

FARMINGTON RIVER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
WEEKLY FAMILY NEWSLETTER

January 20, 2023

Edition #18

Dear Farmington River Families,

Given today's snowfall and prediction for next week I thought it might be a good idea to reprint my snowday procedure first shared in the November 18th newsletter. During the fall months I met with the DPW Superintendents from Otis and Sandisfield to share maps of bus routes and discuss procedures. When snow or ice is forecast the I place a call to Brad Curry from Sandisfield DPW and Derek Poirier of the Otis DPW between 4:30-5:00 am to ascertain the conditions of the roads. I make the decision to cancel school if the Superintendents report that the roads are in poor condition and they are unable to keep the roads open and safe. I make the decision to delay the opening of school for two hours if the Road Superintendents report that the roads can be made safe with extra time. The Dufour Bus Company has asked that a decision be made by 5:15 am if possible. A decision to cancel or delay school is promptly followed by an automated call to all PreK-12 FRRSD families and staff. This is typically done by 5:45 am if possible. The information is also posted on the website and sent to local radio and television stations.

Sincerely,

Rob Putnam

You can access all previous editions of the Farmington River Elementary School Weekly Family Newsletter at this link: [Newsletter Archive](#)

**FRRSD Student Council is sponsoring a winter dance for the FRRSD community:**

**Farmington River Winter Dance Night**

**Friday, February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023**



**6 pm - 8:30 pm**

Family Dance for

Grades pre-k -3

**6 pm -7 pm**

An adult must be  
present with child

- Hokey pokey
- Chicken Dance
- Cha cha slide
- Macarena
- And more!!!
- Refreshments
- 50-50 raffle
- DJ Mike in the House!!!

(Parents who attend the first program with a younger child may relax with their child in the cafeteria while older children attend their dance program. There will be legos, games, and art supplies for fun family time.)

## 7 pm - 8:30 pm Grade 4-6 Winter Dance

**Hosts: DJ Mike and Mr. Flower!!**

**Group Dances like:** Cha Cha Slide

Vogue

Watch Me (Whip/Nae Nae)

And more!!

\* The Dance Programs are free and open to the FRRSD Community!!!

\* Glo-Sticks and Necklaces will be provided for all those who venture onto the dance floor!!!

\* Refreshments will be available for purchase.

\* 50- 50 Raffle will benefit the Student Council Activities Fund.

**Bring your Dance Shoes and Join us for a Night of FUN!!!!!!**

### **Robo Calls**

We have been refining the Robocall system by creating customized lists that target specific groups. For example, we decided to cancel afterschool programs on Thursday and rather than calling the whole school community we programmed the system to call just those families affected by the decision. We will be working of creating lists for specific groups as we move forward.

### **A very busy week for Music and Photography at Farmington!**

Following the success of FRRSD's new Select Chorus, Mr. Flower has secured a spot in the After School program offerings for ten Fifth and Sixth grade members to rehearse uninterrupted for 90 minutes on Monday afternoons.

Select Chorus consists of students desiring an opportunity to sing at school concerts and other FRRSD community events. Their first public performance was in December, caroling for our community members at the Veterans Home in Sandisfield. Mr. Flower (singing) and Mr. Putnam (playing keyboard) accompanied the chorus on their premier performance under extremely chilly temperatures. Afterward, the student shared Chinese take-out back in the music room to celebrate.

Many of these students have never taken instrument lessons but wanted to experience the pleasure and thrill of performing in public. As a result, the Select Chorus was conceived last year while preparing for our 2022's Spring Concert. Everyone is looking forward to integrating our new chorus with band members in future performances.

Mr. Flower began the fourth year of his Visual Frontiers Photography Program at Farmington on Thursday afternoon. After last summer's successful pilot program CTSB in Lee, MA, Mr. Flower received funding from our Otis and Sandisfield Cultural Councils and the green light to teach a 15-week photography and video program for students to receive hands-on photography and video production skills. Pretty Amazing, and the students' work looks great!

