

REPORT OF THE ELLIS ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL

This report reflects the activities that have taken place in the Elementary grades at the Ellis School. I welcome Mr. John Safina as our new Principal for the middle school grades. John and I work collaboratively to provide a complete and comprehensive education for the students of Fremont. Collaborative leadership and shared responsibility have been the cornerstone of the administrative structure for the past five years at Ellis.

While this year had many highlights, one of our greatest accomplishments was to launch our Standards- Based Reporting system. Replacing traditional grading practices, this reporting system more accurately reflects student progress and provides teachers and parents with a deep understanding of individual student learning. To support this effort, staff and administration implemented common grade level assessments, the use of benchmark assessments, and a system to respond when children are not learning. The success of this effort would not have been possible without our wonderful teachers, therapists, para-educators, counselors, support staff and the guidance of our Superintendent and School Board.

In our classrooms, teachers are focused on creativity, student engagement and academic success. Students are working toward grade-level expectations, and teachers are differentiating instruction to ensure their success. Teachers have embraced technology using online teaching tools. As a result, children are very comfortable with technology and they embrace and expect this new way of learning. As the world changes, so must our teaching tools. Professional development is paramount to student success. Teachers continue to develop skills in assessment, instruction and curriculum.

Students in the elementary grades have enjoyed both Science and Literacy clubs. As afterschool activities, children have the opportunity to further explore literature and science concepts. Other student activities include raising monies for a number of causes and giving to the Fremont food pantry. Recycling projects included catalogs, clothes, sneakers and books. Our musical events are now held at Sanborn Regional High School to accommodate the large audience and better acoustics. We have many very talented elementary students and we want them to be seen and heard.

In February the Ellis School hosted our first Go Green Go Healthy Fair. Organized by the Ellis School Wellness Committee, this one day event invited a variety of community organizations to display their efforts in the areas of health and environmental awareness. Vendors such as Cool Air, Clean Planet, Dawn Solar Energy, the Fremont Energy Committee, and the local Brownie and Girl Scout troops all had information pertaining to energy conservation and environmental health. Agencies such as Easter Seals, Serve New England and the UNH Cooperative Extension gave out information about healthy eating and living. Free blood pressure checks were available to the public. Well over 400 people attended from Fremont and other towns. The second annual Go Green Go Healthy Fair is scheduled for February of 2010.

In addition to working with the Town Energy Committee, Ellis School has made a number of improvements in lighting, water controls, recycling and reduction of energy over the past year. Involving students in this process is important. For example, our greenhouse produced plants and food to sell, students and staff are recycling but most importantly, these projects provide hands-on learning in science and math. This year we will be helping with the solar panel installation at the Safety Complex. Involving students by calculating energy use and savings, we hope to build awareness of the importance of energy conservation and an interest in problem solving, engineering, science, and commitment to community.

In summary, as we approach 2010 the Ellis School will face many challenges, have many successes and see many changes. The staff and students will meet these challenges and changes with enthusiasm, hard work and commitment. We will celebrate our successes and then quickly seek out our next challenge.

As always I would like to thank the Fremont community, parents and local businesses for supporting us in the most important task of educating our youth and preparing them for an ever changing world.

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn Lewis
Elementary Principal

*"The mind is everything.
What you think, you become."*

~ Buddha