

# Pierce School News



February 2019

## Building Bridges

### *Partnerships for Success*

We are so lucky to live in and around the Monadnock Region, but especially in our town of Bennington. With that, one of our greatest assets is our community connections, which allows our children to thrive in a supportive environment between school and home. Did you know that research shows that students who have strong school-community connections are more likely to have better social skills, improved behavior and higher self-esteem which also creates a positive impact on student achievement? Wow, right? It isn't surprising that our "village" means so much, to so many of our students and families. Thank you for all you do for one another, our students and our staff at Pierce School.

To enhance these efforts in bringing our school and community together, after winter break our Pierce Student Leadership Team is planning a reach-out to many community members for interviews! They are interested in learning more about what they do in our community and how students at Pierce can help support them. We are excited to share what we learn with you in the weeks to come.

Just so you know, the student representatives have set two goals for the year for us, one is an internal goal- building our library into a stronger resource for students and another an external goal, which is focused on strengthening community partnerships. Both goals reflect their mission of "making Pierce an *even better* place to be (although I can't imagine how that could be!). We look forward to hearing from you as we reach out to families for thoughts and suggestions. Thank you!

### Upcoming Events:

- Winter Vacation – February 25<sup>th</sup>-March 1<sup>st</sup> ☺
- March 22<sup>nd</sup> – **AFTERNOON ASSEMBLY** at 2:30pm
- *Drum-Mazing* – Thursday, March 28<sup>th</sup> at 5:30pm

## Heart Healthy Days

This past Valentine's Day brought with it some wonderful moments for many students and staff! We all had fun exchanging Valentine's Day cards and smiles with one another to make the day very special. From a "gentle-man" kindergartener handing each teacher a rose (!) to students picking up trash in the cafeteria for one another, it was definitely a week worth remembering.

Adding to these acts of kindness, we also celebrated *National School Counseling Week* and gave our very own Mrs. Gregg a big bear paw card to show her how much she makes a difference for students and staff at Pierce School – Thank you Mrs. Gregg!

## Starting the Day

Do you know that our grade 3 & 4 students do the morning announcements each day? This is just another wonderful way our students show they care for their school and one another!

## Kindness Call

Calling all families! Looking to help students at Pierce School expand their experiences? A few courageous students have come forth to see if there was interest in starting a singing club, where all may participate, sing favorite songs and have fun together. If you have interest in supporting this creative idea, please give Mrs. Morrocco a call to get more information.



## Homework...*HELP!*

For our families~

When families begin to wind down after a busy day, the last thing we want is to find ourselves in a challenging situation with regard to homework. Consistency is the key in creating a homework healthy house, where there can be a quiet space, family support and time afterward to relax together-sometimes, this is hard to find.

If you are feeling frustrated with the idea of homework, you are not alone. Above and beyond the child's frustrations, although parents and guardians know it is important to solidify skills, families have challenges making it all work for everyone. With that, you may find the attached message from the National Association of Elementary School Principals helpful. It gives some tips that may help ease the experience and bring a consistency to your evenings that ends happily for all. Take a peek and see if there is one take away that may be just what you need to make it work ☺. (It's available in Spanish too!)

### Recap: Schoolwide Title I

Just a reminder that as a school receiving Title I federal funding, we have an amazing opportunity to help all students in our school succeed. Title I federal funds are supplemental funds designed to meet the educational needs of all students, especially those challenged to meet proficiency on the challenging State academic standards.

***Please remember that your voice as a parent is important!*** Please consider yourself a member of our team and join us for upcoming events, meetings or surveys that let us hear your ideas for making our schoolwide program truly your voice for student success!

\*\*\*\*See our website for the Title I School plan and newsletters filled with family tips and information.

Keep on top of Pierce News by checking our website at:

<http://bes.convalsd.net/>

## Three Cheers for PTO!

We all know that Pierce School has strong and involved families in the PTO and we are very lucky to have you all!

As a reminder, our PTO meetings are held on the **1<sup>st</sup> Monday of each month at 6:00pm** in the Pierce School library. Please come and join us for fun conversation and productive planning for supporting our students and school!

## Community Suppers

*\*Hungry for food and community conversation? Meet your neighbors and enjoy a great night of food and fun.*

*On the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month through June, Pierce School is the site for our local community supper. In months past, this has been a very successful evening with many community residents coming to enjoy the night together. Bring yourself and your family this March on the 11<sup>th</sup> at 5:30-7:00pm.*



*2018 community supper photo – we would like more!*

# Report to PARENTS

## Effective Homework Help

**S**tudents with parents who are involved in their education are more likely to earn higher grades, adapt well to school, and pass their classes. But is there a point when parents can be too involved—specifically, with homework? Consider these scenarios:

- Your child's big science project is due tomorrow, but her schedule has been so busy lately that she hasn't had time to finish it herself. You want her to get a good grade, so you end up doing most of the work for her.
- Your daughter's entry for a school poetry competition seems pretty bad so far. You suggest phrases that sound better. When the awards are announced, your daughter comes home and says, "We won!"
- Your son's math homework packet is a big part of his grade, but he's having trouble with a few of the concepts. You wonder if it's okay to help him with some of the answers?



If parents end up taking over homework tasks—as in the first two examples—involvement can quickly turn into interference. Use these strategies to reasonably support your child as he or she tackles assignments.

**First, create conditions conducive to learning.** Make sure your child has a quiet, well-lit space to do work, away from the TV or other distractions.

**Help your child learn time management.** Set a time each day for doing homework, and block off time on the weekends for working on big projects. Make sure your child has a planner. Create a visual calendar at home to help your child keep track of assignments.

**Be positive.** If your child is losing steam while completing homework, reinforce the importance of school. If your child is frustrated with a project or a tough new concept, be encouraging.

**Guide, don't do.** Don't do homework for your child. Instead, help your child understand assignments by discussing concepts. Have your child walk you through the way he or she learned to solve a problem, and try to come up with a hands-on method to practice it.

For instance, if your child is struggling with basic division, gather pennies or paper clips, count the total, and, together, divide them into groups of five, six, or seven.

**Brainstorm together.** Challenge your child to come up with a variety of ideas for projects. If your child is

writing a poem, brainstorm ideas he or she could write about rather than telling him or her what to say.

**When your child does homework, you should do work, too.** If she is reading an essay, you can read the newspaper. If he is working on math problems, you can balance your checkbook. This shows your child that the skills he or she is learning are related to adult tasks.

**Stay informed.** Talk with your child's teacher. If your child is consistently having trouble with a specific topic, let the teacher know.

### Web Resources

The **National PTA's Homework Help Web page** offers strategies to help parents cut homework stress and maximize learning.  
<http://bit.ly/PTAhomeworkhelp>

Visit the **Department of Education's homework portal** for resources on study skills and helping kids get organized.  
[www2.ed.gov/parents/academic/help/homework](http://www2.ed.gov/parents/academic/help/homework)