Students enrolled in last summer's pilot program managed to write, shoot, edit and act in a "Fire Safety" Public Service Announcement (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mLd-p-xKrko>), as well as a parody of a TV game show. The wonderful staff at CTSB have been a pleasure to work with and have frequently commented on how creative our students are and how much their staff enjoys collaborating with our school. I believe that FRE is the only elementary school in our county working with CTSB. I can't wait to see what our students come up with for the current program.

Finally, our fantastic Otis and Sandisfield Cultural Councils have once again awarded our school with generous grants to underwrite our Student Loaner Musical Instrument and Photography programs. While there are many repairs Mr. Flower has taken on since his appointment in 2018; there are many more repairs that require being repaired by specialists. Photography and Video equipment are not always within the means of most families. The support and grants from our Cultural Councils ensure we can repair instruments, purchase photographic materials for our students to print and exhibit their photographs at school, transport students to and from CTSB in Lee, and archive all our students' projects here at Farmington River Elementary.

The incredibly generous gifts we receive from our community members are equally as important. Shortly after the Enrichment loaner program was announced to the community, Guitars, basses (acoustic and electric), amplifiers, a beautiful Baldwin Piano, Keyboards, Flutes, Trombones, Trumpets, Clarinets, Saxophones, Drum Kits, endless Percussive instruments, digital cameras and lenses, tripods scanners have been received by our school.

Should your family have a working instrument that has been hidden away in your closet or attic or a digital SLR camera that is not being used or has been recently upgraded, please consider donating your surplus to Farmington River Elementary School. The school will gladly provide you with a letter acknowledging your charitable gift, which you may use for your tax filings. Additionally, you will experience first-hand the joy and opportunity you give the children in our community.

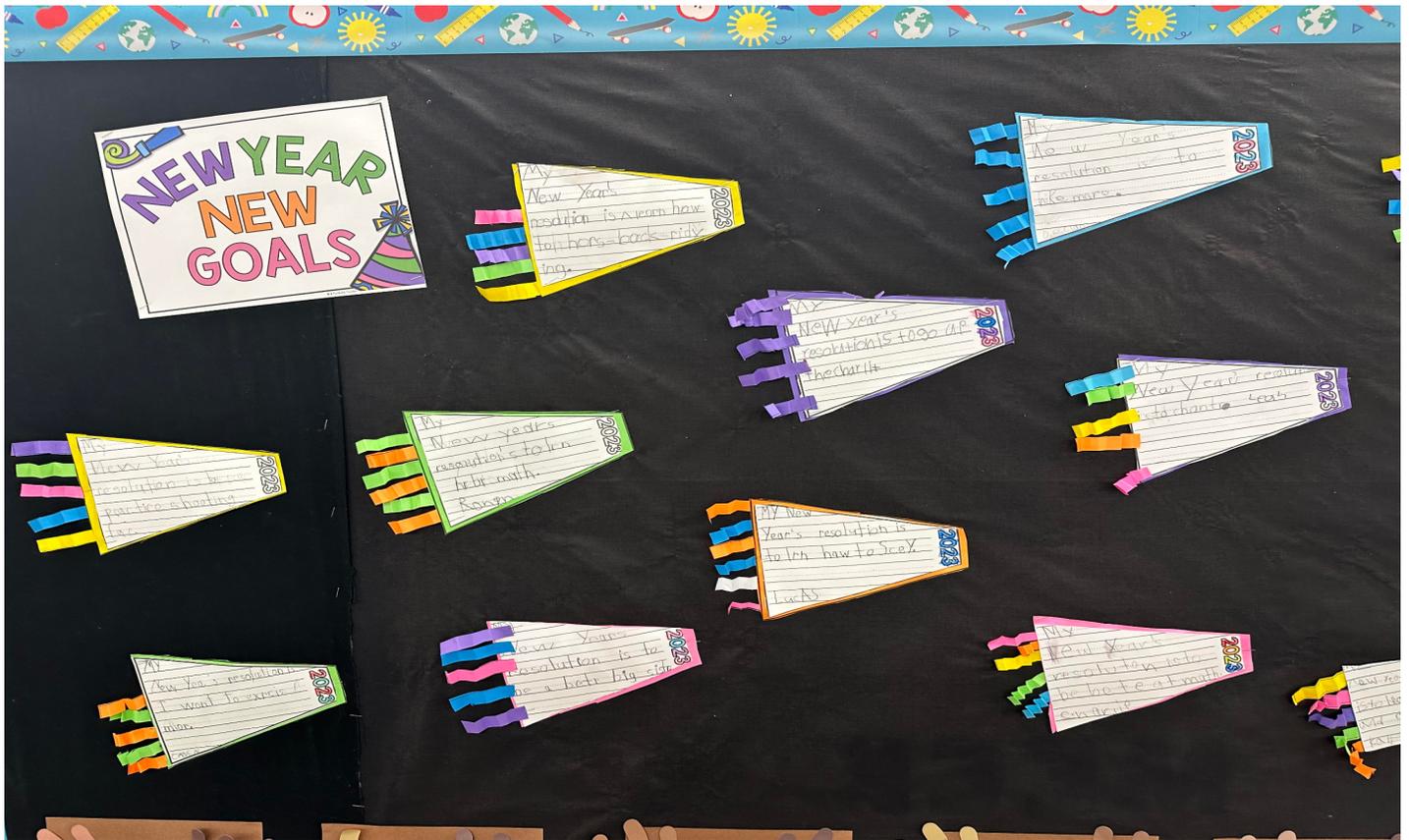
## First Grade Learns About Martin Luther King, Jr.

