

Principals' Reports for January 2021

Celebrations

ALBANY COMMUNITY SCHOOL

The staff came back! During January, all the people who missed time due to quarantines, FFCRA leaves, and other reasons, returned. The return was timely - I was out on a family medical matter, then on bereavement leave for the first two weeks of the month. The big celebration is that the school ran like a charm in my absence. The staff pulled together, and I had minimal problems to deal with on re-entry. Candy Palmer, our Middle School Math teacher, ably filled in as principal designee in my absence.

One other small celebration: I asked our secretary to find some small snow shovels for our first and second grade. She called around various hardware stores. When she called Poulin Lumber in Hardwick, a gentleman there whose first name is Steve, decided to order six for us, and donated them to us from his own money. He wanted to do something personally for schools for staying open and taking care of kids during COVID. I didn't get to meet him when I picked them up, but I did leave a thank you card that was hand-made by our first and second graders.

BARTON ACADEMY AND GRADED SCHOOL

Be on the lookout for our *Tiger Times* bulletin at the C & C Supermarket. Our *Partners in Pride* committee will be using this bulletin board to share and celebrate happenings at Barton Graded. Most recently displayed were snow forts built in physical education class, bridges built by our middle school scientists, writing in our K/1 classroom and a couple of pieces of student artwork.

Barton students also created beautiful cards this month for the NEK Council on Aging to distribute to our elderly community members with their meals on Valentine's Day.

During our virtual, school-wide *Tiger Time*, Mrs. Baker has started to facilitate *Tiger Time Talent*. Students have enjoyed this opportunity to display their musical talents. It is great to see students taking risks and performing while their peers encourage and support them.

Barton Graded School was chosen in the 4th round, as one of 81 from 251 total applications in this year's VPA/Vermont Community Foundation, BARR Foundation Mini Grant offerings. We received a check for \$5,000. The grant panel prioritized food, mental health, and access to learning for students. We will be using these funds to support our partnership with We R Hope.

BROWNINGTON CENTRAL SCHOOL

For the month of January, Sleuth, the BCS Leadership Team, decided that we needed to inject a little bit of fun. Usually, we tie whole school events to showing large amounts of Safe, Respectful, and Responsible behavior. This time, it was just for fun. The week we returned from vacation we conducted a whole school cheer wave; starting with 8th grade Ms. Cotnoir and Mr. Racine raced down the halls leading the cheer in each grade. When the kindergarteners had their chance to cheer, the wave went back up the hall to 8th grade. On January 14th, we held our first ever virtual, whole school bingo competition. There were some very excited kids who won a prize; bingo! The third week in January was

interrupted with a surprise, instant dance party. I am proud to say that nearly every student (including the middle schoolers) danced the Hokey Pokey and enjoyed a cookie. We finished out the month with a classroom scavenger hunt; in each room, students searched for things like a pink marker, a piece of gum, or a photo of the principal. I'd like to thank a handful of 8th grade students for leading many of these events. BCS Rocks!

GLOVER COMMUNITY SCHOOL

In December Mr. Lapham used some of his PE supply funds to purchase new equipment that could be used for indoor classes since the temperatures are dropping. Items started coming in at the end of the month, so students were able to enjoy them in January. There are mini tabletop cornhole games, movable basketball hoops, and giant Connect 4 games.

January was also the first month that we had a full week of music classes. It was nice to see Ms. Vogel for more than two days.

IRASBURG VILLAGE SCHOOL

We have virtual Monday Morning Meetings and each week, among other student/staff recognitions, a staff member and a class receive our Eagles of Excellence for their work the previous week. The most recent recognitions were for Sue Cloutier for her work when the kindergarten class needed to go remote and the 8th grade class for their efforts, both academically and behaviorally.

We also have a staff member working toward her license and has now passed the needed Praxis exams.

I also want to celebrate our kindergarten class. They did an excellent job working remotely due to a recent COVID case.

ORLEANS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

We celebrated winter by having a Winter Activity Day on February 3. Jason Brueck from Siskin came and taught students how to nordic ski. We also utilized the Orleans Skating Rink and the sled hill. Students spent half a day outside enjoying fresh snow!

Kim Hastings carried on the tradition of teaching second grade students how to play chess. She joined the class via Google Meet and taught students how to play. Students were proud and pretty intense during games.

We resumed full in person instruction for grades 5 - 8! We are happy to have everyone back in the building.

OCSU REMOTE ACADEMY

In January ORA 3-5 participated in the Great Kindness Challenge. Students were really excited and motivated to spread kindness. During the Morning Meeting they participated in Kindness Challenges.

Focus on Learning & Equity

ALBANY COMMUNITY SCHOOL

November and December were difficult months in Albany. We got hit pretty hard by COVID, with 3 staff members and five students testing positive, plus at least one additional student and staff member on the preschool side. That's a lot of COVID for a population the size of ours. As is typical, the kids did not experience a lot of symptoms, but the adults got really sick. We are fortunate that everybody has recovered. The situation led to six day pivot to remote learning, and a couple of other individual classrooms at other times. We got through it. Most days we had a skeleton staff, and a lot of parents were keeping their kids home out of caution.

I think it is fair to say that the organization of the school into four cohorts or Pods, as well as our other health procedures, kept the COVID situation from being worse.

As I said above, January has been very different. People are coming to work, and kids are coming to school. It would be fair to say that our situation in December made learning difficult. People were doing other people's jobs, and because there were so many absences, there was a lot of review. We are very grateful to have had a month with students and staff back and healthy!

Our Middle School Science teacher Rachel Deonigi is busy preparing for the Science Fair! Kids are busily designing experiments with dependent and independent variables on topics of personal interest. We are working on an on-line format for the event so we can be COVID friendly. The Science Fair is a big deal in our learning community and it is wonderful to be offering it during COVID.

