

# Weekly Highlight

Athol Royalston School District

## Spotlight

Kudos to grade 5 science teacher, Jamie Hume. This week during the district learning walk, Mrs. Hume demonstrated how to effectively implement questions that allow students to have entry points into course content. She asked her students if it is possible for the water in my bottle to have come from the age of dinosaurs. Students were studying the water cycle. The prompt allowed students to use their prior knowledge to begin thinking about the topic.



## ARMS Students Show Spirit

The day before the Thanksgiving break the ARMS students showed their school spirit with a rally in the gymnasium. Sports teams ran out onto the gym floor. Student teams took part in competitive games, students on the Honor Roll were celebrated, and students announced how much money they raised for individual campaigns to support local causes. Teachers and staff also talked to students about how perseverance leads people to succeed. The day was highlighted by student's smiles and lots of school colors.



## Superintendents Schedule

12/4/2017

- Aces Visit
- RCS Visit

12/5/2017

- Arms Focus Groups
- AHS Visit

12/6/2017

- Grab and Go Breakfast Visit
- Principals Meeting

12/7/2017

- ARMS Visit
- Franklin County Meeting

- Directors Meetings
- Aces Meeting

12/8/2017

- ELL Dinner
- Budget Preparation Meeting



**Picture of The Week**  
 A special thank you to Subway for supporting our Scholar Athletes.

### Did you know on a state culture survey of grades 5,8 and 10

- 94% of Athol-Royalston students on a statewide culture survey agreed their teachers help them when they need help
- 96% of students believe their teachers are proud of them when they work hard
- 94% of students felt comfortable telling a teacher if they heard about a threat towards the school
- 85% of students believe teachers encourage students to respect different points of view when expressed in class



## 2019 Budget Design Begins

Believe it or not, the district has begun designing the district budget for next year. Building administrators and directors have been asked to start projecting their budgets. This means each person should be talking with his or her building staff and/or department to see what is needed for next year. In addition, they should be evaluating the current schedule to see if there are needs for any redesign. Currently ACES is working with a district team to develop some possible reconfigurations at the school for next year. This is based on the state data that is demonstrating a need for a restructure to ensure students are receiving the support they need. Also, at the high school, the principal along with the ILT and department chairs are reviewing the schedule to see what can be modified to get the most time on learning, ensure commitments to specific classes are upheld and to ensure the school has teachers placed in positions they were hired for. **If any teacher or staff member has needs for next year now would be the time to discuss it with your building administrator.**





# CLASSROOM WALK THROUGH

The idea behind walk-throughs is that firsthand classroom observations can paint a picture to inform improvement efforts. These observations typically involve looking at how well teachers are implementing a particular program or set of practices that the district or school has adopted. For example, a school principal might want to know whether teachers are able to put into practice their recent training on using learning targets.

In theory, before visiting classrooms, observers decide what they will focus on, what evidence they will collect, and how they will make sense of it. Afterward, they report their findings formally or informally to the building administration who in turn should share results with teachers.

Walk-throughs are *not* intended to evaluate individual teachers. Rather, the goals of walk-throughs are to help administrators and teachers learn more about instruction and to identify what training and support teachers need.

The district will complete its first set of walkthroughs at all school buildings this week. It is expected that the building administration will share the results with the staff and troubleshoot about how the school can improve in areas of weakness.



## Entry Point Questions

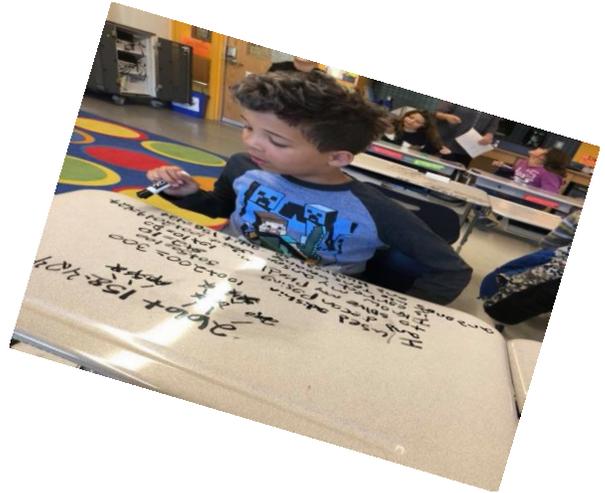
*Entry points are great ways to have students begin to conceptualize a new topic being taught. So what is an entry point? It is an opportunity for a teacher to ask a question that allows the student to use their background knowledge to form thoughts about the new topic.*

*Example, in social studies students were asked to talk about a time when there was conflict in their lives and explain the elements that led to the conflict. Students did this just prior to starting their unit on the revolutionary war.*

## School Highlights

### ACES

WINN block is up and running. This is the time when students receive assistance and help in areas where they have not performed well or get accelerated course work because they have been able to show that they are ready to move on to the next set of grade level standards.



### RCS

Royalston Community School received survey results on a climate and culture survey the state conducted with all 5<sup>th</sup> grades during MCAS. The survey results show that the school out scored the state in almost every category. Congratulations to the teachers and staff in the building.

### ARMS

Athol-Royalston Middle School has set up its data wall to begin tracking student performance though out the building. The wall shows students performance on MCAS, behavior and grades. It also shows school trends in the implementation of best practices learning strategies implemented across the school.



### Athol High School

Teachers have begun designing formative assessments for each grade level that align to the standards being taught in each unit. Department chairs are leading the work in conjunction with the 6-12 curriculum coordinator.