First Grade students read the book, “Martin’s Big Words” by Doreen Rappaport. Following the story we had a lengthy discussion about why he was so important and when and why we celebrate him each year. Based on his famous “I Have a Dream” speech, first grade students wrote “dreams” that they had to make our world a better place.



## New Year's Resolutions

After reading the story, “Squirrel’s New Year’s Resolution,” students in first grade talked about what a resolution was and why it is important to set goals for ourselves. Each student then wrote a resolution for the New Year. Some of our resolutions included exercising more, riding the chair lift on our own, learning to swim better, and being a better big sister.



**Student Artwork Showing Their Favorite Places and Activities in Otis:**



Skiing - Olivia

**Skiing- Olivia, Grade 4**



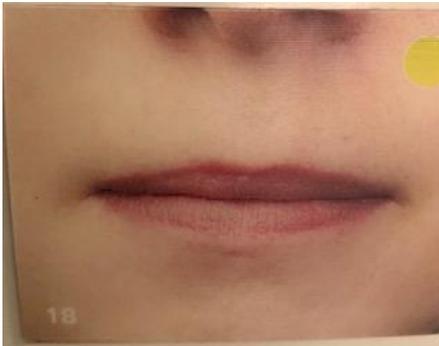
**House by the Lake-Clarisse, Grade2**



Papas- Khyia, Grade 4

## Fun with Speech and Language

### Mystery Speech Sound



**Clue #1** Air comes out of your nose, not your mouth, to make this sound!

**Clue #2** You hear me at the beg

## After School Basketball Skills Grades K-1

Students this week worked on their ball handling and shooting skills!



## PE News

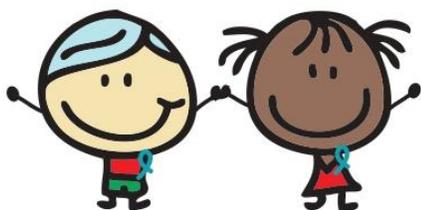
Students in 2nd-6th grade have been working on Pillo Polo - a fun version of floor hockey! We focused this week on passing and stickhandling drills before getting into a game.





### **Nurse's Corner**

Please review this information at home with your child. I will also be sending home a paper copy today to keep everyone informed and safe. Handwashing after eating and not sharing foods in the school setting are very important.



