



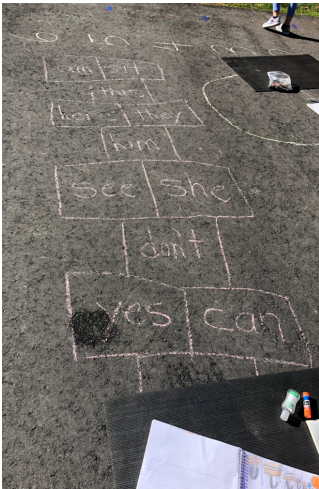
**December 14,  
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# Superintendent's Update December 2020

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***"Nothing is forever  
in this world, not  
even our problems."  
– Charlie Chaplin***

Sight word  
Hopscotch at HES



***Appleton's  
generator arrives!***



Typically, I send separate monthly newsletters to school staff and parents, but in this special holiday edition, there is no distinction in the message: Enjoy your precious time with family and friends, stay safe, and rest and relax over the winter break!

**This update is brought to you by the letter 'G'** As I was thinking about writing this update three words, all starting with the letter 'G', kept coming to mind: Gratitude, Generosity and Grace. I'll start by expressing deep and heartfelt gratitude for the teachers, staff, administrators and communities of Hope, Appleton and Lincolnville. Leaving my home of 20 years and moving to this community, starting a new job, and managing schools during a pandemic was a momentous change. I say this often, and I truly mean it: I could not imagine working in education anywhere else right now. These talented, dedicated professionals and informed, involved communities make me grateful and humbled every day. Trying to keep up with my daily practice of reminding myself of all that I have to be grateful for, I began to think about generosity of spirit. Giving yourself and others around you the room and license to be human, even with all the messiness that can entail, is essential to our well-being. We build strength and resilience by reflecting on all that we have to be grateful for and by showing up for others, even if we may not get anything in return. I have noticed that people in Maine are different than other places I've experienced when it comes to generosity. People I have met here ask first, "What can I do?" "How can I help?" This spirit of leaning toward others when they need help is a hallmark of folks in this community. Take it from someone from "away", this difference is striking, and much appreciated.

Finally, Grace. My Grandma Grace. My mom's mom, Grace Wright. Grace Wright lived into her 90's alone in her home, until she had to be cared for by others very close to the end. In her small home in the Northwestern most



*Lincolnvile swags  
hanging at Mrs.  
Clark's house. Look  
for wreaths from  
Hope to be hanging at  
the Central Office!*

*Appleton has  
fundraisers going on  
too! (but it seemed  
silly to share a  
picture of the kitchen  
items I bought  
through the Appleton  
fundraiser)*

corner of New York State, where the Niagara River flows into Lake Ontario, she lived a life that embodied her name, and I think of her when I need to channel grace. Grandma Grace believed in the good in people and accepted others for whatever it is they could bring to the conversation. Brave and artistic, she painted beautiful landscapes and could show us the beauty in a barn, a stream, a boat on the water. I'm not sure about all of you, but right now I need to find my strength again. These are trying times and in the last month or so, all the pandemic news has been dire. It is hard to concentrate on bad news all the time. So, I now know what I need to do: I need to recommit to my daily practice of gratitude, make sure I am moving through the world with generosity of spirit and see the beauty all around me, just like my Grandma Grace did. I offer this to you not only because it works for me, but also because these practices are based in research about how humans manage difficult situations. Be well, take care of each other and do whatever it takes to keep yourself healthy!



Grace Wright at  
her easel.



**Wishing Everyone a Healthy  
and Happy Holiday Season!**