

# SES NEWSLETTER

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**NECAP Science** - Fourth grade students throughout the State of Vermont participated in the New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP) Science Assessment last spring. In general, Sherburne students and students throughout Windsor Central Supervisory Union performed well in comparison with state scores. NECAP Science assesses students' content knowledge in the areas of physical science, Earth and space science, and life science. Teachers use test data to determine future curriculum and instructional needs. Parents may review individual student test results during parent conferences.

**Student Council News** - Sherburne Elementary School Student Council elections took place on Friday, October 03, 2008. The ten fifth and sixth graders running for office presented well-prepared speeches to the student body during an assembly. After the assembly, students returned to their classrooms to vote. Congratulations are extended to the following officers for the 2008-09 school year: Christina O'Brien, president; Claire Mercier, vice-president; Lucas Godfrey, treasurer; Alex Crompton, recorder. We are proud of all candidates for the manner in which they ran for office and for their desire to serve on the SES Student Council.

**Trailblazers Prepare for the Slopes** - Many Trailblazer volunteers met recently to discuss the upcoming ski and snowboarding year. Sherburne Elementary School students enjoy ski and snowboard days on nine Thursday afternoons in the winter months. This program continues due to parental and community involvement. More volunteers are needed! If you are interested in becoming a Trailblazer volunteer instructor, please contact Mrs. Wise at [jwise@sesvt.org](mailto:jwise@sesvt.org). We look forward to another exciting year on the trails of Killington this year.

**Who's Afraid of the Big, Bad Wolf?** - Wolves today get a bad rap. Fear comes from lack of knowledge. Third, fourth, fifth and sixth graders learned a great deal about wolves from Michael Clough, the "Wolfman." Clough shared folktales and myths with students and compared these tales with real life facts. Wolves are important to our ecosystem. As a top predator, they affect all other species. In regard to the big, bad wolf, Clough assured children that there is no known fact of a healthy wolf ever killing a human in our country. Students and adults appreciated Clough's enthusiastic and educational presentation.

**Students Study Pond Ecology** - Third, fourth, fifth and sixth graders enjoyed a special day at the Pittsford Hatchery on Tuesday, September 30<sup>th</sup>, sponsored by the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation. Students participated in hands-on workshops dealing with fishery management, stream ecology, and water supply. Students returned to school fascinated with the day's experiences, which included watching ecologists stun fish by shocking them in order to weigh and measure fish, determine the species of fish, and judge their general health. This process allows for calculation of health of streams and population of fish. Engineers spent time teaching students how ground and surface water is purified and filtered and how it reaches our homes. It was a day filled with experiments that stressed the importance of environmental education.

Loren M. Pepe, Principal

## Dates to Remember

### October 10,11,12

**Killington & Pico Ski Clubs' Ski Swap  
@Killington Resort and Pico Mountain**

### October 14

**SES School Board Meeting @4:00 p.m.**

### October 22

**Fire Safety Day at SES**

### October 23 & 24

**Professional Meetings/No Classes**

### October 28

**End of First Marking Period**

### October 30

**Killington Park & Rec. Halloween Party  
& 6th Grade Haunted House**



## School Cancellation Call List Attached

When roads are unsafe for school bus travel, the beginning of the school day may be delayed for one hour or more. If it is likely that unsafe conditions will continue throughout the day, school will be cancelled, and the SES call list will begin. In addition to the call list, announcements will be on PEG TV and on the radio: WJJR 98.1, WZRT 92.1, WEBK 105.3, and WSYB 97.1. If you are uncomfortable with driving conditions, please feel free to keep your child home from school.

## **Killington/Pico Ski Swap!**

Parents new to SES and to the community... this is a terrific opportunity to obtain ski/snowboard equipment at a reasonable cost for your child to use in the SES Trailblazer Program.

All students in grades 1 – 6 participate in the SES Ski and Snowboard program, "Trailblazers" on Thursday afternoons in winter. If purchasing equipment is a hardship for you, please leave a message for Mrs. Wise as to what is needed. A future newsletter will list equipment "needs" to determine if parents can help each other.

