

# Principal's Report

## Amherst School District

School: Clark-Wilkins Elementary School

February 2018

Gerry St. Amand, Nicola Fraley

### Elementary School Excellence

**Building Goal:** Develop and implement high-quality curriculum, assessment, and instructional practices to support personalized student learning.

#### **PACE Work in Concord**

Teachers have attended the second round of PACE work sessions in Concord with educators across the state. These sessions have been targeted to developing performance assessments specific to PACE content areas. In addition to classroom teachers attending the sessions, the SAU has divided all PACE task development days amongst building leaders and is sending one administrator to each day to support the teachers from Amherst, Mont Vernon, and Souhegan.

#### **Assessment, Grading and Reporting Committee**

The Assessment Grading and Reporting Committee will be facilitating book group discussions at the March Clark-Wilkins staff meeting. These will focus on selected chapters of the book *On Your Mark* by Thomas Guskey. All professional staff are reading this book during this school year to help strengthen our understandings of standards-based grading. Clark-Wilkins teachers who are involved in the field test of Empower, a standards-based grading/LMS, have provided feedback to the technology subcommittee and continue to learn more as they use this tool.

#### **Geography Bee and Spelling Bee**

The time-honored Clark-Wilkins Scripps School Spelling Bee takes place each year in January. To qualify for this event, all 4<sup>th</sup> grade students take a qualifying spelling test made up of twenty-five words from the previous year's spelling words. Typically, 10-15 students qualify and are given study materials from the Scripps National Spelling Bee organization as a study guide in December. The January Spelling Bee includes the participants, judges, and a pronouncer. The entire 4<sup>th</sup> grade class, teachers, administrators, families, and a representative from our local newspaper are invited to attend. Participants take turns trying to spell words correctly aloud until four students are remaining, at which time the whiteboard round begins for written words. The final student remaining must spell an additional championship word correctly to become the school champion. The winner of this Scripps School Spelling Bee has the honor of competing in the New Hampshire Scripps State Spelling Bee in February. This year, Aidan Reardon won the 2018 Clark-Wilkins Spelling Bee after correctly spelling the championship word *conundrum*.

#### **Invention Convention**

Our Invention Convention season launched as students joined in an invention-themed lesson, encouraging creativity, problem-solving, collaboration, and flexible thinking. Soon after, families of those interested in the Invention Convention joined students in an informational session to excite and inform. Now over 100 students are participating- Kindergarten through Fourth grade. They will work on their inventions at home, journaling their work. Along with a model or a working prototype, students prepare a display with information about their process. Students will also prepare to speak with the judges about their work on Invention Convention

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night. Students will compete by grade level and General or Challenge Invention. The Challenge theme this year is Inventions to the Rescue-following a current worldwide effort. A Gold and a Silver are awarded with special awards going to a STEAM recipient or team and the Joshua Savyon team award. The PTA generously provides their support through supply reimbursement and treats for the big night. The Invention Convention Team consists of Gail Polio, chair, Sarah Strauss and Sherry DeFranco. Our evening is February 20<sup>th</sup> beginning at 6:15 with the awards ceremony at 7:45. All are welcome. And if you are interested in participating more formally, we still need judges. Please consider joining colleagues and community members in support of this important night for our students.

**Building Goal:** Establish a community, classroom, and school-wide, that fosters and ensures the social-emotional development and growth of all students.

### Power of Our Words Book Group

Beginning in early March, professional staff and support staff from across C-W will be participating in a voluntary book group. Participants will read "Power of Our Words" written by Paula Denton and published by The Center for Responsive Schools.

