

WAITSFIELD TOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT REPORT OF THE SCHOOL BOARD AND SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION March 2009

This report provides you with an overview of the past year's data and events at the Waitsfield Elementary School (WES). There is so much that occurs in a year and so little space to tell the story. The Board and administration are proud of our school and its accomplishments. We are able to achieve great things in large part because of this communities support. Thank you for that support and please call if you have any questions about this report.

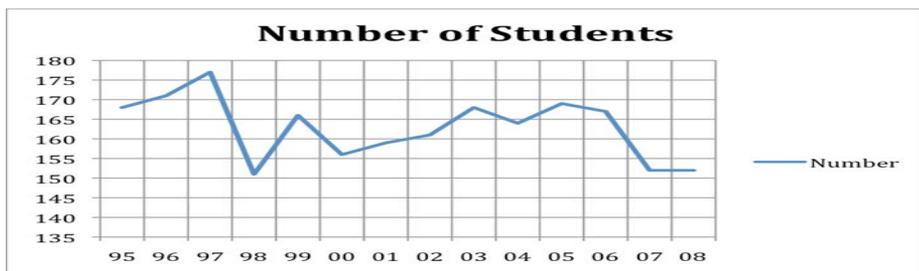
Elementary Enrollment as of October 2008

Grade	PK	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Enrollment	17	22	22	14	26	13	21	17	152

Grade	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
Enrollment	22	24	18	23	17	20	124

Enrollment Trends PK-6 (1995-2007)

YR	'95	'96	'97	'98	'99	'00	'01	'02	'03	'04	'05	'06	'07
#	168	171	177	151	166	156	159	161	168	164	169	167	152



There has been a great deal of discussion with regard to enrollment trends within the Waitsfield Community. With the exception of 1997, where there was a one-year spike in numbers, enrollment has tended to be steady with a variation of no more than 10 (year to year). Student enrollment tends to rise after the October count.

Professional Staff List 2008-2009

Teacher	Position	Certification
Amanda Badeau	Contracted Interventionist	
Georgianne Baker	Teacher – Grade 3	Level II Prof. Ed. Lic
Pamela Barnard	Contracted Physical Therapist	
Ann Beattie	Teacher – Grade 5	Level II Prof. Ed. Lic
Elizabeth Belknap	Teacher – Grade 4	Level II Prof. Ed. Lic
Nina Brennan	Teacher - French	Level II Prof. Ed. Lic
Elizabeth Bisbee	Paraprofessional/Interventionist	
Emily Church	Paraprofessional	
Philip Dalsimer	Paraprofessional	
Sue Dillon	Nurse	Level II Prof. Ed. Lic
Raymond Drake	Teacher - PE	Level II Prof. Ed. Lic
Ellen Drysdale	Librarian	Level II Prof. Ed. Lic
Betsy Eckfeldt	Teacher - Preschool	Level II Prof. Ed. Lic
Catherine Fair	Counselor	Level I Prof. Ed. Lic
Daniel Greenleaf	Teacher – Grade 5/6	Level II Prof. Ed. Lic
Connie Hartshorn	Administrative Assistant	
Patti Haynes	Paraprofessional	
Jeremy Hill	Teacher – Music	Level II Prof. Ed. Lic
Mary Hong	Interventionist/Supervisor	
Taylor Hubbard	Teacher – Grade 1/2	Level II Prof. Ed. Lic
Sharon Jendrazak	Contracted OT	OTR
Lynne Kingsbury	Teacher – Grade 2/3	Level II Prof. Ed. Lic
Susan Koeplinger	Teacher - Support Services	Level II Prof. Ed. Lic
Kay Marcelle	Teacher – Technology	Level II Prof. Ed. Lic
Nora McDonough	Teacher – Art	Level I Prof. Ed. Lic
Beth McGeorge	Teacher – Support Services	Level I Prof. Ed. Lic
Barbara Morrison	Paraprofessional	
Heidi Nishi	Paraprofessional	
Krietta Phillips	Teacher – Kindergarten	Level II Prof. Ed. Lic
Joe Robinson	Head Custodian	
Richard Schattman	Principal	Level II Prof. Ed. Lic
Leigh Stockton	Speech Language Pathologist	Level II Prof. Ed. Lic
Lee Van Dine	Teacher – 5/6	Level II Prof. Ed. Lic
Arthur Washington	Contracted Lunch Program	
Katie Westhelle	Paraprofessional / After School & Winter Sports Coordinator	
Terry Wilcox	Teacher – Primary Unit	
Roy Yoder	Custodian	
Tom Young	Teacher – Grade 1	Level II Prof. Ed. Lic

