

# HAPPY NEW YEAR

Gales Ferry /  
Juliet W. Long School

January 2012

## Message from the Principal

Dear Parents and Friends of GFS/JWL School,

In recent months, bullying has been a prominent subject in the national news. We are working hard to help students understand the importance of using appropriate words and actions. At the January All School Meeting, we will define bullying and share ways for students, staff, and parents to report and respond to suspected acts of bullying. The GFS/JWL School Climate Plan that outlines how the school community is responding to this national issue in a proactive manner is included on pages 4-5 of this newsletter. Parents are invited to attend the All School Meeting on January 13<sup>th</sup> at 2:00. The theme of the month is respect. Girl Scout troop 63153 will be performing a skit entitled "Lace Up Against Bullying" that the girls wrote about bullying to raise awareness and earn their Bronze award.

We are extremely excited to announce that the book chosen to be shared school-wide as a part of the *One Book, One School* project is Have You Filled a Bucket Today? by Carol McCloud. All classes will be reading this book and participating in grade-appropriate activities designed to promote the six pillars of character.



If you are interested in learning more about bullying and/or participating in discussion groups, there are several local options listed below.

Together we can stamp out bullying and create a community based on respect!

Happy New Year!

Anne Hogsten  
Principal

## Workshop Opportunities



"**Anti-Bully Workshops**" is a two-part series presented by the Women's Center of Southeast CT and hosted at Ledyard Congregational Church on Feb. 12<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> from 3:00-4:30 PM

"**Stop it, Bully, That's Mean!**" (grades 3-6)

"**Healthy Relationship: Is Jealousy a Sign of Love?**" (teens)

"**How Do You Communicate With Your Teens?**" (parents/teachers/adults)  
Workshops are free and open to the public. Please call 860-464-9926 or

email [ledyard.cong.church@snet.net](mailto:ledyard.cong.church@snet.net) for more information and to register as seating is limited. Please note "Anti-Bully Workshops" in subject line.

## Upcoming Events



- January 3<sup>rd</sup>** - School Resumes
- January 11<sup>th</sup>** - Special PTO meeting at LMS at 6:00 P.M.
- January 12<sup>th</sup>** - PTO meeting in the GFS library at 7:00 P.M.
- January 18<sup>th</sup>** - Shortened Session~ Professional Development
- January 27<sup>th</sup>** - Girls Night Out Program in the GFS gym from 5:30-8:30 P.M.
- January 24<sup>th</sup>** - NED Show Assembly 9:30 A.M. in the GFS Gym
- January 28<sup>th</sup>** - Roller Skating at Galaxy Roller Rink at 5:00 P.M.

## Mitten Tree

Catherine M. Foley, Executive Director of the Covenant Shelter in New London, gratefully accepted the mittens, gloves, and hats that we collected on our Mitten Tree. What a fabulous way for all of us to demonstrate our care for others!



## Special Recognitions



Mrs. Hartz's sixth grade class collected and wrapped gifts for the Ledyard Senior Center. Some of the program's participants visited Juliet Long and met the students.



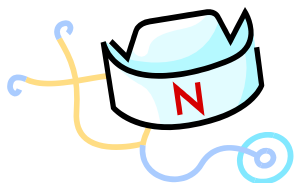
## News From The Nurses

GFS-Cassandra Allen 464-2458,

[callen@ledyard.net](mailto:callen@ledyard.net)

JWL-Susan Baker 464-6929,

[sbaker@ledyard.net](mailto:sbaker@ledyard.net)



### Food Locker

The Jaret Kulmann Food Locker is up and running. Feel free to contact your school nurse if you are in need of assistance with food. She will guide you through the process and it all remains confidential. We also have some gently used coats and some new gloves and hats available for kids.

### Hearing & Vision

Hearing/vision screening has been completed. Those students who did not pass were rescreened and parents were contacted via mail with the referral forms. Please make appointments at your earliest convenience and send in reports from your vision &/or hearing specialist. If you need assistance with glasses/eye exam, please contact the school nurse.

### Diabetes Awareness

Diabetes is one of the most common chronic diseases among children in the United States. When diabetes strikes during childhood, it is routinely assumed to be type 1, or juvenile-onset, diabetes. Type 1 diabetes develops when the body's immune system destroys pancreatic cells that make the hormone insulin that regulates blood sugar. It

normally strikes children and young adults. People with type 1 diabetes must have daily insulin injections to survive. In the last two decades, type 2 diabetes, formerly known as adult-onset diabetes, has been reported among U.S. children and adolescents with increasing frequency. Type 2 diabetes begins when the body develops a resistance to insulin and no longer uses the insulin properly. As the need for insulin rises, the pancreas gradually loses its ability to produce sufficient amounts of insulin to regulate blood sugar. Reports of increasing frequency of both type 1 and type 2 diabetes in youth has been among the most concerning aspects of the evolving diabetes epidemic. In the year 2001, approximately 3.5 million children less than 20 years of age were under surveillance at the six SEARCH centers to estimate how many children or young people had DM (prevalent cases);

### **What are the symptoms of type 1 diabetes (T1D)?**

The symptoms may occur suddenly, and include one or more of the following:

- Extreme thirst
- Frequent urination
- Drowsiness, lethargy
- Sugar in urine
- Sudden vision changes
- Increased appetite
- Sudden weight loss
- Fruity, sweet, or wine-like odor on breath
- Heavy, labored breathing
- Stupor, unconsciousness

If you think you or your child has diabetes, call a doctor immediately, and drink fluids **WITHOUT SUGAR** to prevent dehydration.