This professional development series will focus on how teachers can use their language (tone, pace, and words) to increase student engagement. The sessions will include facilitated discussion, reflection, and practice

### Review and Revisit School-Wide Rules

In January, staff and students at Clark and Wilkins reviewed our school-wide rules and expectations for expected behavior. The beginning of a new year is a great time to review and refresh all of the things that we started our school year with – establishing rules, understanding expectations, developing processes and procedures, etc. Taking time to review classroom practices and procedures, review classroom and school-wide behavioral expectations, and reestablish "normal" can lead to less frustration for students and staff. As children move through developmental milestones it is essential that we move through the growth continuum with our students. Being eight is considerably different to being seven and as a school we are working hard to understand these changes and anticipate how they will impact students socially, emotionally, and academically.

### Work Study Practices Network

Clark-Wilkins staff members are participating in a tiered professional development opportunity within the SAU on the Work Study Practices. The work study practices that have been defined by the NHDOE are communication, collaboration, self-direction, and creativity. These skills are essential for students to develop and our teachers are engaged in deep professional development in understanding the progression of these skills and ways that they can explicitly teach them in their classrooms. We have several teachers working in a year 1 group and also many teachers who will be participating in a year 2/3 group. We are fortunate to be able to do this work with our colleagues across the SAU and receive support and guidance from the course developers, 2Revolutions and the NHNetworks.

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### Diligent Fiscal Oversight

**FY18 Budget:** The C-W Administrative team is continuing to review and approve requisitions as they come forward.

**FY19 Budget:** We continue to work to prepare a comprehensive and fiscally responsible budget that meets the current and project needs of our students and staff. Working closely with the Director of Student Services and Business Administrator we have hired four paraprofessionals to provide targeted and specialized support to C-W students. These positions have been added to the 18-19 Budget.

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### Inspirational & Effective Teaching

#### Teacher-Leader Effectiveness Evaluations

Observations	Completed to Date	To be Completed
<b>Informal</b> (10-15 minutes in class)	81	108
<b>Formal</b> (pre-observation conference, 45-60 minute observation, post-observation conference)	32	0

All four C-W administrators are currently completing observations.

#### Staffing for 2018-2019

##### *Assistant Principal for Student Services*

The Assistant Principal for Student Services interview committee completed first and second round interviews during the weeks of January 29<sup>th</sup> and February 5<sup>th</sup>. Members of the hiring committee will be conducting site visits with our final candidates before moving our strongest candidates on to meet with the Associate Superintendent.

The hiring committee included administrators from C-W, AMS, and the SAU, classroom teachers and special education case managers, support staff, related service providers, and a school board member!

##### *Professional Staff Positions*

The administrative team has worked with the SAU to post vacant positions for the 2018-2019 school year. These positions include Speech and Language Pathologist, BCBA, Physical Education Teacher, Classroom Teachers, and Student Services Administrative Assistant.

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### Innovative Technology Integration

#### SWIS

Clark-Wilkins administrators and office managers participated in a training session in January on the SWIS system. This system allows for us to enter behavior referral forms into a password protected and secure site. We will be able to use this information to track schoolwide targeted

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behavior interventions and measure our progress towards achieving our social and emotional learning goal.

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### SAU #39 Strategic Planning

Clark-Wilkins Enrollment Figures 2017-2018

Grade	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.
Pre-K	35	35	35	36	36	36	37				
K	106	110	108	109	108	109	110				
1	138	136	139	137	137	137	137				
2	115	116	116	118	121	120	120				
3	131	133	134	133	135	135	135				
4	140	143	142	145	149	149	149				
Total	665	673	674	678	686	686	688				

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### Summary of Upcoming Events

February 5 - 16	Winter NWEA
February 7	Staff Meeting - <b>Assessment, Grading, and Reporting</b> - postponed due to the inclement weather and rescheduled for early March
Feb. 12 - 23	NH Traveling Map
February 13	Late Start - PACE
February 14	Valentine's Day Parties
February 16	Kindness Day School-Wide Assembly - 8:45 @ Wilkins
February 20	Invention Convention 6:30 - 8:30 (Snow Feb. 21)
February 20	WMUR Kevin Scarupa - Clark & MV Kindergarten
February 21	Clark School Traveling Map Day
Feb. 26 - March 2	Winter Recess