

Principals' Reports for February 2021

Celebrations

ALBANY COMMUNITY SCHOOL

We finished February with a Winter Carnival. It was planned a bit differently - teachers organized the activities by pod, rather than having a rotating all-school schedule. We have been really developing our cross country ski trails, and our use of the school property for skiing and snowshoeing is at an all-time high.

BARTON ACADEMY AND GRADED SCHOOL

Wednesday, February 3rd was [Global School Play Day](#). Our kindergarten and first grade students enjoyed opportunities to engage in play with their classmates. They created and built many things, played games, problem solved, made play dough and had lots of fun!

"The day was magical!" said Mrs. Marsh, Kindergarten teacher.

"I am so happy right now!" said one of our Kindergarten students.

We hosted [Winter Week at Barton](#) from February 15th-19th. This week included a special treat delivered to students from our Barton Tiger, wearing orange for tiger strong, hat day and pajama day. We also celebrated the 100th day of school on Wednesday, February 17th and Random Acts of Kindness Day. Our first graders created a wonderful video about kindness that was shared with the whole school during Tiger Time.

I submitted a plan to VREC (Vermont Rural Education Collaborative) who was offering schools an opportunity to enhance racial literacy. I saw this as a great opportunity to increase our access to resources and begin building a Social Justice Library at Barton. I received a prompt response stating VREC would love to support this initiative. We will be receiving a grant for \$500 to begin building this library.

BROWNINGTON CENTRAL SCHOOL

Please check out some of the great celebrations we held in February. Photos can be found on the linked facebook posts.

- [K-2 Snow Storm Fun](#)
- [Flannel Friday for Food was amazing at BCS! Combined with our can drive in January, we collected 594 pieces of food and over \\$100 cash.](#)
- [K-2 100th Day Activities](#)
- On February 19 we held our first Virtual Awards assembly for Safe, Respectful, and Responsible behavior and academic performance. You can see most award winners [here](#).
- February 19 was also [Pajama Day!](#)

GLOVER COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Glover raised \$115.00 and collected 86 nonperishable food items. Some items were donated to Glover families while others were sent to the Federated Church in Orleans.

During the week of February 15th-19th hosted an Animal Appreciation Week in appreciation of some of our favorite animals. The 100th school day also occurred during the week. Starting on Monday the 15th, we collected as many dollar bills (100 pennies) as we could for the Pope Memorial Frontier Animal Shelter in Orleans. This collection continued throughout the whole week. We hosted some other fun animal themed activities too.

Monday- Students brought a picture of their pet(s) or favorite animal to share during Morning Meeting or circle. They wore animal themed hats, headbands, or bandanas.

Tuesday- SNOW DAY!

Wednesday- It was farm animal day! Students dressed as ranchers, farmers, or farm animals. We played a rousing school-wide game of animal bingo from 8:15-9:00 on Google Meet. Winners won ice cream and everyone else got a cheese stick.

Thursday- It was predators day. Students wore animal masks or whiskers. Mr. Lapham hosted JUST DANCE during PE for the younger grades. There are lots of animal themed songs, like "Eye of the Tiger" and "What does the Fox Say". The older students don't like to dance in front of one another.

Friday- It was animal mimicry day! Students wore items that mimicked animals from any decade. We also hosted a PETting Zoo in the afternoon. Staff members brought in pets. Students and staff also guessed how many elephant animal crackers were in the container. Winners received \$10.00.

Glover raised \$167.03 to be donated to the Pope Memorial Frontier Animal Shelter and students made treats for the animals as well.

IRASBURG VILLAGE SCHOOL

Our school staff and students brought in over \$265 and 86 food items for Flannel Day. 1st grade students also organized a food drive trying to collect 100 more food items for their 100th day to donate to the local food shelf. These were very worthy causes to support.

The 1st grade students also made 100 valentines to distribute to local nursing homes. And Pam Enterline, guidance counselor, arranged for valentines to be made to give to the NEK Council on Aging.

Our February newsletter highlighted Sue Cloutier (kindergarten), Rose Stone (Grades 1 & 2), Jack Williams (physical education), and our guidance counselor, Pam Enterline started a Counselor's Corner. Our next issue will be sent home on March 24th.

