

**Summit Street School
Principal's Report
2010-2011 Annual Report**

Summit Street School is a dynamic learning community committed to preparing young learners to develop and thrive academically, socially and emotionally so that each one is prepared with the necessary skills to become life-long learners.

Our educational journey began in the fall of 2010 with the addition of new faculty joining our highly qualified staff. Timiny Bergstrom joined the 3rd grade team; Katherine Duggan took over the helm in the Learning Center as its new director and Diana Clayton stepped in as our new World Language educator. These new Summit faculty members add a vitality and energy to our learning community as we focused on the following professional initiatives:

- ✓ A systematic approach to assessment and data analysis;
- ✓ An exciting "natural" playground project sponsored by Summit's PTO Playground Committee;
- ✓ Intentional integration of technology and learning;
- ✓ Student-led conferences as a celebration of learning;
- ✓ Parent forums presenting standard-based learning, teaching and reporting;
- ✓ Musical residency with the *Song Dudes*.

In an ongoing effort to improve learning experiences in the areas of guidance, world language, health instruction and information literacy, a revision was made to the schedule ensuring a six-week rotation so that students continue revisiting these standards throughout the entire school year in contrast to the former schedule that rotated mid-way throughout the academic year. While this adds to transitions, it provides year-long exposure to important content.

A systematic approach to assessment and data analysis continues to be a priority; educators monitor and continually analyze student progress on local and state assessments. Summit students continue to exceed performance by their peers across the state as measured by the New England Common Assessment (NECAP) of Progress. 86 percent of third graders in the fall of '09 met or exceeded the reading standards and 87 percent met or exceeded the math standards.

Summit's Natural Playground Committee raised over ten thousand dollars through various fund raising efforts. The Natural Playground Design Company of New Hampshire visited Summit Street School and provided an overview to parents and community members about the benefits of providing children with opportunities to play with natural elements. Surveys were distributed and from the visit and input from various constituents a design was completed. This multi-year project is spear-headed by PTO member, Chris Catterton and the playground committee. Approval was granted for this project from the Prudential Committee and the process of securing approval from the Planning Commission is underway.

Three parent forums presented throughout the year provided opportunities for parents from Essex Junction's three elementary schools to learn about standards-based education, student-led conferences and school reports regarding overall student performance. Parents provided meaningful insights and questions about each of these topics. It is our intent to host parent forums in the future to provide opportunities for parents to engage in conversations about education in the Essex Junction schools.

21st century classrooms incorporate technology as effective learning tools. Four additional electronic presentation boards were added to classrooms. From authentic learning connections with scientists at the Bronx Zoo to connections with schools across the world to understand how children spend recess time, new opportunities for integrating technology emerges. Digital and flip cameras are utilized by students as they create digital stories to report their research. Faculty newsletters are posted on Summit's web page where families and community members access school news. Teachers meet with technology educator, Dave Davidson to plan curriculum lessons utilizing the software options available on presentation boards. As we continue to transform our school so that children are learning in a school designed for 21st century learners, we will tap the many benefits technology provides.

In closing, Summit Street School is a caring and thriving learning community that prioritizes safety and achievement and is enriched by important partnerships with families, colleagues and beyond. We celebrated the selection of our school counselor, Ashley Wageman as Vermont's Outstanding Young School Counselor. The Vermont School Counselor Association presented Ms. Wageman with this distinguished award to recognize her program innovation and many contributions to children and families. Faculty showcased their talent in late spring at the second Faculty Variety Show featuring teachers dancing, singing, performing comedy acts that even involved parents from the audience. Hosted by retired educator and Essex Junction resident Robin Noble and directed by P.E. teacher Rosalind Hutton, funds were raised from donations collected for the new playground. Another example of community is the International Potluck Dinner hosted by school counselor Ashley Wageman and includes shared entrees from various ethnic traditions. The annual spaghetti dinner and pancake breakfast sponsored by PTO and hosted by parent Deb Carlin brings families and neighbors together for good food and conversation. It is the participation of so many that makes Summit such a special place. We are proud of our school; thank you for your ongoing support and partnership.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Hughes, Principal