# Be a PAL<sup>®</sup> to Friends with Food Allergies

**Did you know that 1 in 13 kids in the United States has a food allergy? That's about two kids in every classroom. For kids with food allergies, even a tiny amount of the food they are allergic to can make them very sick.**

The most common food allergies are to milk, egg, peanuts, tree nuts (like walnuts and almonds), soy, wheat, fish, and shellfish (like shrimp and crab). But a person can be allergic to any food!

Since food allergies affect so many kids, it is good to learn how you can Be a PAL<sup>®</sup> to a friend with food allergies! Here's how:



## **Know that food allergies are very serious.**

It's hard to believe that foods you eat every day can hurt others, but it's true!

If someone with a food allergy eats something they are allergic to, they can get very sick and sometimes have to go to the hospital.

If a friend or classmate has a food allergy, don't tease, bully or make fun of them. Tell an adult right away if you see other kids picking on someone with a food allergy,



## **Don't share your food with friends who have food allergies.**

You can share jokes and laughs with your friends with food allergies, but don't share food. For kids with food allergies, sharing food can be very dangerous. So don't offer kids with food allergies anything from your lunch or snack. Why? Because it may have something in it that could make them very sick or hurt them.



## **Wash hands after eating.**

Washing your hands with soap and water after you eat is very important. It's a good way to clean off any food that is on your hands.



## **Help all of your friends and classmates have fun together!**

There are lots of ways to have fun without food! Listening to music, playing board or video games, making crafts, going for a bike ride, and playing sports are just some of the cool things you can do together. This way, everyone stays safe and has fun!



## **If a friend with food allergies feels sick, get help right away!**

If your friend feels sick or thinks they may have eaten something they are allergic to, tell an adult right away or dial 911! They will make sure your friend gets help and gets the medicine they need to feel better.

**Save this handout so you won't forget how to Be A PAL<sup>®</sup>, and Protect A Life From Food Allergies!**



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[foodallergy.org](http://foodallergy.org)

## 4th Grade Winter Break Essays

The 4th grade class spent each morning sharing different things about their vacations using our "TEEC Talk" strategy. This is a trick we use to "talk" in the same way we would "write" pieces of a paragraph. After sharing so many wonderful things, they used the steps of the writing process to help them figure out how to collect ideas on paper, organize them into body paragraphs, and write a fancy five paragraph essay! We will be sharing essays over the next few newsletters.

I had a wonderful time over winter break for many reasons. Christmas Eve, opening presents, and family are only a few things I did over winter break.

Christmas Eve was a spectacular part of my winter break for many reasons. One reason is I looked at the Santa tracker. This was cool because he was only three hours away from my house. Another reason is I put out milk and cookies for Santa and carrots for the reindeer. This was awesome because there was a carrot trail out of my house. These are only a few reasons Christmas Eve was so special.

Opening presents was another amazing part of my winter break for many reasons. One reason is I got to open my stocking. This was fun because I got a couple pairs of fuzzy socks. Another reason is I was so excited. This was silly because I wanted to open my presents so badly. This was only a few more reasons why opening presents was a great part of my winter break.

Family was a fun part of my winter break for many reasons. One reason is I got to hang out with them. This was awesome because I don't get to see my family much. Another reason is I get to go to my uncle's house. This is amazing because we got to just relax. These are just a few reasons why Family is a fun part of my winter break.

These are just a few things I did over winter break. Christmas Eve, opening presents, and family I had a wonderful time over winter break.

By: Khyia

I had a spectacular winter break for many reasons. One reason is that New Year's Eve was so much fun. Another reason is Christmas Eve was so cozy. And lastly, the presents I got from Santa and my family were awesome! These are just a few reasons why I had a spectacular winter break! I had an amazing New Year's Eve for many reasons. One reason is I got to hang out with friends I haven't seen in a long time. This is really fun because we went down in the basement and played gaga ball for hours. SLAP! Another reason is they had such good food including chicken wings, brownies, and New years cookies. This was good because I was not hungry the whole time I was there. Lastly, we watched the ball drop. BOOM! It was SO much fun because before it dropped we all had party hats, fun glasses, and when it dropped we would make noise with our noise makers. These are just a few reasons why I had such an awesome New years eve.

