doug Fulton ~ Aimee Smith-Zeoli ~ Lyn Roberts ~ Traci Sackrey



All School Sing



Our next All-School Sing will also be on Tuesday, January 26th at 2:10 in the school gymnasium. Bring your voices and let's all sing together!

CAFE SUN FOR KIDS!

The next highly anticipated Cafe Sun for Kids will be during lunchtime on Tuesday, January 26, 2010 in the school cafeteria.

We have lots of talented children who will be entertaining us with singing, dancing, comedy, instrumental performances and even a science experiment! Everyone is welcome.

Grades 1 & 2 Performances : 12:10-12:25PM

Grades 3 & 4 Performances: 12:40-12:55PM

Grades 5 & 6 Performances: 1:00-1:20OPM



Sweetheart Polka Night



Activity will be the name of the game on Saturday February 6th when the PTO hosts the first Polka Night Sweetheart Dance here in Sunderland. Originally scheduled to take place in the cafeteria, we have received so much advance interest in this night of dance and music that we have decided to move the dance into our gymnasium. Eddie Forman and his Orchestra will be performing and the evening's fundraiser promises to be a hit. Childcare is being provided by the Frontier Regional National Honor Society.

The event will include performances by our 1st and 2nd grade dancers under the direction of Debra Zimnowski. I've even heard talk of a special performance by some of our town Police and Fire personnel and perhaps a few elected officials.

There will be a dessert bar and light snacks and, of course, the inspiring music of Eddie Forman and his renowned band. The dance begins at 6:30pm and goes until 10:00pm. Tickets will be available in our main office and at the door. Proceeds will be going to several town departments including our Police, Fire and Public Safety teams and the Sunderland PTO. Please consider making the Sweetheart Dance a family night out or an early Valentine's date with that special someone.

~Tim Merritt ~

