

Plymouth Elementary School
Annual Report
January 2020

Dear Friends and Families of Plymouth Elementary School,

In August 2019, we welcomed School Resource Officer, Jill Carroll, to our team. We share Officer Jill with Plymouth Regional High School (PRHS—65%, PES—35%). Her calm, positive presence is felt throughout each day. Officer Jill has done an outstanding job of building trust with students and families. Whether picking up a student who has missed the bus or having lunch with kindergarteners, she has helped to expand our school message of Be Safe, Be Respectful, Be Responsible, Be Your Best You!

Safety is always a focus and foundation for much decision-making. PES received a grant that supported safety upgrades to our front entranceway. PES staff also participated in the Homeland Security's Table Talk Training. In collaboration with Plymouth Police and Fire Departments, we worked through scenarios to see our strengths and gaps in safety procedures. In December 2019, after a comprehensive safety inspection, we received approval from the NH Department of Education School Safety Division.

In addition to having strong safety measures and an established safety committee that organizes regular drills and training, we work daily to provide a culture where we build each other up--not put each other down. Much of our kindergarten through grade 5 guidance program is based on TIGER, which stands for *T Take Action! I I say "NO" to bullying in person and online! Get help--don't be a bystander! Exit when necessary. Respect yourself and others!* TIGER was developed through Plymouth State University and has proven effective in supporting students with problem solving language and tools. We are fortunate to have compassionate adults who are committed to keeping students safe and strong, physically and emotionally.

We incorporate the research on the brain and learning that encourages regular movement breaks. In addition to recess, we offer Physical Education, Winter Program, and a full array of athletic opportunities. We have exemplary coaches who represent the philosophy of developing the whole child through teamwork, sportsmanship, self-improvement, and fun.

Our positive, active Wellness Committee includes students, parents, staff, community members knowledgeable about health and well being. The Wellness Committee works closely with Café Services, our breakfast and lunch provider, to ensure healthy options, and includes an educational component. They also host wellness experts and sponsor a very successful summer wellness bingo!

This fall, Our Literacy Action Team hosted a **One Book, One School**. Families and staff came together to celebrate the messages of the beautiful book Wish Tree by Karen Applegate. The story is told by Red, a red oak tree that has observed many animal and human interactions over time. As one attendee said, "We all experience the world a little differently and as we find a way to understand these differences, we can grow together with kindness and compassion building a stronger community."

From the integration of technology using Chromebook stations to the upgraded partitions between classrooms, all moves are designed with optimal learning as the focus. From daily Writers Workshop to hosting the regional Mathalon, our teachers understand the importance of making learning come to life. On any given day, you can see our first graders going to Mumford's for lessons in maple sugaring; third graders walking to the historical society; fifth graders participating in Wreaths Across America, placing wreaths at the Douglas A. DiCenzo Bridge and at Town Hall; sixth graders gathering data at the Baker River; our eighth graders walking to the Judd Gregg Meteorology Institute at PSU. These learning experiences are just a few ways that PES teachers integrate powerful community experiences.

In addition to projects and classroom assessments, we use several data points to review and analyze student progress, including Fountas & Pinnell for reading, NWEA Measures of Academic Progress, PSATs in grade 8, and the state test, NH SAS (Student Assessment System) . We will use the results from the assessments to create goals, adjust instruction, and to monitor progress. For more information, please contact me or visit the New Hampshire reporting site:

<https://ireport.education.nh.gov>.

Plymouth Elementary School offers a rich variety of learning opportunities to build confidence academically, physically, and socially. Whether before, during or after school--PES is a hub of learning:

- Pi Day—all students participated in enrichment activities and games around 3.14 and PTA hosted a community Pie extravaganza that evening.
- The Middle School Play showcases student talent as well as helps to create a fun camaraderie among students. Congratulations to last year's cast of *Doo~Wop Wed Widing Hood*..
- Novel writing each opportunities—30 students stay after school and write...write...write.
- Visiting authors like Patricia Polacco help us to explore cultures, kindness, and the joy of learning. They also inspire reading and writing!
- Technology Student Association (TSA) where students extend learning and practice engineering, design, collaborative problem solving--and have fun.
- Winter Program: To support exercise during the winter months, PES parents and teachers have coordinated five weeks of activities--skiing, snowboarding, snowshoeing, and skating--that get all of our students moving.
- Our ongoing and outstanding collaboration with Plymouth Parks and Recreation, especially the After School Program.

The PES PTA is a special organization full of vibrant, inquisitive parents who not only want to support learning through fundraising but who also understand the changes that are happening in the world of learning. They organize a joyful first day of school welcome for students and families, they celebrate teachers with grants and a luncheon, they provide many scholarships for field trips and winter program. In support of school safety, they also host a parent evening presentation on Avoid Deny Defend by the Plymouth Police Department.

Our school proudly takes time during the year for important ceremonies. As always, we integrate these rituals into learning opportunities. From Memorial Day to Law Enforcement Appreciation, Veterans Day to Earth Day, teachers work with students on history, civics, writing, and presentation skills. Those who attend leave uplifted and proud.

As always, we are grateful for the many partnerships we have that support student safety and learning. Please visit our website, <http://pes.sau48.org/>, to learn more about our school, to view events, or to access some of our learning resources. If you have any questions, concerns or ideas, we encourage you to contact us via email, phone or simply stop in for a visit.

After 12 rewarding years as principal of Plymouth Elementary School and more than 25 years in education, I have made the decision to retire effective this June 30. I wish to extend my gratitude to the families, the staff, the students, and to the Plymouth School Board for their continuous support. Plymouth is a very special community, and it has been an honor to serve as principal.

Respectfully Submitted,
Julie Flynn, Principal