Another reason I had a great winter break was because of Christmas eve. One reason was I loved putting milk, cookies, and carrots out for Santa and his reindeer. This is cool because without even seeing the presents under the tree I can see if he came to my grandma's house just by looking at the crumbs on the plate and the empty glass. Another reason was I got to see my grandma, uncle dan, cousin jackson and my Aunt katie. This is awesome because I got to hang out with them and talk. Lastly, I got to open a couple presents early because my cousin [my uncle Dan's son] his parents are divorced so he was unable to spend Christmas with us this year. This is sad but happy

because he had a great time with us opening his presents but it was sad because we did not see him on christmas day. These are just a few reasons why I had a great Christmas eve!

Lastly, another reason why I had a great winter break was because I got presents from my family and Santa. One thing I got was roller skates. This is cool because I got to ride around my grandma's house. Another reason is I love to see what other people had gotten. This is cool because I liked to see their faces when they opened their presents!. Lastly, I got to use what I got after I opened them. This is awesome because I did not get bored.

These were a few reasons why winter break was AWESOME winter break! [Just a reminder] I had an awesome New Years Eve, A great Christmas Eve, and AMAZING presents! YAY!!! BYE!!!

By: Olivia

My winter break was amazing for many reasons. One is New Year's Eve. Another is christmas. Lastly, is present. These are just a few reasons why my winter break was cool.

I Love New Year's Eve for many reasons. One reason is all the games I played. For example I played monopoly with my uncle and my cousins, my cousin Audry won. Another reason is when my grandma made us a fancy dinner. I love this because we had ribs, this is my favorite food. Lastly, I had snacks. This is awesome because it helps me stay up till 12.00pm. These are just a few reasons why one thing was cool on winter break.

I really enjoyed Christmas Eve for many reasons. One reason is family. This is so so so important because I got to spend time with my mom, my grandma and grandpa. Another reason is going to bed early. I'm ok doing this because I can wake up to presents. Lastly is playing X box before bed. I love this because I can try to beat my uncle up in hockey. This is just another reason why my winter break was cool.

This is cool because I got to open presents. One reason is I got a gel blaster. This is amazing because it can shoot up to 400 feet away. Another reason is I got a rc car. This is fantastic because it can go in mud ,ice , snow and dirt. Lastly is when my grandpa got me a new ukulele. I was so happy, because we could play together. These are just a few reasons why my winter break was amazing. New year was so fun. Christmas was awesome. I loved to rip up the wrapping paper up. I wish winter break never ended.

By: Satpal

My winter break was amazing for many reasons because I got good presents. One reason is I got a new Lego set. This is cool because I like to put them together. Another reason is army men. This is amazing because I like to play with them and I put them everywhere in my bedroom. The third reason is I got a new ski bag. This is good because now I can put my ski boots inside of it and my helmet. These are only a few reasons why presents made my winter break so amazing.

My winter break was cool for many reasons. One reason is Family. This was good because my Brother and sister were nice to me. Another reason is my step uncle. This was cool because we played with my new army men. The third reason is Joy because everyone was nice to each other.

My winter break was fun because I played outside for many reasons. One reason is skiing. This is cool because I like going skiing with my friends. I like skiing because I get to go up the chairlift. Another reason is I like making a snowman. This is fun because like putting the head on the snowman. The third reason is I had a snowball fight. This is cool because I like to make snowballs and make forts. These are only a few reasons why my winter break was sooo amazing.

By: Thomas

Winter break was spectacular for many reasons. One reason is I got awesome presents. Another reason is Christmas Eve was so much fun. Lastly, a reason is I got to spend lots of time with my family. These are just a few reasons why my winter break was fantastic.

