



### PRINCIPAL'S NOTE:

Hello SA Community,

As we prepare to close out 2019 and welcome 2020, I am reflecting on the many positive experiences we've already had as an SA community this school year. From field trips to wonderful places such as Shelburne Farms and the Flynn Center to engaging learning opportunities within the walls at SA, our students have been busy exploring the world around them since the first day of school. I hope you and your family can take some time to relax and restore over winter vacation, and that you are ready for more great learning in 2020.

With gratitude,

Nina Oropeza  
Principal

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### UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS

#### **Dragon Parade on New Years Eve 12/31**

We are looking for volunteers to represent the Sustainability Academy in the New Years Eve Dragon Parade. The parade starts at 5:30 at the top of Church St and then heads to Main St. and is led by the band Sambatucada. SA already has a dragon that just needs a little love - if you are interested in participating, there are folks who will help get our dragon ready for the parade. Please contact Valerie Esposito ([valpoespo@gmail.com](mailto:valpoespo@gmail.com)) for more information or to volunteer!

#### **Catamount Trail Association Ski Cubs- Beginning 1/11**

Ski Cubs is a free Learn to XC Ski program sponsored by the Catamount Trail Association. They generously provide children in the Greater Burlington area with free XC ski lessons, rental equipment, snack and transportation to and from Bolton Valley Nordic Center for 6 consecutive Saturdays starting on January 11th. There is a bus that picks up/drops off students from the SA parking lot. No experience necessary! There are about 12-15 slots available for SA students and priority will be given to 4th and 5th grade students and sibling groups. If you are interested in participating, volunteering or have any questions, talk to Nurse Justina [jstarr@bsdvt.org](mailto:jstarr@bsdvt.org) or Courtney Dickerson - Ski Cubs Program Coordinator [cdickerson@catamounttrail.org](mailto:cdickerson@catamounttrail.org).

Parent volunteers can take advantage of free rentals and a day pass, but skiing is not required. Here's a link for more information about the Ski Cubs program. <https://catamounttrail.org/programs/ski-cubsabout/about/>. Go Ski Cubs!

#### **Principal & Coach Coffee 1/17**

Join Ms. Oropeza and Ms. Kestrel for coffee in the library on Friday, January 17 from 8:15-8:45am. All families are welcome to attend to discuss SA topics, share community needs, and meet other SA families. Coffee, tea, and light breakfast pastries will be provided. We hope to see you there!

#### **Community Dinner 1/23**

On Thursday, January 23 SA will host its second community dinner of the school year. This community dinner will be potluck style. Families are encouraged to bring a dish that is special to their family to share with others. We are excited to feature food from all around the world! More details coming soon in the January newsletter.



### **Morning Move It - Mondays and Thursdays, ongoing**

Congratulations to Kindergarten student Ryan, Second Grade students Calvin and Zaelen, and Third Grade student Jasper for running ten miles during Morning Move It sessions this year! Monday & Thursday are our days for Morning Move It! Join us around the back track from 7:45-8:05. Start your school day with a clear mind and an energized body by walking or running before the bell rings. We'll help you keep track of your mileage and even recognize your big milestones with announcements and prizes! Hope to see you out there!

-Mr. Bissonnette, Physical Education Teacher

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## COACH'S CORNER

At SA, we believe that our relationship to food is a critically important way to engage with our place and the natural world. We also believe that food is directly related to Education for Sustainability (EFS). In addition to learning about growing veggies, raising animals, and sourcing healthy local foods to be served in the cafeteria, we want to make the experience of being in the cafeteria a pleasant one. Recognizing that the lunch room experience contributes to the formation of our students' relationship with food and also impacts our students' well-being, we strive to make lunch at SA an experience that is as nourishing as possible.

To that end, last year SA began hosting community lunches. We are the only school in the district that has community lunch. So far this year, we have hosted two! Community lunches are opportunities for families and community members to join us for lunch. Adults sit at tables with students. Food is served family style and students practice table manners such as passing food to each other, which fosters conversation. Students also practice serving themselves which allows for greater self-efficacy and an opportunity for them to think critically about how much food they want to consume.

One addition to community lunch at SA this year is the inclusion of students from Burlington City & Lake Semester, a Burlington High School program. These

older

students provide both practical help in the form of extra hands (which is much appreciated in assisting the kindergartners as they wield the serving utensils!) as well as providing the opportunity for SA students to speak to others who are also engaged in Education for Sustainability. City & Lake Semester students have served as informal mentors to our fifth graders and have encouraged SA students to think about what they are learning related to sustainability and how this learning might be applied after they graduate. Stay tuned for more community lunch dates coming in 2020!

-Kestrel Plump, EFS Coach

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## GRADE LEVEL & SPECIALISTS UPDATES

### **Kindergarten**

In readers workshop we have been comparing and contrasting different versions of the Gingerbread Man story from different parts of the world. In writers workshop we have been writing various opinion pieces using Gingerbread Man story prompts. We have added (f, b, j, z and w) to our known letters and sounds this month. In math, we are learning about two and three dimensional shapes. We are learning how to describe flat triangles, squares, rectangles, hexagons, and circles. We are also learning how to identify cubes, spheres, cylinders and cones. We are also learning how to use the words above, below, beside, in front of, next to, and behind.