Remaining NECAP Test Dates

**Oct. 13, 14, 15, 16 - grades 3 -6**

### Conceptual Understanding in Mathematics

*Investigations* and *Connections*, the math program used at Sherburne Elementary School, promotes a high level of student understanding. Adopted at Sherburne Elementary School 8 years ago, along with an investment of 80 minutes per day in mathematics and intensive teacher training, promotes the excellent mathematical thinking experienced by our students. A recent article in *Teaching Children Mathematics* supports this by stating, "In classrooms that promote teaching and learning mathematics with understanding, instead of memorizing abstract algorithms and mimicking teachers' solution paths, students collaboratively engage in making sense of mathematical tasks in their own ways and communicate their thinking with one another (NCTM 2000)." This collaborative work gives students time to articulate their mathematical understandings and compare them to their peers. One student's comment often sparks another student's thinking and leads to making new mathematical understandings. Teachers ask questions to push students' thinking, promote higher level critical thinking skills and support important mathematical ideas.

In the *Investigation* curriculum, students develop sound strategies they can rely on to solve computation problems. They learn to look at the whole problem and make reasonable estimates of the results. They use materials and models to visualize the relationships of quantities. They learn to have more than one strategy to solve any problem so that they can double-check their accuracy.

Work with number is not limited to work with operations. Students should understand number as a way to describe relationships in the real world, but they should also encounter purely mathematical questions: "What patterns can you find? What are the factors? What happens when you add two odd numbers together?" In our *Investigations* and *Connections* mathematics curriculum students have the opportunity to experience, appreciate, and be fascinated by the patterns of number and to make and test conjectures based on what they see.

Kate Carey, M.A., SES Educator

### Guidance News

Mrs. Laird's 2<sup>nd</sup> grade class has begun a classroom guidance unit focused on building social skills; a curriculum derived from the work of Michelle Winner, a renowned leader in the field of social thinking and behavior theory and practice. Mrs. Knipe's Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade will receive classroom guidance with a focus on sharing and getting along.

Parents, please note two excellent websites for parents on parenting. **The Vermont Parent Information Center**, [www.vtpic.com](http://www.vtpic.com) (they have a family scholarship program for parents who want to attend conferences and/or need help getting services for their children or family) and **The Vermont State Parent Information and Resource Center**, [www.pircvermont.org](http://www.pircvermont.org), a project of the Vt. Information Center, another excellent resource.

We hope to sponsor a parenting class, *Active Parenting Now*, a practical applications program for parents, to be led by Sally Alloway, in January and/or February. If you are interested in attending, please inform Mrs. Pepe, Mrs. Pilsmaker, or myself, Ms. McFarlin, so we may determine need. More information on Active Parenting can be obtained at [www.activeparenting.com](http://www.activeparenting.com). There's a handy on-line quiz you can take to assess your parenting style. Check it out!

Remember Six Important Messages to give to our children:

\*I believe in you   \*I trust you   \*I know you can handle things

\*You are listened to   \*You are cared for

\*You are very important                      Ms. McFarlin, Guidance

### School Directories Now Available

A school directory of student and their parent names, addresses and home phone numbers is now available at the front desk. We did not have any requests in our first 45 days of school for omission from the directory. If you would like a directory and are unable to pick it up, we will send it home with your child.

### Lifeskills Parent Training

Dear 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Parents,  
The Woodstock Supervisory Union and the Ottauquechee Community Partnership are supporting a new school health curriculum called "Lifeskills." I am excited to begin teaching Lifeskills to our 6<sup>th</sup> graders this year! In summary, Lifeskills introduces students to lifelong tools that help build self-esteem, develop social and coping skills, resolve conflicts and make healthy decisions. Lifeskills classes are facilitated by the health teacher, but students are highly encouraged to lead the discussions. I will be attending training for this program for two days at the end of October and plan to begin teaching in November. I am also planning on covering the "puberty" portion of our health class early in the school year.

Supporters of the Lifeskills training program (including myself) are looking for what we call "parent champions" to help implement this new curriculum. A one day parent training program is being offered at the Killington Library on October 13<sup>th</sup> from 8am-3pm. If you are interested in being a parent advocate for this program, please contact me or Mrs. Pepe at 422-3366. We look forward to your support of this exciting, new curriculum.

Jamie Sudol, RN

**Looking for a Black Spyder Fleece Jacket** Please call SES if your child accidently brought home a jacket like this one.