The Waitsfield Elementary School Mission

It is the mission of the Waitsfield Elementary School to support students in the achievement of high academic standards; we believe that all students can master challenging academic material, and we expect them to do so. It is our mission to foster a safe, comfortable, and challenging learning environment. It is our mission to help teach children respect for themselves and others, and teach them to accept responsibility for their actions. It is our mission to enhance global awareness and acceptance of cultural diversity. Finally, it is our mission to make a positive difference in the lives of each of our students.

Staff Changes

This year, the Waitsfield staff welcomed a limited number of new staff members. Amanda Badeau and Elizabeth Bisbee joined the staff as interventionists, supporting a limited number of students with specialized learning needs. Sharon Jendrazak has joined us and provides consultative and direct occupational therapy for those students who have an identified need in this area. Philip Dalsimer, after years of dedicated service at the Moretown Elementary School has joined us as a paraprofessional. As many of you know, this will be our principal, Dr. Richard Schattman's, final year at WES. Richard joined the staff five years ago and has completed his 33-year tenure as an educator, The Board, after an extensive search process, is pleased to announce that Kaiya Korb will be leading the WES as principal beginning on July 1st. We thank Richard for his years of dedicated service and wish him the best in his retirement.

New and Revised Policy

Policy development, review, and revision are the responsibility of the WES Board. Policy guides our school in a variety of areas, all of which ultimately move our school toward best practice. In the past two years, policies/procedures have been reviewed, revised or developed in the areas of discipline, harassment, animals in the school, and bidding. We are beginning a comprehensive review of our policies and procedures related to privacy, confidentiality, and disclosure of student information. If you are interested in reviewing any of the school's policies, please make an appointment to come in or we can mail a copy of specific policies/procedures upon request. Some policies are also available on the school's web site.

The Waitsfield School Web Site

The Waitsfield Elementary School web site was launched two years ago. With the support of Aaron Carlino, web designer, we were able to build a web site that provides parents, teachers, and other members of the community with a wealth of information about the school and school events. If you haven't visited the regularly updated site, please do so soon at:

<http://www.waitsfieldelementary.org>. We are planning a major revision of the

site this year and hope to make it even more useful. This year, many teachers have begun to set up classroom “blogs” as a way to communicate with parents, students, and the general public. These blogs can also be linked through the school web site. If you are interested in seeing the school board minutes, review the school budget, check the school lunch menu, see student work, look at the school calendar, etc., please visit this great resource at the above URL.

Action Planning

This year, we are in the final year of our Action Plan. Goals have been established in the areas of reading, mathematics, writing, health and wellness. The Action Plan defines the school’s goals and priorities for three years. This plan is then used to guide budget and staff development. In June, teachers and the administration reviewed all year three goals and summarized progress toward our goals. The new administration will have the opportunity to begin a new cycle of action planning beginning in the fall. Copies of the action plan are available on the web site (go to staff/PDF).

Accountability

The Waitsfield Elementary School is committed to presenting town residents with comprehensive assessment data. This data can help community members understand the overall performance of the school. The State Department of Education has indicated that the performance of the Waitsfield School far exceeds State of Vermont expectations with regard to what it calls “adequate yearly progress (AYP).” In 2006, the Waitsfield School met its adequate yearly progress targets for the year 2013. This is a reflection of the quality of our teachers and the talents of our students. Without family support and partnership, these targets could not be met.

We are continuing to administer all Vermont State Assessments as required. A more complete report of the school/student performance is included in this Town Meeting Book.

Another important area of accountability is that of teacher appraisal. All schools in the Washington West Supervisory Union, including Waitsfield, are implementing a system for comprehensive appraisal of teacher performance. Each teacher participates with formative goal setting and a comprehensive summative appraisal once every four years. This process is designed to provide teachers with essential feedback for continuous growth and professional development.

