

# The Vinton Chronicles

Fall 2012  
Volume 4, Issue 1

Principal James E. Palmer

## A Message from the Principal

As we turn the calendar page to October and reflect on summer fun, please allow me to welcome you to a brand new year at Vinton School. It is our sincere pleasure to work with you to make this a fantastic year for your family.

Whether you are familiar or new to our school community, please don't hesitate to contact us if there is anything we can assist with. It is important to us that everyone feels included in the "Vinton Family." Here are a few items as we get rolling into the school year ...

**Vinton School Open House** - Our annual Open House on September 12<sup>th</sup> was a huge success. On behalf of the entire Vinton School staff, please know that we deeply appreciate your support. The family attendance was close to 90%, a goal that we are proud of and for which we are thankful; my gratitude to the loyal Vinton School PTA for helping to make the event so enjoyable.

**Speaking of the PTA** - As you know, Vinton School has always had a dedicated, hard-working and helpful PTA. Please do what you can to support the PTA as your involvement benefits the entire school community.

**Big Y Points** - The Vinton School community under the sponsorship of the PTA will once again participate in the Big Y Education Express Program. The program will begin on October 4<sup>th</sup> and run through the end of December 2013. A registration form will be sent home

soon or you may sign up at the store. As you buy groceries, Vinton accumulates points, which we redeem for useful school supplies and materials. Thanks in advance for your interest.

**School Climate Survey** - Beginning Friday, October 12, every student, parent, and staff member will have the opportunity to complete a school climate survey. This is a requirement for all schools in the state as part of Public Act 11-232 in conjunction with the Connecticut State Department of Education. The survey is anonymous, quite brief, and can be taken online at <http://tinyur1.com/c8fmc6e>. Paper copies will be available in the school office. The response window closes on October 21, 2012. Thanks in advance for your assistance.

**Bus Safety** - Please help your child's bus driver by reinforcing our three simple bus rules: (1) Stay in your seat, (2) Talk quietly, (3) Listen to the driver. On behalf of our fabulous drivers who transport the most precious cargo in the world, thanks in advance for your ongoing support.

**Don't Hesitate** - Please call me at (860) 423-3086, ext. 208, or email me at [palmerje@mansfieldct.org](mailto:palmerje@mansfieldct.org) should you have a question or concern. As always, thanks for your support ... have a wonderful year.

## Thanksgiving Week - Special School Schedule

To accommodate Parent/Teacher Conferences, the three days before the Thanksgiving holiday, November 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, and 21<sup>st</sup> are half days for Kindergarten through Grade 4. Dismissal time is at 12:45pm and the Vinton After School Program and the Mansfield Community Center After School Friends program are in operation these three days.

**Pre-Kindergarten:** please note this important change to your schedule that does not appear on the 2012-13 School Year Calendar. **There will be NO Pre-K classes these three days,** (November 19, 20, and 21).

All families will receive more information in early November about how arrangements will be made for conference(s).



### Contents

|                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| Principal's News      | 1 |
| Thanksgiving Schedule | 1 |
| Welcome New Staff     | 2 |
| Bus Safety Drill      | 3 |
| Healthy Lunch Options | 3 |
| Library News          | 4 |
| Mileage Club is Back! | 4 |
| Guess Who?            | 4 |

### Upcoming Events

- ◆ Fire Safety Day on Thursday, October 11th
- ◆ PTA Fall Event at Cedar Ledge Tree Farm, October 19<sup>th</sup> 4:30 - 6:30pm, (raindate is October 26<sup>th</sup>)

## Two New Faces in Grade Two!



*Mrs. Abke, Grade Two*



*Ms. Joyce, Grade Two*

We are pleased to introduce two new teachers in Grade Two this school year. Mrs. Harbec welcomed her second child to her family this summer and will be returning to her classroom in April.

Until then, Mrs. Abke is our long-term substitute for Mrs. Harbec. Before coming to Vinton School, Mrs. Abke taught at the Pomfret Community School last year.

Prior to Connecticut, Mrs. Abke taught in the Winton Woods School District, which is just outside of Cincinnati, Ohio. She and her husband have one "very spoiled child," their yellow lab named Tyke.

