



## DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

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### Muster Field Farms Engages Sutton Central Elementary Students in “Old Fashioned” Learning

*Local farm brings historical perspectives and appreciation to Sutton students, teachers, and community*

Sutton students who are now attending KRMS used to frequent Muster Field Farm often during their years at Sutton Central Elementary School. They were all participants in the programs at Muster Field Farm - programs which are based out of the 1810 Ryder Corner Schoolhouse on the Farm. These programs were initiated, added to, and refined by Kathleen Stowell – a Sutton parent/resident. The programs taught our students about the natural world, the challenges and chores that faced earlier generations in Sutton, the eight generations who lived in the Harvey Homestead-Tavern, and the general history of the town of Sutton.

Now, each grade first through fifth attends full and/or half day activities several times each school year. In the spring, the first grade students learn about insects. Second grade has a fall program on trees and usually a late winter program on sugaring. Third grade learns about early farming, the super-highway that passed right through Muster Field Farm until relocated in 1830, and the farm produce that was taken to coastal markets. Fourth graders arrive wearing colonial-type clothing which they made themselves and endure a day of strict, old fashioned schooling (presided over by

schoolmistress Cantrell, also in costume), laboring at farm chores, and learning details about the Harvey homestead and the earliest Harvey family members who lived there. The fifth grade does a winter session at the farm on weather and how earlier generations coped with the cold in their daily lives. They also have sessions perusing original documents both at the Farm and at the Town Hall. At the Farm they study both the transcriptions and the original letters that five third generation Harvey daughters of the 1840s wrote home from the Lowell textile mills. On their field trip to Lowell in the spring, the students wear their colonial outfits from fourth grade.

The enthusiasm of the Sutton Central School students when they arrive at the Farm is impressive. Steve Paquin, Farm Manager, makes their visits memorable with such activities as having them thresh beans from the dried plants, riding in a tractor-pulled hay wagon down to the orchard he planted seven years ago, picking apples, feeding the ones under the trees to the cows, and teaching them about many aspects of farming. Kathleen Stowell and the Sutton Central teachers keep students attentive, engaged, and focused in their away-from-school learning sessions. With just one class per grade, the student groups are just the right size for high quality experiences at Muster Field Farm.

Submitted by: Jack Noon



### Partnering with our Parents and Families: Your Input is Invaluable!

“It takes a village to raise a child,” is a phrase attributed to an old African proverb. The KRSD truly believes in the parent/school partnership in education. To that end, we will be asking parents to provide their insights regarding their children’s educa-

tional experiences via a survey. This survey and directions will be posted to the appropriate Kearsarge websites in January. Results of this survey will be used to reflect on and improve our educational practices moving forward.



### Upcoming District Events

*Mark Your Calendars - KRSD Events*

- 12/06 - Grades Close for Progress Reports
- 12/05, 12/12 (tentative) & 12/19 - School Board Meetings - KLC @ 6:30 PM
- 12/13 - Progress Reports - Mid Quarter Averages available on PowerSchool
- 12/14 - Sutton - PTO Sponsored Make-a-Gift Fair - 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM
- 12/23 - 1/3 - Holiday Break



### Kearsarge - Did You Know?

*Interesting Seasonal and District-related Facts*

- As of 2012, Sutton’s population is 1,843 people
- Since 2000, Sutton has had a population growth of 19.37 percent
- This year’s winter solstice will occur on Saturday, December 21, 2013 at 12:11 PM EST
- “This winter is shaping up to be a rough one,” says Janice Stillman, editor of *The Old Farmer’s Almanac* - bitterly cold weather and lots of snow - praemonitus, praemunitus!