Transportation

There has been a great deal of discussion with regard to WES bus usage. As you may know, we provide transportation to and from school as well as a noon run for our kindergartners. The Washington West Supervisory Union contracts

with the First Student bus company. We appreciate their fine service and excellent safety record.

Last year we conducted a bus survey to better understand how the system is working for students and their families. Results of this survey appeared in the Valley Reporter and on our web site. In an effort to address environmental and parking lot safety issues, parents are encouraged to use the school transportation bus system whenever they can. The following data reflects the levels of ridership for the 2007-08 school year:

- Each morning, bus 1 transports 35 elementary and 48 Harwood students
- Each afternoon, bus 1 transports 29 elementary and 40 Harwood students
- Each morning, bus 2 transports 16 elementary and 55 Harwood students
- Each afternoon, bus 2 transports 12 elementary and 58 Harwood students

While elementary participation is approximately 40% of capacity, when combined with Harwood, capacity is close to 100%. In addition to the AM and PM bus runs, we do provide a mid-day run to accommodate preschoolers and kindergartners. This run averages 24 students.

Staff Development

The Washington West Supervisory Union (SU) has developed a comprehensive staff development program for all schools in the SU. For the second year, all instructional staff participates in the district program on eight Wednesday afternoons. Teachers meet at Harwood Union to participate in a range of workshops. Each is designed to improve instruction. These half days have been very worthwhile according to teacher and administrative feedback. We recognize that early release days place a burden on each family and we appreciate your support.

The Arts

Since the last Town Meeting Day, students performed a number of wonderful plays. They included "Once upon a Lily Pad", It's a "Jungle Out There", and "The Wizard of Oz." All are invited to join us at the Valley Players for our production of the Fiddler on the Roof on March 20th and March 21^s. We have a new drama director for this year's upper unit production and extend a warm welcome and thank you to Ruth Ann Pattee.

At the Waitsfield Elementary School's holiday program, students performed a variety of songs and readings. These songs and readings drew upon the

traditions of Christians, Jews, and Muslims. It was heavily attended by parents and others within the community.

Health and Nutrition

Our breakfast/lunch program is contracted with the Fayston School. This is the 5th year for our partnership; Arthur Washington and Cheryl Joslin staff and coordinate the program and are to be commended for a job well done. The program has made a commitment to working with local farmers to use locally grown products to the greatest extent possible.

Sue Dillon, our school nurse, coordinates all health services and provides direct instruction to all classes on a rotating basis. Topics covered included nutrition, safety, physical activity, making healthy choices, dental health, infection prevention, media literacy, and human growth and development.

PTA

This year, the annual ski and skate sale was the most successful ever. The sale is coordinated and directed by Krissa Hammond. Krissa volunteers for this year long duty and does an absolutely spectacular job. As with most ski swaps, the school keeps 20% of the proceeds, which are administered by the PTA for the enrichment of all of our children.

This year, the PTA is sponsoring a two week long residency with Kevin O’Keefe and Circus Minimus. Kevin taught children circus skills linked to the cultures and history of countries throughout the world.

In addition to our residency program, the PTA funds field trips to the Flynn Theater and other venues. They purchased books for the library, sponsored the winter sports program, responded to staff requests for materials and special events, The Waitsfield PTA is a critically important part of our school. Thank you to all who support the PTA.

Non-commercial Book Fair

Instead of continuing our commercial affiliation with Scholastic Books Inc., we developed a relationship with a local and regional bookstore to provide students with only high quality books. Thanks to the effort of Elizabeth Cadwell and our school librarian, Ellen Drysdale, we were able to continue to improve the quality of our fair and to encourage children to engage with quality literature. We continue to hear from other schools that are interested in improving the quality of their fairs and to move in a more non-commercial direction.

Media Literacy

Media literacy continues to be an important focus for the school. The school strives to be a “commercial free zone” and is vigilant in its commitment to safeguard all students from the influence of advertising within the school

building. Part of this commitment includes providing students with the tools of media literacy, so that they may understand how they are influenced by our media saturated society. All students participate in a course of study in this area prior to their graduation from grade 6. This year, our focus has been on music and history. Students are producing videos that link images with sound in areas that have historical and personal significance.