Mrs. Abke is an avid runner and will actually be entering the Hartford Half Marathon next month. She has already run about three different 5k events this year.

In addition to running, she loves crafts, (which will come in handy when Grade Two classes undertake their gingerbread house projects in December).

Mrs. Abke is really excited to be at Vinton and says she is "having a great time getting to know her students, families, and staff. Everyone has been very welcoming." We're glad you are here too! 😊

It seems "I was meant to be in Grade Two" said Ms. Joyce after revealing that she performed her student teaching and long-term substitution assignment at the grade 2 level before joining the Vinton family. She says that Vinton has been a "dream school to start in because the students, staff and Dr. Palmer have been great. Every day my students amaze me with their ability to notice everything, even the details you wouldn't necessarily expect them to pick up on."

A lifelong dancer, Ms. Joyce also taught dancing and says that jazz and ballet are her favorite forms of dance. When she wants to enjoy the great outdoors her favorite activities are kayaking or just taking her two year old chocolate lab, Kali, for a walk (there's that number "2" again!) 😊

Ms. Joyce received her bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Connecticut and has been a lifelong resident of the state. She recalls her desire to become a teacher began when she was in middle school, where she volunteered to help other children and, of course, played school with her stuffed animals. We are thrilled that Ms. Joyce now has the opportunity to teach "real girls and boys" at Vinton.

Welcome to Mrs. Abke and Ms. Joyce!

## Grade Three Welcomes Mrs. Smith



*Mrs. Smith, Grade Three*

"Things have been going smoothly and I leave [Vinton] with a smile every day," reported Mrs. Smith when asked about how her transition to teaching grade three at Vinton School was going. After teaching in the Hartford Public School District for seven years, Mrs. Smith had a busy summer getting her new classroom ready and getting married! Congratulations!

It's definitely a bonus for Mrs. Smith to be teaching at a school located so close to UCONN because she is a big fan of the Men's and Ladies Basketball teams; she and her husband attend games as often as they can.

Another fun activity Mrs. Smith pursues is watching the Food Network's show, *Best Thing I Ever Ate*, so she can explore the New York City restaurants featured and try out their delicious entrees.

Recently, Mrs. Smith's classroom welcomed their first parent volunteer. If you would like to speak with Mrs. Smith about volunteering in her classroom, she would welcome the opportunity to speak with you or you may send her an email at [smithlc@mansfieldct.org](mailto:smithlc@mansfieldct.org).

## Students Learn About Bus Evacuation Safety

Every year, the school conducts various safety drills to prepare students in the event of an emergency. On September 7<sup>th</sup>, students learned how to evacuate a school bus safely.

Members from the Mansfield Fire Department were on hand to explain to students the proper protocol for getting out of the bus, such as being quiet in order to listen for instructions from the bus driver,

leaving backpacks behind, and forming a single line to exit out of the back of the bus. If needed, older students may volunteer to help the younger children as they exit the bus. Third grader



*Students are instructed to sit on the floor of the bus before exiting. Julianna assists the kindergarteners.*

Julianna practiced this part of the drill and said that she enjoyed assisting others because the “little kids need a little help.” Julianna also stated that

she felt better prepared if a real emergency occurred. On October 11<sup>th</sup>, members from the Fire and Emergency Response Team will be returning to Vinton School for Fire Safety Day. They will instruct students

about fire safety and provide fire evacuation guidelines, such as “Stop, Drop, and Roll.” Students will also tour their fire trucks and rescue vehicles and check out the fire fighters special tools and safety gear.



*Students practice exiting at the back of the bus during our recent bus safety drill*



*Firefighter Gagnon gets the children's attention first with a game of Simon Sez and then reviews what students should do after they evacuate the bus.*

## More Healthy Choices Available at Lunchtime

Vinton School is pleased to announce more healthy lunch options will be available to students. You may have noticed on the school menu the addition of hummus, trail mix, and whole grain pasta and rolls. Please encourage your children to try these healthier options and remind them that sometimes you need to try new foods many times before you like them!

Changes also affect milk options, which are now limited to fat-free or low-fat milk. The only flavored milk option is chocolate milk, which is low sugar and zero fat.



