

Dear C.P. Smith Families,

I wanted to begin this newsletter with an important personal announcement. After 32 gratifying and wonderful years in Education I have decided to retire in June of this school year. This is probably one of the most difficult decisions I have had to make. There are so many joys in my life that come from being with your children every day. It will be hard to give that up. On the other hand we all know that principalships can be time and challenging and I am excited to explore a new chapter in my life. I have had sixteen special years in Burlington, nine of them right here at Smith. It has been a great privilege to work in schools with such quality leadership and talented and dedicated school staff. The opportunity to work with such a diverse student population has been both rewarding and unique. I do believe that the Burlington Schools are special places and I am fortunate also to have a son who is a product of these wonderful schools. I will be participating in the 20/20 Early Retirement Buy Out offered by the district. This will allow me to remain a part of the district in a part time manner for the next three years. I will be on hand to help train the new principal at Smith and to lend a hand at our alternative site over at St. Mark's this fall.

The hiring process for my replacement will begin soon and includes an important parent component. You will be invited to meet all finalists and to offer input and help rate candidates on a set of criteria. You'll be hearing more about the process in the next few months. Thank you for all your support and involvement through the years.

Our Smith community would like to acknowledge the celebrations of all cultures and religions at this time of the year. We believe that "holidays are special times for friends and families to celebrate love, sharing and kindness to all." With this message in mind, all of us at Smith would like to say:

Merry Christmas!

HAPPY HANUKKAH!

Happy Solstice!

A Joyful Kwanzaa!

And

Happy New Year!

Important Dates:

December 23 Sing-A-Long @ 1:45 pm

December 24-January 3 Holiday Break – No School

January 18 Inservice – No School

News from the Guidance Office:

The year in classroom guidance began with some lessons around building a desired identity within our school community. Students were asked to think of a word or two that would like others to use when describing them. Next they brainstormed what actions or behaviors would support this identity. Next we made our way through bullying and on to emotional regulation. The focus of this unit was to help students develop strategies to manage anger and other strong feelings. I encourage you to test their memories. The strategies we practiced were: belly breathing, counting, spending energy in a healthy way, using calming self-talk, the 4 B's and taking a break. Currently we are finishing up with our friendship unit in classroom guidance. If you haven't had the chance already check out the Great Wall of Friendship outside the guidance office (built by the first grade classes). In fifth grade students were asked to respond as "Dear Abby" to a writer who wants to join a group and feel a sense of belonging, here are some of their suggestions:

- *You should smile
- *Do a couple of favors
- *Ask questions
- *Get to know one group members at a time
- *Join them at lunch
- *Offer to help w/something
- *Introduce yourself
- *Be generous
- * Start a conversation
- *Make them laugh
- * **Be yourself**

The Giving Tree

Please remember our neighbors in need at COTS this holiday season. Girl Scout Troop 844 invites you to donate to our Giving Tree in the Smith lobby. We will accept gifts through Wednesday, December 22. These are some of their wish list items:

- ** Baby diapers (except size 3)
- ** Baby formula (Enfamil, Similac/Isomil)
- ** Baby wipes
- ** Wool socks
- ** New underwear
- ** Waterproof mittens/gloves
- ** Deodorant
- ** Tissues
- ** Alcohol-based hand sanitizer

We will accept donations through December 22. If you have any questions, please ask one of these 5th grade scouts: Alyssa, Brittany, Eve, Jasmine, Johara, or Sumeya.

Thank you for supporting our larger community!