

Sedgwick Elementary School

272 Snow's Cove Road, Sedgwick, Maine 04676 (207)359-5002

Fax (207)359-5071

email dbuckingham@sedgwick-es.u76.k12.me.us

Donald A. Buckingham, Ed.D., Principal

Lynnette Grindle, Administrative Assistant

June 29, 2009

Dear Parents,

I hope by the time this letter reaches you the sun is shining. What a 'summer!'

I have great news to report. The hard work we have all put in on raising money for the technology program has paid off. Shortly before the end of the school year, we received donations from an anonymous and very generous person to bring the total in the technology fund to \$25,000. This incredible donation allows us to move ahead with the first priority of the technology improvement. This will bring 12 new Mac mini computers to the computer lab; 6 new Mac minis to allow classroom access to the internet and server using Mac OS 10; new laptop computers for those classroom teachers who are not getting new MLTI computers; two new servers, one for all school computers, one for attendance and record keeping; two new laser printers to be dispersed to the K-4 and 5-8 wings of the building and used in addition to the one in the lab. Server software will support System 10 computers and only those computers which run Mac OS 10 will be on the server. We will be looking at upgrading the current teacher laptops, when it makes sense to do so, so that specials and others will be able to have regular access to them. All computers will be wireless.

All Grade 7 and 8 students and their teachers will be getting new computers under the MLTI program. We have re-advertised the technology position and have had at least one additional application as of this writing.

Although these funds will help meet basic technology needs, we will have a real need to continue to raise funds for additional equipment and to establish a fund from which we can draw to maintain our technology program and avoid the situation we are now trying to fix. We still have raffle tickets for the lovely painting of the Maine oceanfront for sale and are beginning the advertising for the 2nd Annual Craft Fair coming up on November 21. Please let us know if you're interested in buying a table for the Fair.

Lynnette Grindle is in the school office Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8-12. My schedule is somewhat more erratic and is posted on the office doors and elsewhere in the building. Please feel free to call at the number above to leave a message or e-mail. In a pinch, you can try me at home (359-2158). Leave a message, please. The superintendent's office can be reached at 359-8400.

In other school news, we have been spending some time trying to look ahead to next year. One area where we can and will improve is in better communicating educational issues with parents. We will offer several opportunities for parents to come in to learn about adolescence (and adolescents) and homework early on in the school year. We are also looking for help from parents in determining the direction our school is going. So look for opportunities to learn and inform to be scheduled early in the school year.

I have also been spending a fair amount of time listening to parent and teacher concerns about the stresses created by combined classrooms and the lack of guidance and gifted and talented services, among other things. I am very concerned about these topics and the future directions our school should be taking, but there are no simple answers. To help maintain or improve the quality of our programs we will need help and advice from parents. A revival of the Parent-Teacher-Friend (PTF) group is really

necessary. The PTF is a vital part of our school's life and we need parents to be part of it. It must be much more than a fundraising group, but how much more is dependent on how parents want to be involved. Please contact me if you are interested in helping out or have ideas. It would be great to have an informational meeting for interested parents, teachers, and friends before the beginning of school.

We will also need parents and members of the community to serve as volunteers here in the building and at home. We need parents to listen to students read, help them with math, supervise before and afterschool activities, and supervise various activities during the school day. If you have time or a skill that you'd like to share with kids, we can use you!

Amy Vaughn is the new director of Healthy Peninsula Program and was in the other day and we had a long talk about the issues facing area children. This program funds and coordinates many area initiatives to support healthy living in all age groups. She is looking for parents or community members who are concerned with drug and alcohol abuse and are willing to serve on a Community Coalition to investigate the problems associated with this scourge. You can call me for more information.

At the end of the year we dispensed with newsletters and didn't get the chance to thank all that we should have. Even these thank you's are only a few of the many who helped out so much. Tina Limeburner ran the Box Tops for Education Program wonderfully; Gretchen Cousins and Megan Carter collected cartridge and cell phones for recycling; Lyllis Rankin, Eyleen Gillen, and Joy Adams helped out by washing winter wear, and Brenda Monteith collected tons of Campbell Soup labels. I'd also like to publicly thank Don and Lee Holmes for again hosting the staff for a lovely and very relaxing lunch at the close of the last day of school. Everyone's efforts have been greatly appreciated.

I hope you all enjoy a great and relaxing summer. Let's hope that the 'golden orb' makes an appearance very soon. Let's also be extremely grateful for this opportunity to reinvent technology at Sedgwick Elementary by opening up a brand new computer lab in August! It's wonderful to work in a community where so many are willing to be so generous with their time and money.

Sincerely,

Don Buckingham