This is a general overview. Please call your doctor with any concerns.

**Gales Ferry/ Juliet W. Long  
School Climate Coordinator:  
Anne Hogsten, Principal**

Classroom teachers use Responsive Classroom techniques to build a sense of community and help each student develop a strong sense of self. Daily morning meetings serve as a time to model and discuss appropriate behavior as well as problem solve issues that arise. Students play an active role in developing classroom rules. Each month, a specific character trait from the Six Pillars of Character is highlighted. Our students are TRRFCC “terrific” (trustworthy, respectful, responsible, fair, caring, and good citizens). Lessons and activities are designed to help students learn and apply the traits in everyday situations. Mentor texts are used to spark rich discussions about decisions and choices we face on a regular basis. The School Climate Committee, in partnership with the media specialist, is in the process of expanding the mentor text collection. Some texts will be designated for classrooms or specific grade levels, while others will be housed in a special section of the school’s library. At the monthly All School Meeting, students write and perform skits that showcase the character traits in action. The music, art, and P.E. teachers also weave in the character traits with song, special visual arts, and unique games. Each week, students write and announce character tips during the morning announcements. Every Monday or the first day of each new week, students and staff say the school pledge in order to prepare for a successful week.

Our goal is to help students make good choices and take ownership of their actions. We want all students to do the

right thing because it is the right thing to do. Primary teachers use Kelso’s Choices, a curriculum for teaching conflict management skills. Posters are displayed in classrooms. Staff use common language and will ask students what two things they have tried before approaching a staff member for help. Large, dangerous, or scary problems are immediately reported to an adult. Intermediate students use levels of behavior to “label” their actions and articulate their thinking. They are taught how to use “I” messages to share feelings and handle situations on their own. In some cases, an apology of action is necessary. Students state what they did, why they did it, acknowledge how their actions affected others, and state what they will do differently in the future. Materials from the Second Step program, which teaches children empathy skills, impulse control, and anger management skills, are often used by the school psychologist in small group settings. The school psychologist also visits classrooms to conduct group character education lessons. Ideas from Michelle Garcia Winner’s Social Thinking that help students improve their perspective taking and social interactions serve as a wonderful springboard for class discussions. The school psychologist also facilitates lunch bunch groups that address specific issues and challenges that students face. To build upon what is done in the classrooms to promote a positive school climate, we involve parents as much as possible. Parent volunteers are welcome and encouraged to give of their time and talents. We encourage students and their families to participate in community service projects and school sponsored activities. The school is fortunate to house the Jaret Kulmann Food Locker,

which allows students and their families to collect food items and toiletries to give back to the community. School-wide events are designed to bring the school community together to both celebrate and educate. This year, we have booked the NED Show to visit and promote three important concepts: **Never give up. Encourage others. Do your best.** Several classes participate in a grant that allows them the opportunity to pair with students from other schools with a different socio-economic population. Many classrooms participate in a buddy program. One third grade class has middle school students who visit once a week to mentor the students. Most classes have paired with another grade level class in order to help students make connections and build friendships. Our latest endeavor is to adopt a book to promote the One Book, One School concept. The book that is chosen will be read to all students and will serve as the common thread that weaves the entire learning community together. The theme of the book will also shape the reward/recognition that students will receive on an ongoing basis.

When students struggle socially and emotionally, we have several programs that provide support. Our Safe Haven staff is trained to help students handle difficult situations that sometimes arise. The staff serves as a listening ear, provides students with breaks when necessary, and works with students on the playground to ensure that everyone is included in games. We also have the opportunity to offer therapy dogs. The dogs and their handlers work with individual students, visit classrooms, and often serve as a reward for students working toward a specific goal. The

DARE program offers fifth grade students the chance to work closely with a youth officer to learn about the dangers of drug use and the challenges they will face with peer pressure. Ledyard Youth Services also works with students on site as needed.

The School Climate Committee meets monthly to review discipline and/or bullying incidents. If patterns are in evidence, the committee develops an action plan to address the identified area of concern.

### **Elementary Process to Report Acts of Bullying**

**Students** – Depending on their age, students may report bullying by making: 1) an oral report to the principal or a school employee; 2) an email to the principal or a school employee; or 3) a written report to the principal or a school employee. The written report may be made anonymously; students may leave a note in the principal's or a school employee's mailbox.

**Parents** – Parents may report bullying by making: 1) an oral report in person or via a phone call to the principal or a school employee; 2) an email to the principal or a school employee; or 3) a written report to the principal or a school employee. The written report may be made anonymously; parents may leave a note in the principal's or a school employee's mailbox.