This school year students are being advised of the “5 Meal Components” to a well-balanced meal. The five components consist of (1) a protein source (such as meat or meat alternative), (2) whole grains, (3) fruits, (4) vegetables, and (5) milk. Students must choose at least three of these options, and one option must be a fruit or vegetable.

We are also excited about the introduction of Salad Plates available on Tuesdays and Thursdays each week, starting in October. The Salad Plate will consist of tossed green salad, a whole wheat dinner roll, fruit choice, and a protein choice (for example, a hard-boiled egg or a cheese stick). Please note that the price for the salad plate is \$2.50.

Each month, the school menu is sent home with your child. Please take a few moments to review it with your child and encourage him/her to try new foods, especially the healthy foods offered.

Healthy food choices at school and home will help your children learn healthier habits that will last a lifetime. If you would like to find out more information about helping your child make healthy food choices, the USDA website offers a toolkit for parents at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/healthier schoolday/default.htm>.



*A wide variety of fruits and vegetables are offered to students at lunchtime. This day Damien chooses to enjoy red grapes, a good source of vitamins A and C.*



*Jadyn makes a healthy choice for lunch ... strawberries!*



## From the Library

Mrs. Parda

Our Summer Reading Program wrapped up on September 28<sup>th</sup> with a party for all of our students who brought in their summer reading lists. Students' access to books was aided by our *Books on Bus* program which ran for several weeks this summer. Many families took advantage of the convenience of having the *Books on Bus* visit their neighborhood to get books through the town's library collection. We hope all of our avid summer readers will continue checking out more great books all year long!

the Celebrate Mansfield Parade on September 23<sup>rd</sup>? Some of the students who visited the *Books on Bus* this summer marched alongside our library staff in the parade. Everyone had a great time and we are glad the weather cooperated so we could have the parade!

Did you see some familiar faces during

Right now all of the fourth grade students are hard at work reading selections from the 2013 Nutmeg Award Nominee books. If you want to see a list of the nominees this year, check out this link to the Nutmeg Award website: <http://nutmegaward.org/93343/index.html>

Annie E. Vinton Elementary School  
306 Stafford Rd  
Mansfield Center, CT 06250

Phone: (860) 423-3086

Fax: (860) 456-4694

We're on the Web!  
[www.mansfieldct.gov/vinton](http://www.mansfieldct.gov/vinton)

## Mileage Club is Back!

Once again, Mileage Club will be offered to students in grades Kindergarten through 4. This club provides an opportunity for your child to walk or run laps at his/her own pace during recess. It's a way to have fun and make a healthy choice.

Of course, we could not do it without our wonderful parent volunteers. If you are able to help out, please email Senora Zugarazo at [zugarazojl@mansfieldct.org](mailto:zugarazojl@mansfieldct.org).

Grades 1 and 2 will meet on Tuesdays and Wednesdays 12:15pm - 12:45pm.

All students who complete a marathon and/or complete five mileage cards are qualified to attend the Kids Marathon in June. We had a great time last year and are hoping for more students to join us this year.

Grades 3 and 4 will meet on Wednesdays and Thursdays from 11:45am - 12:15pm. See you there!



School photographer, Sandy, takes a class photo on School Picture Day. Retakes are scheduled for November 26<sup>th</sup>. Notices will be sent home to families soon.

## School Picture Day

has been a tradition for many years. Can you guess which teachers and staff are featured in these pictures? (Answers below)

Answers:  
A-Mrs. LeFevre,  
B-Mrs. Kegler,  
C-Mrs. Csere,  
D-Senora Zugarazo,  
E-Mrs. Abke,  
F-Mrs. Parda,  
G-Ms. Joyce,  
H-Mrs. Smith,  
I-Mrs. Drew,  
J-Mrs. Davis,  
K-Mr. Kronisch,  
L-Mrs. DeLoreto,  
M-Mrs. Terry,  
N-Mrs. Herrick,  
O-Ms. Welch,  
P-Ms. Rudge.

|   |   |                     |   |   |   |
|---|---|---------------------|---|---|---|
|   |   |                     |   |   |   |
| A | B | C                   | D | E | F |
|   |   | <h1>Guess Who?</h1> |   |   |   |
| G | H |                     |   | I | J |
|   |   |                     |   |   |   |
| K | L | M                   | N | O | P |