

Principal's Newsletter

Asa C. Adams Elementary School.
Issue No. 9 June 2019



June 1	Bicycle Rodeo	10 am-12pm (Asa parking lot)
June 1	Asa Family Dance	6 pm-8 pm (Keith Anderson Community Center, formal or not)
June 6	Variety Show	6 pm- 7:30 pm
June 13	Water Slide/Field Day	All Day
June 14	Last Day of School	Half Day in morning

Reflections on Leadership and Learning: A Year at Asa C. Adams School

Dear Parents,

It has been an exciting year at Asa C. Adams School. As the principal, I have learned much about what makes this school such an extraordinary learning environment. Our assessment scores regularly exceed state norms in virtually all content areas. Innovation is a mainstay in our instructional practices, and our attention to such social-emotional skills such as Habits of Mind and Social Thinking create schema that helps students navigate the developmental terrain of their lives.

If I had to highlight one aspect that defines Asa C. Adams School I would reference its culture. We have an extraordinary variety of high-performing teachers, professionals who place the needs of students first and develop enduring relationships with families. This is advantageous and comforting when it comes to issues as comprehensive as school safety. Moreover, our proximity and connectedness to law enforcement provides a strong presence that is comforting in an age of social change. Of course, a safety and a sense of well-being contribute much to the creation of a positive learning environment.

Our long-standing relationship with the University of Maine at Orono also contributes meaningfully to our culture. We regularly host student teachers, collaborate with UMO students for such events as Arts and Literacy Night, and invite researchers and professors into our classrooms; nor is it unusual for classrooms to visit the UMO, as well as an array of educational field trips.

I would be remiss not to mention RSU 26's commitment to the arts. Our talented staff literally puts students in the spotlight, but not without the practice, support, and teamwork that performance can engage learners in new and surprising ways. Our Specialists provide many opportunities to engage students in music, art, physical education, library, and more.



As I have mentioned in the past, brain research indicates that we all learn in different ways and in different timeframes. Our Special Educators and Educational Technicians provide personalized learning that often includes Social Thinking and specific strategies to help all students succeed in an inclusive environment. The transition to and from regular classrooms is often a seamless process, and most children enjoy being ‘borrowed.’

In looking ahead to the next school year, I plan to expand my focus my leadership on culture, which underscores so many elements of our school. Good schools are about good people who want to make good things happen. Here’s a list of some initiatives we will be address next year to best prepare our students for the 21st century.

- Actualize all safety precautions and protocols according to evolving research
- Utilize our new student information system to communicate more effectively with parents and community
- Embed Universal Design for Learning in daily instruction to ensure greater learning equity for all students and their learning modalities
- Establish a comprehensive Literacy approach in K-2 with the Teachers College Reading Writing Program with Lucy Calkins units of study in Phonics, Reading, and Writing.
- Continue our efforts to integrate STE(A)M-based activities in classrooms help students make interdisciplinary connections with 21st century approaches
- Refine our Habits of Mind within a classroom framework to emphasize the importance of Social-Emotional Learning
- Establish further connections with the University of Maine at Orono and other outside agencies to enhance learning opportunities
- Create a greater vertical alignment with Orono Middle and High School in curriculum, Social-Emotional Learning, and student data to sustain a more comprehensive, ‘Whole Child’ Pre-K-12 learning experience
- Address instructional equity within specific grade levels and adjust educational support and scheduling to better serve student-teacher ratio

Sincerely,

Darren J. Akerman, Ed. D.



The only thing of real importance that leaders do is to create and manage culture. If you do not manage culture, it manages you, and you may not even be aware of the extent to which this is happening.