BARTON ACADEMY AND GRADED SCHOOL

During our January 14th PLC, all Barton staff participated in an ALICE training session facilitated by Jay Bonneau and myself. Last February, Jay and I attended a two day training through the ALICE training Institute. This staff training built upon the mandatory training that all staff complete at the beginning of the school year. The objectives of this training were to identify how ALICE strategies work in our environment and to practice these strategies.

We are in the process of administering our mid-year Study Island benchmarking assessment for students in Grades 3-8. In February, we will spend time analyzing this data to monitor student progress and drive core instruction and interventions.

Teachers held conferences the evening of the 21st. On Wednesday, January 27th, our 8th graders visited Lake Region for their Assessment Day.

BROWNINGTON CENTRAL SCHOOL

Since a picture is worth a thousand words, I thought some links to the photos on Facebook of BCS kids learning would be helpful:

- [Kindergarten students participated in a shape show. Students built a flat shape using different materials.](#)
- [K-2 shed some light with their paper lanterns.](#)
- [7th and 8th graders have been learning about Potential and Kinetic Energy while building marble roller coasters.](#)

Other great learning in January included: multiple lessons on multiplication, a velocity lab using matchbox cars and ramps, kindergarten meteorology, hockey skills on the icy playground, second grade chess with the OES second graders online, and student archeologists digging for dinosaur bones.

GLOVER COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Glover began partnering with BFF in January. Russ and Netdahe joined the middle school PLCs each week to support some learning around racial equity. I had lots of conversations with Mike Moriarty and Netdahe about starting affinity spaces for students. We'll get at least one of these running in February.

The teaching staff met to determine 3-5 key components of high quality universal instruction. Then the Leadership Team identified a lesson plan template that teachers could use to be sure they are incorporating these key components into daily lessons. Teachers had time to practice using the template and to collaborate with special education teachers about their lesson plans so that everyone has the information they need to provide special education accommodations and modifications. Our goal is to close the academic achievement gap that exists between students on IEPs and those who are not.

IRASBURG VILLAGE SCHOOL

Teachers participated in the inservice on January 15th by attending different workshops around race/equity. They found these workshops to be valuable and look forward to learning more in these areas throughout the year.

The middle school teachers continue to read books and have great discussions with their students about equity. The most recent books have been, "*The Book Thief*" and are currently reading "*March*" book one, by John Lewis.

Conferences went well on the 21st. It's certainly different having virtual or phone conferences. We only had a couple glitches when phone lines were tied up.

8th grade students went to LR to take their placement tests on the 27th. They are always worried before they go, but come back feeling like they did better than they thought they would. Results should be coming back to the elementary schools soon.

ORLEANS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

We are working on our EST system so that information is located in central areas and is accessible to everyone. EST files can now be easily viewed and transferred from year to year. We are also looking at how to create a database for benchmark assessments so that we can more easily track growth.

Middle school students used music software to create their own compositions which they then translated to paper strips that could be played through a music box.

Staff are learning more about how to use differentiation to meet the needs of all students in their classrooms. We have purchased several new online subscriptions that can be tailored to student levels and teachers are using them in classes.

OCSU REMOTE ACADEMY

ORA teachers planned and ran a technology showcase. During this time, they modeled how to use tech tools and sites to promote student engagement and learning. This was recorded so that it can be shared with in-person staff as well. The ORA staff was also provided some training on Google Edu. All teachers in the supervisory union will soon have a license to this too. With it, they have updated Google Meet features, such as breakout rooms and polls. After each Meet, they will get an attendance report emailed directly to them. We can't wait for everyone to have access to this.

Staffing

ALBANY COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Staffing is stable, except of course for the principal. A committee has been formed to interview principal candidates under the leadership of Larry Fliegelman and Angelique Brown.

Northern Vermont University reached out, and a new student teacher, Bailey Perry, will be joining our 1-2 classroom, with Deanna Gonyaw and Charles Supernaw as cooperating teachers.

BARTON ACADEMY AND GRADED SCHOOL

During the first week of January, our 6-8th graders learned remotely due to 11 staff members needing to quarantine. We were still able to provide in-person schooling for students in grades K-5. Lake Region helped us provide lunch to our students that week. Our Barton staff worked together to provide breakfast.

Titles funds were used to increase our We R Hope partnership. We have 1.5 coaches supporting multiple students daily to build strategies to work through their everyday struggles.

BROWNINGTON CENTRAL SCHOOL

We are full staff through January

GLOVER COMMUNITY SCHOOL

We had one staff member out for the two weeks after vacation. We were able to get one sub to cover this position.

IRASBURG VILLAGE SCHOOL

We are happy to have two long-term substitute teachers - Frank Daigneault is in his second term as a long-term sub. This time, he is teaching humanities in the middle school. Theresa Peura is currently a long-term sub for our librarian. Welcome to both of them - and thank you.

We have formed an Assessment Committee to analyze our current assessments and revamp or Local Comprehensive Assessment System. We have identified some areas of need and we are attempting to get more consistency in our assessments K-8.

ORLEANS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

We welcome Theresa Peura to our building. Theresa is subbing for our librarian who is out on maternity leave.

OCSU REMOTE ACADEMY

We were fully staffed through January.

Hazing, Harassment, Bullying Investigations

ALBANY COMMUNITY SCHOOL

None in January

In December we had two HHB investigations. In both cases harassment was substantiated.

BARTON ACADEMY AND GRADED SCHOOL

None in January

BROWNINGTON CENTRAL SCHOOL

One bullying situation during January.

GLOVER COMMUNITY SCHOOL

None in January

IRASBURG VILLAGE SCHOOL

None in January

ORLEANS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

OCSU REMOTE ACADEMY

None in January