During our Monday Morning Meeting, we recognize classes and teachers for the Eagles of Excellence. Sue Cloutier was recognized for her dedication and work during the time the kindergarten class needed to work remotely. The 8th grade class was recognized for their continuous hard work and having thoughtful and energetic math discussions.

ORLEANS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

We celebrated the 100th day of school! Students made hats with 100 items and spent time counting to 100. Our 8th grade students registered for high school classes. Despite COVID 19, we are continuing to move forward with learning and progress at OES! The 8th grade students are all registered for high school and excited to be thinking about LRUHS.

OCSU REMOTE ACADEMY

Just before break, teachers hosted a variety of theme days and 100 Day activities. We shared pictures of students dressed as 100 year olds on our Facebook page.

We also participated in Flannel Friday for Food. Though food and money donations were counted by sending schools, an anonymous donor gave a dollar for every student who wore flannel that day. ORA's total was \$71.00.

Focus on Learning & Equity

ALBANY COMMUNITY SCHOOL

We had our first online science fair! Rachel Deonigi did a great job organizing, including updating the rubric using the California state rubric as a model. All students grade 5-8 completed a project. This year, students can self-select to take their projects to the Vermont state science fair.

Our eighth grade scored well on the Lake Region placement exams. Three of five students got into honors algebra, and the other placements were strong as well.

BARTON ACADEMY AND GRADED SCHOOL

At a staff meeting, teachers analyzed in collaborative teams our Study Island benchmarking data for English Language Arts and Mathematics. This assessment information is used to monitor student progress, identify strengths and areas of needed improvement and make informed decisions about core instruction and intervention.

As a district, we continue to collaborate to develop curriculum and pedagogy practices that promote justice and challenge bias. Teachers were given time during a staff meeting to explore resources that have been introduced including *Teaching Tolerance*, *Newslea*, *OCSU Social Justice Library*, *OCSU Equity Page* and a lesson plan for engaging in healthy discourse. The

focus of this exploration was to consider the essential question: *How can we provide curriculum and instruction with equity in mind?* Teachers were asked to choose something that they planned to try in their classroom. We will share about this work during an upcoming staff meeting.

BROWNINGTON CENTRAL SCHOOL

At a staff meeting, each teacher analyzed the January Star 360 data looking for students who did not show the expected growth. Each teacher has made an informal plan on how to help that child improve. In some cases, we will hold an Education Support Team or special education meeting to chart a new course.

Check out the awesome [3rd grade poems about Frogs](#). They have been studying frogs as part of a unit on reading informational text (non-fiction). Each poem is filled with facts about a different species of frog.

I sent the following to Secretary French in response to a request for information about how the pandemic is affecting student learning:

The effects of the shutdown and the mitigation efforts this fall have not a major impact on the academic achievement of the students at Brownington Central School based on our local assessment data. We use Star 360 for reading and math benchmark screening.

In the fall screening, our average reading score (percentile ranking) was 34.3 this year compared to 34.7 the year before; average math went up to 44.9 in 2020 from 37.4 in fall 2019. Clearly, students had not lost a major amount of learning due to the shutdown and even seemed to be doing better in math.

The winter benchmark data is less clear but with major bright spots. Our average reading score (percentile ranking) was 41.2 this year compared to 45.3 the year before; average math 41.4 in 2020 changed from 43.0 in winter 2020. What makes this data look bright to us is that in reading the highest scoring class held steady while three other cohorts had significant gains over last year. In math, five cohort classes made significant gains over the prior winter.

A partial explanation for this winter data is the relatively large upheaval in grades K-3 and the relative stability in grades 4-8. In K-3, one veteran teacher was reassigned to the Remote Academy, a large group of students left for either the Remote Academy or home schooling, we needed to combine the K, 1, and 2 into a single class, and we have a teacher new to our programs in one grade. At the same time, grades 4-8 have seen only one staff position change hands and a very small number of students choose not to be in the building this year.

Finally, our data suggests that improvements that we have set in motion will have the best chance of working with increased stability of staffing and enrollment. We are optimistic that Spring 2021 will show great growth over the fall and fantastic achievement.

GLOVER COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Glover students learned a lot during Black History Month.