Winter break was wonderful because of presents for many reasons. One reason is I got a pet bearded dragon. This is awesome because he is so cute, small, and only a few months old. I also like to feed him crickets, it is fun to watch him chase them down and then eat them. Chomp! Crunch! Secondly, I got a chromebook for Christmas. This was surprising because I now have a computer of my own. Another reason is I got soccer shin guards. This is exciting because I have wanted to play soccer for so long and now I can. Lastly, I like to see my family open the presents I got them. This is fun because I like to see if they like the gifts I got them and it is really exciting. These are only a few reasons why presents made my winter break fabulous.

Winter break was amazing because of Christmas Eve for many reasons. One reason is I decorate the tree. This is always fun because I love to put on the big and small ornaments every year. Another reason is we put out the milk, cookies, and carrots. This is cool because this year I got to pour the milk. Lastly, I went to Mimi's house on Christmas. This is awesome because we opened more presents, and we ate tasty foods. Mmmm! These are a few reasons why Christmas Eve made my winter break magnificent.

Winter break was unbelievable because of my family for many reasons. One reason is me, my mom, my dad, and my brothers watched a movie. This is cool because I love to snuggle up on the couch, get cozy and watch a movie. Another reason is we hung out. This is fun because we played lots of fun games like chutes and ladders, pictionary, and the game of life. Lastly, we had lunch and dinner with my family. This is tasty because the food is always so good. Some of my favorite foods there are my uncle Shawn's mashed potatoes, grandma and grandpa's corn, and the mac and cheese they had. These are a few reasons why my family made winter break super.

These were a few reasons why winter break was amazing. One reason is the presents I got were super. Another reason is Christmas Eve was magnificent. Lastly, I saw almost all of my family. These are a few reasons why winter break was fabulous.

By: Tori

I had a wonderful time over winter break. One reason was Christmas Eve, another reason was opening presents, and lastly New Year's Eve!

Christmas Eve made my Winter Break awesome for many reasons. One reason is my nephew came over to my house for a week-long sleepover. This was fun because we played hide and seek every day! Another reason was I made sugar cookies with my Mom. This is fun because we decorated the cookies with sprinkles and frosting. This is why Christmas Eve made my Winter break fantastic.

Presents made my winter break SO wonderful for many reasons. One reason is my Elf got me a watch on Christmas morning. This is cool because having a watch is useful to keep track of time. Another reason is my mom got me Jenga. I played with the Jenga blocks with my cousin and brother all day [my little brother won] . Another thing I got was a lego airplane. I finished putting it together on Christmas morning! These are just a few reasons why my presents made my winter break fabulous! New Year's Eve made my Christmas break fabulous for many reasons. One reason is my cousin, and we watched the ball drop. This was cool because we stayed up until after midnight and I couldn't go to sleep. Lastly, my cousin and I played Far Cry 3 on New Year's. This was awesome because enemies come to shoot you and you try to survive. That is why New Year's Eve was Wonderful!

My winter break was so magnificent for many reasons. One reason was Christmas Eve, another reason was opening presents, and last but not least was New Year's Eve!

By: William

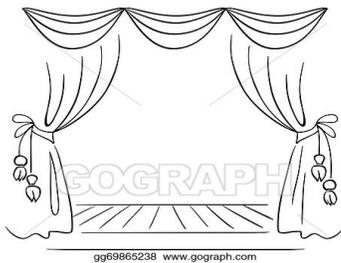
## LOOKING FORWARD

### Special Education Parent Advisory Committee (SEPAC) MEETING NOTICE

The Special Education Parent Advisory Committee will host a meeting on January 30th 2023 at 3:30 pm - 4:30 pm in the Farmington River Elementary School Dining Room.

This meeting will include a review of Special Education Regulations as well as other agenda items. Additional sessions will also be scheduled in the future. Coffee and light refreshments will be served.

The meeting will be hosted by Denise Hardie, former long term school administrator and Otis resident as the District acting SEPAC chairperson and Michael A. Saporito – FRRSD Director of Student Services



gg69865238 www.gograph.com

**SAVE THE DATES!!!!!!!**



gg67102912 www.gograph.com

The Farmington River Community Production this Spring is called "The It's Never Too Late Show" a musical featuring a cast of endangered and extinct species of animals in a talk show setting. All roles will be played by the students at Farmington River. **There will be two performances for our community in May 2023: Friday, May 19th at 6:30 pm and a Saturday Matinee on May 20th, at 4:30 pm.** We have been awarded grant funding from our local MCC chapters in Otis and Sandisfield, MA and deeply appreciate their support!