— Edgar Schein —

AZ QUOTES

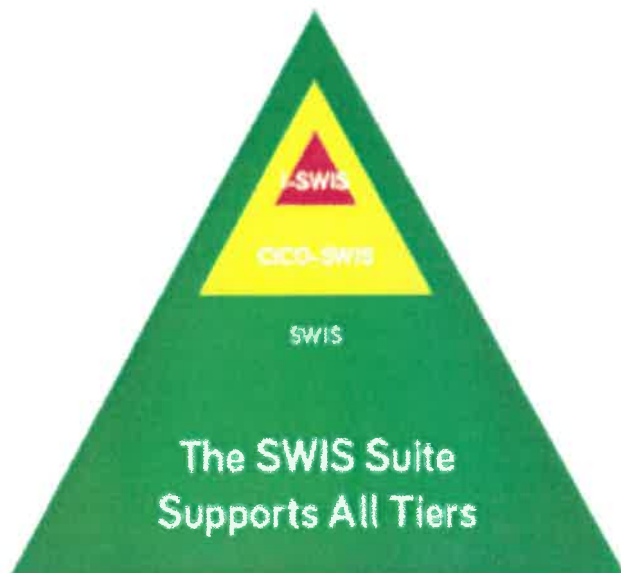
ACTEM arrives at Asa

Asa C. Adams hosted the ACTEM Teach Wonder workshop on May 9th. In most of these pictures, the staff are learning how to program the Dash bots to draw polygons. As Mr. Sonderburg reported: "I learned how to program the angle measure for each turn the bot makes. The challenge was that I needed to be thinking of the internal angle of the shape, but also its external angle measure too! I've done a lot with angle measurement and protractors with my math students already this year, and I think they're really going to enjoy the challenge of using the bots to create assigned shapes. From this conference, I feel ready to bring this experience to my mathematicians in the near future!"



Science
Technology
Engineering =
Arts
Mathematics

STEAM



Did you know we use the SWIS data system to proactively address student behaviors? Our Student Support Team meets regularly to review data recorded in SWIS. This helps us examine the frequency and intensity of student misbehaviors behaviors; additionally, the data is underscored by the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), a research-driven construct designed with a tiered approach to provide a variety of approaches to help student succeed. Far from a mere tracking device, SWIS helps our team craft meaningful interventions geared to individual needs.

Red Nose Day Campaign at Asa: Laughter for a Cause

In May second grade students participated in the Red Nose Day Campaign as a service learning project to raise money for children living in poverty. The Red Nose Day "raises money and awareness to keep children who need our help the most stay safe, healthy and educated in America and around the world by using the power of entertainment". Second grade students donated twenty-five cents to earn a red nose and tell a joke. In total, second grade students raised over forty dollars to send off to the Red Nose Day Campaign. One red nose at a time, second graders developed some empathy for others and felt proud that they made a positive change.



Notice for Parents

We will be sending out class placement letters to parents on August 1st, 2019.

Asa C. Adams School Hours for Summer
Monday-Thursday 8:30-12:00 1:00-3:00

Asa Theater Club: Drama on Display



“What Happened After Once Upon a Time” by Alexi Alfieri (Pioneer Drama Service) was presented by the 4th and 5th grade Asa Theater group on May 24th, during the day for a school audience, and at night for family and friends (of over 100 people). This fantastic crew was directed by Angie McLaughlin and Maddy Mellor, with assistance from UMaine student Melanie Zablony. About 30 4th and 5th grade students worked together to create an incredible show. A substitute narrator is called in on short notice to present stories from a stack of fairy tale books. But just as each tale begins its “once upon a time,” the main characters show up to interrupt and correct the newbie narrator’s telling of their story. Turns out, these characters have hysterical idiosyncrasies! It’s up to the characters to comfort the narrator and explain what really happened after “once upon a time.” Wouldn’t you know? Everyone lived happily ever after, of course!

In order to pull off such a show Mrs. McLaughlin and Ms. Mellor had support from the wonderful families of our students, sound help from Cami Carter and Jon Hawley, space help from Nick Butler, Jess Moore, Terry Henry and Waldo Caballero. It takes a village to make a wonderful experience for kids—we’re thankful to ours!

OHS Chorus: World Tour Comes to Asa



Under the direction of Terry Henry the OHS Chorus visited Asa C. Adams School on May 28th. The set included “Bohemian Rhapsody” and “Who Will Tell Your Story” (from the Broadway hit Hamilton). First grader Kaitlynn Witham was chosen from the crowd to direct one song. The finale was, of course, an old favorite Jabberwocki! It’s wonderful to see our former students visit to perform for us!



Happy Summer, students! Stay safe and read!