

From the Principal's Pen
November 2021
Submitted by: Jennifer McGee, Principal of Atwood Primary School



Peace.

I can't think of a word that better suits our wishes for our school environment than "peaceful" here in our beloved village of Atwood Primary. Although Covid19 continues to swirl around, causing havoc in our world, here in the walls of our Atwood classrooms, we are trying to maintain peace.

As the leaves begin to fall, and the breezes begin to feel more arctic than tropical, the holiday season approaches. With the shipping shortages, the pandemic in full force, and with the, sometimes, chaotic demands of the holiday season, I am making "peace" my mantra for November through the New Year.

Our new social worker, Emily Widor, has a Peace Pledge posted outside of her office door. It goes like this:

I pledge to use my words and speak in a kind way
I pledge to help others as I go about my day
I pledge to care for our earth with my healing heart and hands
I pledge to respect people in each and every land
I pledge to join together and unite the big and small
I pledge to create peace for one and ALL.



Each week, I create a video message that goes out to our classrooms...*hopefully* sending a message to our entire community. Last week, my message was one of peace and I signed off by giving the children the two finger "peace sign". Your adorable children, as they pass me in the hallway, now give me the peace sign, and I LOVE IT!

Noise, over-planning, busy-ness and chaos equal stress. Calm, quiet, safe, and happy equal peace.

A few years ago, I called up my (now) adult children during the madness of the holidays. Just for my own psyche, I asked them what their favorite memories were of our holidays growing up. I needed to know what really mattered to my children. There was not ONE mention of gifts...not one. Here are the things they talked about:

- Going to their grandparent's houses
- Playing with their cousins
- Seeing the holiday lights
- Leaving cookies for Santa
- Advent calendars
- The fragrances of the season: balsam, cinnamon, turkeys baking
- The tradition of hiding the pickle in the tree
- Holiday music
- Holiday movies
- Playing games and cards with family

The point of sharing this with you is to encourage you to keep things simple and peaceful for your families this holiday season. The simple and inexpensive traditions create the most enduring and warm childhood memories. There may well be shipping shortages, there may be a need to adjust plans for safety reasons around Covid19...but maintaining a focus on peacefulness may keep all of us calm, centered and grounded through these next few months.

Wishing you peace.



Jenny McGee, Principal

Dates to Note:

Wednesday, October 27: School PHOTO Day

Friday, October 29: "Socktober"....Costumes for a Cause....Wear a costume to school and bring a new pair of socks for the homeless shelter (no gorey costumes or weapons please)

Thursday, November 11: No School for Veteran's Day

Friday, November 12: No School for Teachers' Workshop Day

Wednesday, November 24 – Friday, November 26: No School for Thanksgiving Break

Tuesday, November 30: Early Release Day, 12:00 Noon Release Time