A script-writing group of about 10 children in grades 4-6 have written the musical and chosen the score for each of the musical numbers. There will be auditions for children in grades 4-6 interested in participating in this show on **Thursday, February 9th, 2023, from 3 until 4:30 pm.** Children in the lower grades can let Ms. Catullo know if they would like to participate as "Endangered Rainforest Bird Species" and can return their permission forms before the end of January. These forms will be sent home the week of Jan. 16th.

Rehearsals for children in grades 4-6 begin February 23rd and will continue every Thursday and Friday from then until the final performances. Children in grades 2 and 3 will join rehearsals beginning in April. If your child is interested in being in the musical, and has not yet returned a permission form, these forms will be available in the Art Room or the front office.

Parent helpers are very much needed for assistance with costumes, helping children learn their lines, and stage management, as well as baking goods for the bake sales held at both performances. If you are a parent who would like to help at Friday rehearsals, please contact Laura Catullo at [lcattullo@frrsd.org](mailto:lcattullo@frrsd.org)

I look forward to working with your children to present our third annual original community performance, written by the children at FRRSD!

Thank you!

Laura Catullo [lcattullo@frrsd.org](mailto:lcattullo@frrsd.org)



The flyer is set against a light blue background with several white snowflake graphics. In the top left, the words "WINTER DANCE" are written in large, bold, blue letters, slanted upwards. In the top center is a circular logo for the Sandisfield Recreation Committee, featuring a colorful figure of people holding hands. To the right of the logo, the text "FREE Event" and "All ages welcome!" is written in a blue, cursive font. Below the logo, the text "The Sandisfield Recreation Committee invites EVERYONE to dance those winter blues away! Join us for music by DJ Jonny Jams, appetizers, non-alcoholic beverages, chocolate fountain and more!" is written in a blue, sans-serif font. To the right of this text is an illustration of three people dancing, with musical notes floating around them. At the bottom, the event details are listed in a blue, sans-serif font: "Saturday, February 11th", "5pm - 8pm", "Fire station #2", and "Route 57". On the bottom left, the RSVP information is provided: "RSVP by 1.28.23 to sandisfieldevents@recreationcommittee.info or (413) 269-7357".

**WINTER DANCE**

RECREATION COMMITTEE  
SANDISFIELD MASSACHUSETTS  
SANDISFIELDEVENTS@RECREATIONCOMMITTEE.INFO

*FREE Event  
All ages welcome!*

The Sandisfield Recreation Committee invites **EVERYONE** to dance those winter blues away! Join us for music by DJ Jonny Jams, appetizers, non-alcoholic beverages, chocolate fountain and more!

*Saturday, February 11th  
5pm - 8pm*

**Fire station #2  
Route 57**

RSVP by 1.28.23 to  
[sandisfieldevents@recreationcommittee.info](mailto:sandisfieldevents@recreationcommittee.info)  
or (413) 269-7357

## OTIS POLICE DEPARTMENT

with the Farmington River Elementary School

# Food Drive

JANUARY 23 -  
FEBRUARY 10, 2023

Food is a human right and is an immediate and tangible way to help someone. Every donation of food helps.

We accept donations of non-perishable food in jars, cans and sealed packets. We recommend sauces, soups, beans, vegetables in cans or jars, peanut butter, jelly, boxed juices, long-life milk, macaroni and cheese, snacks, and tuna fish.



### Donations can be dropped off at the following locations:

\*Papa's, \*Knox Trail Inn, \*Katie's, \*Otis Town Hall,

\*Bruce's Hardware, \*Otis Poultry Farm

Food donations benefit families in the Otis and Sandisfield communities. Thank you!