

Principal's Newsletter

Asa C. Adams Elementary School

Issue No. 13 December 2019



December 4	Instrumental Assembly	1:00-2:30 p,
December 10-12	PTO Craft Fair	8:30-3:00 pm
December 18	Grade 3-5 Chorus Concert	UMO 6:00 pm
December 23-January 1, 2020	Winter Break	



Facilities Update: Looking Toward the Future at Asa C. Adams School

Dear Parents and Guardians,

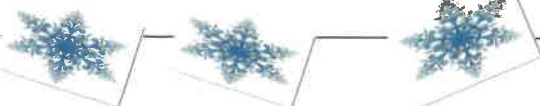
With the passing of the referendum to update and improve facilities at RSU 26, we are working every day to help emerging plans at Asa C. Adams. The traditional school buildings of the 1950s were generally built without significant attention to the learning environment but rather to meet organizational management needs. Rows of desks, fluorescent lighting, and heating pipes of the day lent an industrial feel to schools. This tended to support the idea that students were passive learners, recipients of knowledge and skills designed for them with an emphasis on conformity.

Teachers spend enormous amounts of time creating an atmosphere that is conducive to learning. At Asa C. Adams School, you will find a wide range of learning-oriented schemas—everything from woods-themed classrooms, to music, science on display, and more. This is largely due to brain research, which indicates that students learn in different ways and in different time-frames. We make every attempt to personalize learning, build relationships, and help students make cross-curricular connections.

The new facilities project addresses the need for learning spaces, safety features, and the high need for a cafeteria that will more suitably meet the needs of our growing student population. We are adding ADA-certified bathrooms and meeting rooms for staff and parents to collaborate.

This is only a brief overview, but it is important to know that we have begun and will continue to renovate existing classrooms and areas throughout the building on a yearly basis throughout the facilities update, which is scheduled to begin in this spring.

Sincerely,
Darren J. Akerman, Ed. D.



Vicki Lynch: A Celebration of Life

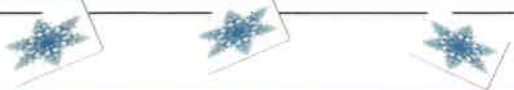


We wish to acknowledge the passing of our beloved pre-Kindergarten teacher, Mrs. Vicki Lynch, after her valiant battle with cancer. Mrs. Lynch helped create the current Pre-K program and was a strong advocate to make it an inclusive part of the K-12 framework. Students in Pre-K have always been included in our Habits of Mind, specials, and whole-school activities. Mrs. Lynch's positive influence on students, staff, and community members remain a vital part of our school culture. The depth and scope of Mrs. Lynch's caring approach remains embedded in the daily lives of our students. Under her care, students up to Grade 8 have had the benefit of a rich, engaging pre-Kindergarten education. The skills Mrs. Lynch taught these students will follow them through life. The spirit of caring and belonging Mrs. Lynch established will always be a part of Asa C. Adams School.

A New Look at Literacy



Literacy is perhaps the most fundamental content area we teach since it touches upon all others. Traditional views of literacy focused on reading levels and lexiles. While it is important for parents to know their child's literacy level (and there are several models, e.g. Fountas & Pinnell, DRA, etc.), research strongly supports an emphasis on 'reading behaviors' or 'strategic actions,' which comprise the various skills students learn and use to decode, comprehend, and express. Our Literacy Team has been working to implement the most current research concerning reading behaviors. Generally, speaking, this approach requires teachers to use a framework that helps them determine a reader's growth from word recognition, to fluency development, to comprehension. This also factors in the way readers are able to integrate phonemic awareness, syntax, semantics, and environmental cues.



Reading Level Correlation Chart

Grade Level	DRA	F & P	Reading A-Z	Read Naturally	Lexile
1	6	D	D	1.0	100L-200L
	8	E	E	1.5	
	10	F	F	2.0	
	12	G	G	2.5	
	14	H	H	3.0	
2	16	I	I	3.5-4.0	400L-500L
	18-20	J	J,K	4.0-4.5	
	24	K-L	L-M	4.5	
3	26	M	M,O	4.5-5.0	
	28	N	N	5.0	500L-600L
4	30-31	O-P	O,P	5.0-5.5	600L-700L
	32	Q-R	Q-R	5.5	
5	34-35	S-T	S,T	5.5-6.0	700L-800L
	36	U-V	U-V	6.0	
6	38-39	W-X	W,X	6.0-6.5	800L-900L
	40	Y-Z	Y-Z	6.5	



PTO UPDATE: Craft Fair December 10-th-12th and More

The Asa C. Adams PTO is gearing up for the annual craft fair. Please be sure to look for your child's name tags, which they should return as soon as possible to help plan for gift-giving. Our PTO does amazing things for students and staff—coffee-cart Fridays, volunteering, and so much more. Also, if you are interested in donating to the PTO before the end of the year, please click or copy/paste this link into your browser:

<https://www.paypal.com/donate/?token=5wABjh9awwdQzFd5K0m110MXMqlyjJNDKRXoQayZyTfwrDgXpU1ycpx9B1RU467epCTSCm&country.x=USA&locale.x=US>

Balloons over Broadway



The first Macy's parade was in 1924 and it all began to make the immigrants happy as they were really missing the traditions of their homelands. Tony was charged with creating some life-like characters. Within 3 years, he figured out how to inflate his characters and make them fly. The first inflatable appeared in 1927 as Felix the Cat. Second graders created blueprints, then designed their own inflatable characters for our Macy's Asa Parade! The halls were lined with spectators as the music played and string handlers walked the parade route. If you're looking for some holiday fun, learn more about Tony Sarg, read *Balloons Over Broadway*, and grab a bag of balloons and have your very own family parade!



Orono High School students in the Drama Club gave Asa students a preview of *The Little Mermaid*. Under the direction of Cami Carter, these students sang and danced as if they were on Broadway. Afterwards, the students took questions from our young audience. We are always excited to share in the performing arts programs offered at RSU 26. As one elementary student observed, "Someday, I'm going to grow up and be somebody else, too!"

Book Donations for Pre-Kindergarten

If you would like to help honor the memory of our beloved friend and colleague, Vicki Lynch, please consider purchasing a book and donating it to our school library. We are asking for all donations to be “easy readers” (books for emerging/beginning readers). Our school library already has many easy reader series that our preK and kindergarten students adore, such as Mo Willems’ ***Elephant and Piggie*** books and Tedd Arnold’s ***Fly Guy*** series. Other series that we the library could use and our students would enjoy include:

- ***I Can Read*** series
- Rob Scotton’s ***Splat the Cat*** series
- Ree Drummond’s ***Charlie the Ranch Dog*** series
- ***Elephant and Piggie “Like”*** series (similar to Mo Willems’ style, but by different authors)



When books are donated, they will be processed for library use. A memorial book plate will be affixed inside the front cover with the names of the kind folks who made the donation.

To help find other appropriate titles, please see the following websites. Each one has a great many easy reader suggestions that would be very appropriate for our youngest students! If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Diana Smart, Asa librarian, at dsmart@rsu26.org. Together we can honor Vicki’s memory and keep her in our hearts through books!

Easy Reader Websites:

<https://www.goodreads.com/shelf/show/easy-reader-level-1>

<https://www.themeasuredmom.com/making-sense-of-easy-reader-books/>

<https://www.penguin.com/static/pages/youngreaders/levels/level1.php>

<https://happilyeverelephants.com/home/best-books-for-beginning-readers>

<https://imaginationsoup.net/best-easy-reader-books-5-6-year-olds/>

School Counselor's Corner



Happy Winter! I hope this finds your family thinking about all of the things you are thankful for, and preparing for all of the festive events that come with this time of year. Things at Asa are in full swing; tons of learning and lots of fun to be had in classrooms across the school.

I appreciated all of the visits and chances to check with parents during our parent-teacher conferences. While the chance to connect formally was nice and welcome, please remember that I am around every day to meet with you if you have questions or concerns. Arranging the meeting with me in advance is preferred (only because I have a busy schedule), but if you don't have the chance, please feel free to stop me in passing, or check with the office to see if I'm available. I will accommodate you if I am able. Working together helps make sure things are going smoothly for your child(ren).

Thank you to all of the parents who have reached out to our staff and students during our time of loss of Mrs. Lynch. And thank you to parents who have supported their children through the grief that they are experiencing. It has been a challenging time, but we are grateful to live & work in such a supportive community. I know that Vicki's family has appreciated the love and support that we all have shown them as an Asa school community.

In other news, RSU #26 has been in the process of working with Acadia Hospital to provide our students with additional support services across all three schools. While the search is continuing for a social worker, we are happy to be working with Erin Perry, who is providing on site case management services for families. She begins working with us officially in December, and we will be happy to help make referrals for your child/family. See her official letter here in our newsletter.

As the holidays are fast approaching, if you are a family who may have some needs this holiday OR a family who might be interested in helping to donate some gifts to a family in need, please feel free to contact me directly. We will do our best to anonymously connect families in need with families who may want to give. The sooner you contact me the better, as people will need to wrap up shopping and I need to wrap up delivering before December 18. Thanks to all who might consider this.

I am grateful for the work that I get to do with our Asa students every day. I tell people all the time I stay in Orono because you as parents give us THE BEST KIDS-and it is an honor to support and encourage them all.

Happy Holidays,
Lisa Erhardt, School Counselor