

Every Student. Every Day.

Fort River Elementary School

70 South East Street
Amherst, MA 01002

413-362-1200 • www.arps.org/fr



Amherst Regional Public Schools: Our Schools

Administration

Principal: Russ Vernon-Jones
Assistant Principal: Lianne Suarez-Werlein

Parent Council Officers

President: Catherine Sanderson
Vice-Presidents: Sue Borden & Elly Hosea
Secretary: Ann McLaughlin
Treasurer: Lynn Hayes

School Council*

Chair: Russ Vernon-Jones
Members: Steve Rivkin
Michelle Spirko
Todd Felton
Amber Douglas
Traci Wolf
Joan Gallinaro
Trish Farrington
Deb Felix

*Updated 1/23/08

Fort River Highlights:

- “We are all learners here” and “We all belong here” are the central themes of the weekly assemblies started at Fort River last year. Students’ learning accomplishments, birthdays, and acts of kindness and solidarity are celebrated. Classes present recent learning projects. We reinforce positive attitudes and habits of mind for learning, and have fun singing together.
- Student leadership engaged the whole school in helping others, especially those in need, in many ways, including collecting money for UNICEF, toys for Family Outreach of Amherst, and supplies and funds for orphanages in Tibet and Zambia.
- Our annual Cambodian New Year celebration featured our Cambodian students, staff, and families with dances, songs, and learning about the culture.
- The Fort River sixth grade math team took first place in the tri-county area in the New England Math League contest. Several of our fourth graders won a regional contest with a PowerPoint presentation they developed about recycling. One of our sixth graders wrote an acrostic that won an award in a state-wide contest sponsored by the Savings Makes “Cents” program.
- Our Parent Council completed a major playground replacement project, raising funds and doing a volunteer installation of safe, accessible, varied play elements that build different muscle groups and foster cooperation and interaction.
- Visit the Fort River school website at www.arps.org/fr/ and check out “Events” and “Principles and Goals” for photos of recent events and a look at our new “Guiding Principles” and the new goals of our School Improvement Plan.



Spotlight on Exploratory Time and Reading

“Exploratory Time,” in which students spend time regularly learning about topics of their own choosing and pursuing projects they have developed, is an important feature of Fort River’s ongoing educational program. It nurtures students’ curiosity and develops life-long learning skills. Reading, sometimes for information and often for pleasure, is part of every student’s homework, every night, at Fort River. “Every student a reader, every night!”

Did You Know? Principal Russ Vernon-Jones is retiring at the end of the 2007-2008 school year after 18 years of service at Fort River. Good luck, Mr. Vernon-Jones! You will be missed!