



Principal's Message:

I hope everyone is having an enjoyable holiday season! At the Stokes house, things are a bit hectic right now as we try to juggle sports schedules, homework, holiday shopping, and visiting with family. I am looking forward to a chance to perhaps relax before the busy time of the new year and the return of my oldest son's return home for college break.

Things are also very busy here at Simonds. We are preparing for the **Holiday Celebration** (see page 2 for more details) which will be held the day before the holiday break. Thanks to Ms. Bragg, students and teachers also decorated a tree at the town hall for the Festival of Trees. With the help of Mrs. James, students also participated in the first-ever Kearsarge Spelling League. Students in grades 2-5 spelled various challenge words and then awards were given throughout the district for achievement. At the end of the year, our highest performers will compete with other elementary students across the district. In my opinion, this is a much more inclusive program than our traditional spelling bee.

Earlier in the month, staff shared the rough draft of the district's **Portrait of a Learner** with students. The Portrait of a Learner will be a "guide" for all staff and students in Kearsarge to help model the key characteristics of every learner/student in our district. Currently, the draft focuses on 3 key attributes - caring, curious and conscientious. The Portrait of a Learner committee will use student and staff feedback to re-draft the current document. In the near future, I would anticipate the committee asking for parent and community feedback as well. Similarly, the district is also working on developing the **Portrait of an Educator**. Again, this guide will outline the key characteristics of all Kearsarge educators (instead of students) and be the guide for how we define educator effectiveness in the district. We are lucky to have Simonds' representation on each of these committees.

I also met with several Unified Arts representatives across the district this past week as part of our **Kearsarge Arts Committee**. This group is responsible for planning Artist in Residence programs at each of the elementary schools. Mr. Mitchell and Ms. Dubreuil are in the process of organizing a visit in early spring at Simonds by Marek Bennett. He is a local graphic artist who specializes in historical fiction. If you are interested in learning more about him, you can visit his website [here](#).

Lastly, please note that Simonds will be closed for the holiday vacation starting on **Monday, December 25th**. The main office will be closed for the most part during this time as well. Please call ahead if you are planning to stop by or email myself at tstokes@kearsarge.org or Wendy at wgrimes@kearsarge.org. The first day back from vacation is **Tuesday, January 2nd**. I hope you have a safe and restful holiday season!

Important Dates:



- Friday, December 8 - PTO Movie Night - Doors open at 6:20 pm
- Monday, 12/19 - Friday, 12/22 - SPIRIT WEEK (details on page 2)
- Monday, 12/25 - Monday, 1/1/24 - December break - NO SCHOOL
- Tuesday, 1/2/24 - Return to School
- Monday, 1/15 - Martin Luther King Holiday - No School
- Friday, 1/12 - LEGO Club 3-4 pm
- Friday, 1/19 - End of Quarter 2
- Friday, 1/19 - LEGO Club - 3-4 pm
- Friday, 1/26 - LEGO Club - 3-4 pm
- Friday, 2/2 - Report Cards Go Home
- Thursdays - Jan. 5th through February 23rd - Crazy 8's Club (grades 1 & 2) 3pm - 4pm
- Thursdays - January 5th - February 2nd (snowdate 2/9) - WYSA Ski/Snowboard Program
- Mondays & Fridays - 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm - Pickleball - MPR (except 12/8)
- Tuesdays - 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm - Adult Volleyball - MPR

IF AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ARE CANCELED ALL SIMONDS AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ARE CANCELED AS WELL. THE ONLY EXCEPTION IS BOYS & GIRLS CLUB. THEY WILL BE OPEN UNLESS THEY REACH OUT TO FAMILIES.



HEALTH OFFICE NEWS:

WINTER 5

Please send your student with the "[Winter 5](#)" each day: hats, gloves, snow pants, jacket, and boots. Students spend a lot of time outside between snack break, physical education class and recess! We also ask that you send your student in with a pair of shoes (sneakers) they can wear while inside. They are welcome to leave them at school if that helps. Please reach out if your child is in need of a pair of winter boots as the health office has an abundance of gently used winter boots (some in brand-new condition!). There are also several pairs of gently used snow pants.

A wonderful gift for the health office to hand out to families in need is a Market Basket gift card. If you are looking to help out with this \$20-25 cards are preferable. Many thanks for your never ending generosity.

From Ms. Bragg - School Counselor:

Warner Festival of Trees

The Festival of Trees Exhibit at the Town Hall is now open and will remain open for viewing daily from 9am - 8pm daily until New Years

All students were invited to create an ornament to hang on our [Simonds School Tree](#). We hope you are able to take time to visit the **Festival of Trees**, especially to view the [Simonds School Tree!](#)



SPIRIT WEEK

Jingle Bell Monday, 12/18 - Show off your best holiday bling

Grinch Tuesday, 12/19 - Dress like your favorite holiday character - Rudolph, Santa, Snowflake, etc.

Winter Wonderland Wednesday, 12/20 - Wear blue & white. Sparkles are optional

Thursday, 12/21 - Wear your ugliest holiday sweater/ vests/socks, etc.

Friday, 12/22 - Flannel Friday - jammies/shirts, etc.

Our annual Holiday Celebration will take place on Friday, December 22nd. Students will rotate through 6 stations learning about different holiday traditions. They will be given hot cocoa and a holiday rice krispie treat at the snack station.



If your child is in need of a new backpack, please reach out. We have quite a variety looking for new homes. They would also be appropriate for middle/high schoolers.

Boys & Girls Club News:

We will open be at SUTTON SCHOOL over the December break, Tuesday December 26 - Friday December 29th. Contact Justin to register at bleakley@nhyouth.org.



Boys & Girls Club will be CLOSED Monday, December 25th and Monday, January 1st.



WYSA NEWS

LAST CALL - WYSA Ski/Snowboard sign-ups end DEC 19th.

Message from Pillsbury Free Library

Pokemon Club - **Tuesday, December 12th 3pm - 5pm**. After school craft - Wed. December 20th, 3-4:00. Miss Sue will walk students from Simonds to the Library. Register with Miss Sue and Mrs. Grimes.

Play tryouts for large parts - **Wednesday, December 13th - 3pm - 5pm**. Students will walk down on their own to the library. Please let Miss Sue know and stop in for a script of "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow". Don't forget to notify Mrs. Grimes that your child will be walking to town hall on play practice days.

The library will be closed on Monday December 25th and Monday January 1st. Happy holidays to all!