### **1st Grade**

In math, we are adding and subtracting to 20. We are learning the strategies to make 10 and to take from 10. In reading, we are learning how to share our opinions about books by recommending books we love. When we recommend a book we introduce the main character, retell the big things that happen, and pass along the lesson. In science, we are studying light. We are learning some things that light can do: illuminate objects, make shadows, and communicate. We are connecting our light study to our Sustainability Explore time by going on a neighborhood walk to see how light is used to communicate.



Ways to help your child at home:

1. Count forwards and backwards by 1's beyond 100 and skip count by 2's, 5's, 10's
2. Recommend books you love and Be a Bee Reader
3. Spend time outside and observe sources of light in our community

### **2nd Grade**

The second graders have been hard at work learning different ways to represent three digit numbers. We have been writing numbers the standard way (345), the unit way (3 hundreds, 4 tens, and 5 ones), word form (three hundred forty-five) and expanded form (300+40+5). Next, the students will be learning to use place value to add three digit numbers. In reading we have been learning how to read non-fiction texts to become experts on a topic. We connected our reading unit to our writing unit by gathering information to create a whole class shared writing piece on a topic the class voted on. During our Quest time the second graders are finding ways to make our school more beautiful, welcoming and engaging. They are in the planning stages of creating a welcome sign for the lobby, a plant wall, artwork, and establishing "Loose Parts" on our playground. To help your child in reading, please continue to read their "Bee Reader" books each night, use Raz-Kids and EPIC to vary their reading selections, read to your child a chapter book and discuss each chapter together. In math, students can use Zearn online and practice counting numbers by 1's, 10's and 100's starting at any 3 digit number.

### **3rd & 4th Grade**

The ¾ team had a wonderful visit to Shelburne Farms to learn about life long ago. We made candles, used tools, did some cooking, did farm chores and learned so much about how life was the same and different hundreds of years ago right here in Vermont. This visit to the farm coordinates with our study of the life in early Vermont history and the Revolutionary War. This unit is a collaboration between social studies and literacy. We

are

reading informational text about the war and about life in early Vermont and beginning to understand how to read history with a focus on who is telling the story and whose voices are left out. We will continue to work on this unit in the coming months.

Third grade math students are working on finishing up a unit on time, measurement and rounding. Fourth grade math students are working on area and perimeter to build understandings that lead to using different models to work with multiplication of large numbers. We will return to a study of multiplication after the break. Please help your child practice telling time using an analog clock at home. All third and fourth grade students should continue to:

1. Read 30 -40 minutes a day at home independently.
2. Practice their multiplication facts.
3. Play outside and get eight to nine hours of sleep every night.

### **5th Grade**

In math the fifth graders are working on a new module. At this point in the unit they are learning to apply patterns of the base ten system to mental strategies and of multiplication using area diagrams and the distributive property. In reading they are continuing their work with fiction and learning to grow their thinking and understanding. As part of writing, they are reading nonfiction articles in order to write opinion paragraphs using evidence from the informational articles. In social studies and sustainability they are continuing to give input on the new badge system and are developing a mission statement and an interest survey for the farmers market. They have also started a geography and history unit on the United States. If you'd like to help your child at home please encourage them to:

1. Continue Formative Loop practice
2. Read nightly for 30 minutes
3. Learn the 50 states in the U.S. through books, apps, maps, and puzzles.

# SUSTAINABILITY ACADEMY BUZZ! - DECEMBER 2019



**SUSTAINABILITY  
ACADEMY**

BURLINGTON, VERMONT

Stay  
Active!

-Mr. Bissonnette, Physical Education Teacher

## **Library Center**

This month in library, SA students are practicing their problem solving skills by participating in the annual Hour of Code. (Please see photos on the SA Facebook and SA library Facebook pages.) Students work in partners to program animated dancers. Coding is an important ISTE (technology) skill, allowing students to meet ISTE standards for Knowledge Constructor and Computational Thinking. Here is a link to more about ISTE: <https://www.iste.org/standards/for-students>! Please remind your students to keep library books in their backpacks when they are not reading them. That way books will return to the library for students to check out new books during their library time and will ensure that students are not losing books. Emails will go out this month to let families know books that have not returned to the library. Thank you!

-Sharon Hayes, School Librarian

## **Physical Education**

Over the past few weeks, SA students have been measuring their exercise by using pedometers. They have been trying to answer the following questions, "Are pedometers a good measurement of exercise?" and, "Which activities give us the most exercise?" We have participated in many random activities and have measured the level of exercise over the past few weeks with our pedometers. Please help your students answer these questions. And a new question for them might be, "How else can we measure our exercise?" We also are in the middle of our district-wide FitnessGram testing for K-5 students. District PE teachers have decided to use the scores of 4th and 5th grade students as a tool to help us analyze where we can make improvements to our program. 4th and 5th grade reports will be sent home with the 2nd trimester report cards. These are fitness reports for each student and will not be used as an assessment tool or grade for PE. We will also complete the FitnessGram again in the spring as a requirement for 4th graders in the state of Vermont.