Kindergarten & 1st Grade

Students learned about courageous people and how their decisions and actions have impacted our lives, even today. They read a story about Ron McNair, a boy living in South Carolina in the late 1950's who was unable to check out a book from the library because he was black. Students discussed how, at that time, the color of one's skin determined one's rights/freedoms/experiences/opportunities. They talked about how these injustices sadly continue, *even now*. Students also read stories focused around events during the Civil Rights Movement and listened to a story called Let The Children March, which helped to reinforce the concept of empowering children/youth to advocate for change. Students are making many connections to our current world events and the *Black Lives Matter Movement*.

2nd & 3rd Grade

Students discussed the historical figures shared daily by curriculum coordinator, Mike Moriarty. This stirred some great conversations within the class. They also worked on a collaborative research project featuring prominent black Americans, which has been displayed in the hallway.

4th Grade

They celebrated Black History Month by reading biographies about notable black Americans. Students learned to differentiate between important information (the main idea) and interesting information (details).

5th & 6th Grade

Students were provided with a variety of resources that allowed them to think critically about history and equity. To further facilitate this work they read *Hidden Figures* while making connections to the history of segregation and racism, as well as work with outside organizations to educate themselves and further their understanding. Fifth and Sixth grade also worked with the Racial Alliance Coalition, a group of students throughout the state of Vermont, that advocates for equity within the classroom. This group facilitated a workshop for students to help build empathy and facilitate dialogue around race.

7th & 8th Grade

They read a new nonfiction book called, *Never Caught, the Story of Ona Judge: George and Martha Washington's Courageous Slave Who Dared to Run Away; Young Readers Edition*. Also, they read *The Life of Frederick Douglass: A Graphic Narrative of a Slave's Journey from Bondage to Freedom*. Both of these inspiring books seek to show the strength, courage, creativity, and determination of black Americans in the face of the dehumanization of slavery.

IRASBURG VILLAGE SCHOOL

One of my goals this year was to put in place a Comprehensive Assessment System for Irasburg Village School. It has been a few years since we have visited this. A team has been meeting to examine current assessments that are in place and also to look at possible assessments that other schools have found success with.

A few of our staff members continue to be part of the OCSU Equity Team that meets every other week with both school staff and community members throughout OCSU.

ORLEANS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Middle school students participated in a program called Web of Voices. They explored themes of culture, perspective, and emotional literacy. Students each created a representational drawing which will be included in a book. OES was the pilot school for this project. Our students were able to help the facilitators understand how to best utilize Google Meet for presentations. We hope other schools will welcome this program into their buildings.

OCSU REMOTE ACADEMY

In virtual classroom walkthroughs, the co-principals saw a fantastic variety of learning that includes: sharing examples of similes and metaphors, filling a jamboard with graffiti about how energy flows in ecosystems, modeling fractions using fraction circles, completing a virtual spelling test on jamboard, using the text and the images to show understanding of a text, and celebrating the 100th day of school.

Teachers have begun the hard work of analyzing or unpacking standards to identify skills and concepts and to create a progression of learning targets. There is lots more work to be done, but they are off to a good start.

Staffing

ALBANY COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Staffing remains stable. We are not yet aware of any resignations for next year (other than the principal.)

BARTON ACADEMY AND GRADED SCHOOL

No changes.

BROWNINGTON CENTRAL SCHOOL

No changes

GLOVER COMMUNITY SCHOOL

No changes

IRASBURG VILLAGE SCHOOL

Frank Daigneault completed the first round of long-term subbing for Sam Carbonetti (paternity leave) and will return the first week of May. Sam returned to the classroom on March 3rd. Theresa Peura continues as a long-term substitute for Bridget Carbonetti (maternity leave).

ORLEANS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

No changes.

OCSU REMOTE ACADEMY

Mr. Rockwell has been on leave for most of the month and Mr. Nixon was hired as his long term sub.

Hazing, Harassment, Bullying Investigations

ALBANY COMMUNITY SCHOOL

None in February.

BARTON ACADEMY AND GRADED SCHOOL

None in February.

BROWNINGTON CENTRAL SCHOOL

One ongoing bullying situation; OCSU SEL Coach is involved with the team in working on solutions

GLOVER COMMUNITY SCHOOL

One unsubstantiated investigation occurred.

IRASBURG VILLAGE SCHOOL

None in February

ORLEANS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

None in February

OCSU REMOTE ACADEMY

None in February