

Kent Center School
Principal's Report
May 2016
ENROLLMENT: 239

Kindergarten registration for the 2016-2017 school year took place the week of April 5th. Our Screening teams worked with twenty incoming students to test vision and hearing, assess fine and gross motor skills, and basic concepts. We anticipate a few more children to register before the start of school in August. The students were excited and so were we. What a great group they were!

Our spring production, *Once Upon a Mattress*, was performed by a talented group of actors and actresses from grades 5-8. The children worked very hard as evidenced by their two performances on April 6th. Thanks to Sandy Kleisner, Lee Sohl, and Amanda Bunting for their guidance in bringing this show to the stage. KCS would also like to extend a huge thank you to all the parents, students and volunteers who worked behind the scenes to make the show a success.

Spring Conferences were held on April 11th. Teachers met with parents to discuss their child's progress. Next year we will be examining student-led conferences.

Our Special Recognition Assembly for the second trimester for grades 5-8 was held on April 13th. Congratulations to all the students who were acknowledged for making High Honors and Honors and those that were recognized for behaviors that went above and beyond expectations (for example: improved effort and grades, being helpful to others, willingness to learn, etc.) We are proud of these well-deserving students.

The Judi Barrett Bash for second graders was held in the Library on April 15th. The room was transformed into *Chewandswallow* with giant food hanging from the ceiling. The multi-subject program was due to the collaboration of teachers: Ellen Diker, Betsy Morrow, Jenn Menniti, and Ane Starr. Previous lessons included: literature circles, art work, poems, and other projects to complement Judi's books. Judi shared her childhood crafts, read to the children, answered questions and listened to their projects. Each child received an autographed bookmark and had their picture taken with her. The day ended with a pizza picnic lunch outside!

Our third graders enjoyed a few special events during the month of April: The Kent Historical Society shared information and artifacts related to local Native

American history during the children's visit to The Swift House on April 8th. The class took a trip to The Institute for American Indian Studies the day before spring break. The weather was beautiful as the students participated in a mix of indoor and outdoor learning experiences. On April 27th, the Kent Memorial Library gave a "Becoming American" presentation to introduce third graders to their study of immigration. Students will make personal connections as they learn more about their own family ancestries. On April 28th third graders spent the afternoon enjoying a concert at Music Mountain.

Our spring break spanned April 18 to the 22nd. Students and faculty came back refreshed and ready to work. During our absence a great deal of work was done by the custodians to the school building. Installed in the building were: an air conditioner, a Smart Board, and a new ceiling in Debbie Morin's room, a new ceiling in Sharon Hurlbutt's room, and two new water fountains with bottle fillers in the hallways. Mrs. Vega received a new Smart Board and the Ellen Diker has new tables. If that wasn't enough, the custodians cleaned the school top to bottom and also did spring cleanup outside. Phew! Staff and student appreciated all the changes and hard work involved.

The Kids Marathon began on April 25th and runs through June 10th. So far we have a dozen students logging their steps before school each day. In the past, they used popsicle sticks to keep track of how far they went. This year, thanks to a generous grant from KELF, we have added pedometers to the program. Each runner is assigned a pedometer that is downloaded onto software that reports his/her steps! We are so appreciative of this grant to make the program more efficient and easier. Thanks to Ane Starr for organizing both the fall and spring marathons.

The After School French program for children in grades 1 & 2 began on April 27th. The program has been going on for more than 25 years! Students met with Mrs. Vega and will continue with the introduction to French that they had in kindergarten. Students sing songs, play games, and act out mini-stories, all using basic French!

On April 27th thirteen of Mrs. Willson's 8th grade students participated in a voluntary yoga lesson to explore hands-on, the effects of cultural diffusion. Students worked with a certified yoga instructor from the New Milford Sports Club and practiced relaxation breathing techniques and certain yoga poses. They were also given a brief explanation of what the posture is called in Sanskrit.

Grades 5-8 science students under Mr. Szwed and Mr. Eldridge participated in a program across the river at Kent School on ecological topics linked to the Housatonic River. The students rotated through 4 stations, each lasting 20 minutes. This included a live animal program presented by Audubon Sharon and White Memorial, a Macroinvertebrate Station, Fish Communities, and Food Chains.

Jennie Rehnberg, a Kent resident and member of the DAR, made a presentation to the fifth grade social studies classes on April 28th. Her presentation included explaining what the organization is, showing a variety of artifacts from the colonial period and explaining their uses. The presentation included creating toys children from the period would have used. Sock dolls, small tops and other toys were made by all and each child had the opportunity to use a quill pen to sign their name to a copy of the Declaration of Independence. Each boy left with a tri-color corner hat and each girl with a bonnet of the period. All students were totally engrossed in the presentation!

Our Arbor Day Celebration was held on Friday, April 29th. Our town has a special connection to Arbor Day because Dr. Birdsey Grant Northrop, the person who brought Arbor Day to American schools, was born in Kent. Through the support of the Kent Garden Club, the Kent Conservation Commission, and the Kent Greenhouse and Gardens, a "Frank Jr." red maple tree was planted on our school grounds. Also, eight student artists and two third grade poets were presented with a Juneberry tree for their fine work. The poets read their poems and the artists shared their work at our school assembly. These poets and artists formed a receiving line in the gym and were congratulated by their peers. We are so proud of all of them!

On Saturday, April 30th, three Kent Center School students, selected by judges at the KCS Invention Convention on April 7th, joined 1,700 other student inventors from all over the state at UCONN for the Connecticut Invention Convention. The students were: Aiden Cherniske (5th grade), Cheyanne Cornelius (3rd grade), and Gussie Smith (3rd grade). Gussie won an excellence award for her invention "The Pest Preventer." The students did an excellent job presenting to the judges, and loved meeting other inventors and sharing ideas. Many thanks to Mrs. Dwyer, our Enrichment teacher, for all her work in guiding these students.

SBAC testing for grades 3-8 began on Monday, May 2nd with short blocks of time (slightly over an hour) in the morning and afternoon and will continue for approximately three days. A big thank you to the PTO who provided breakfast for

all test takers on Monday and for the rest of the testing period and also to the Student Council who served the breakfast.

This week is Teacher Appreciation Week. The PTO made an enticing meal for the staff on Tuesday to thank them for all their hard work and many kindnesses. Our students are very lucky to be taught by such talented caring people!

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- May 4 Spring Concert - 1:15 & 7 p.m.
- May 6 Kent Budget Hearing - 7p.m.
- May 9 Bus Evacuation Drill
- May 12 KCS Art Show - 7-8:30 p.m.
- May 13 KCS Art Show - 9-5 p.m.
- May 16 Grades 4-5-6 to HVRHS for Nutmeg Award Program
- May 20 Kent Town Vote - 7 p.m.
- May 24 Grade 6 to Audubon Sharon & the Housatonic River in Falls Village
- May 25-30 Regional Art Show at The Wish House, Cornwall
- May 26 Grade 3 to Audubon Sharon
- May 27 Grade 3 to Skiff Mountain School House
- May 27 Grade 2 to Audubon Sharon
- May 30 Memorial Day Parade