Mrs. Beattie's fifth graders are to be congratulated. They developed a media project called "Letters to Obama." Each student wrote a personal essay addressing their hopes and dreams for the new president. These were then filmed and the project was submitted for consideration in a competition. "Letters to Obama" won first prize and was shown on a 40-foot screen at the Huffington Post Inaugural Ball (attend by Tom Hanks, Cheryl Crow Steven Spielberg, and many others).

The Waitsfield Ways

This is the fourth year of implementing The Waitsfield Ways. It is a statement of those behaviors that each student and staff member agrees to follow as a member of the school community. We are using the Waitsfield Ways to discuss issues and problem solve when necessary. The Waitsfield Ways frame many of our assemblies as children develop role-plays and demonstrations for all to see and discuss. The Waitsfield Ways now appear in the school's handbook and include:

- Set a good example for yourself and others by helping those in need
- Respect each other's body, property, feelings, and differences
- Do your best
- Keep our school safe, neat, and healthy

Technology

The Waitsfield School is a leader in the area of integrating technology across the curriculum. It is truly impressive to see how the use of mobile computing stations allowed students to create digital projects, media productions, and applications for Internet for research. New to the repertoire of students this year is the use of podcasts, blogs, and wikis.

Six teachers participated in a summer technology course and were granted funds to assist with the cost of purchasing "Smart Boards." These boards were recently installed in 5 classrooms and the computer lab. We are now streaming content-based video from the Internet and enable students to actively engage through the use of this new technology. Our teacher's embrace of new technology is to be commended as they find new and innovative ways to teach more effectively.

At the Waitsfield School, we believe technology is a tool for enhancing learning across all areas of the curriculum. Application of technology is evident in PK-6 grade, art, and music. We have both a computer lab and a mobile lab that can be placed in any classroom to support class-based research. Students are developing many skills through the use of technology including Internet research, manipulating digital images, keyboarding, development of spreadsheets, ability to evaluate web sites, drawing and painting, and creating digital multimedia projects. Our school is constantly upgrading the technology infrastructure of the school so our students will have access to information in a manner consistent with current standards.

As a result of our integrated approach to applied technology, our students are developing proficiencies that will enable them to access a broad range of essential knowledge and skills. These skills include communication and collaboration, innovation, creativity, productivity, media literacy, and research methods. Thanks to our strategy for integrating technology across the curriculum, students are more engaged and excited about learning.

Building Use and Maintenance

The Waitsfield School is arguably the town's most valued asset. The condition of the building continues to be excellent due to the hard work and dedication of Joe Robinson and Roy Yoder. A building reserve fund was established three years ago and is used to support building maintenance and improvement projects. These projects have included items such as addressing water purification, drainage, roofing repair, etc.

This year, the school building was not only used for education of children but also as a community center. Over 40 groups used the building for meetings, classes, or activities.

With the towns approval of the municipal water system we have committed to hooking up. We are negotiating with the State of Vermont to allow us to use our Water Resources Grant to off set the cost of this hook up. While we have been able to provide students and the community with a quality of water that consistently meets state standards, the new water system will help assure that our children have access to quality water for years to come.

A Final Note from Richard

I have had the honor of being the WES principal for the past five years. At the end of this year, I will be retiring after 33 years of service. I look back with great appreciation for entrusting me with your children and your school. I feel like I am ending my career on a high note, working with many of the best teachers I have known, supportive parents, and in a community that truly values its children. This community is blessed with a dedicated, engaged and effective school board, teachers who are deeply committed, and a level of community

engagement rarely found. I will continue to be a part of this community, its school, and our children. Again, thank you for your trust and support - Richard

Respectfully Submitted By:

- Richard Schattman, Principal
- The Waitsfield Board of School Directors
 - Melissa Siner Shea, Chairperson
 - Wrenn Compère, Board Member
 - Sandy Tarburton, Board Member
 - Troy Kingsbury, Board Member
 - Rob Williams, Board Member



Kids welcoming cows back to the Simplicity Farm

Photo: Robin McDermott