• Despite the fact that snow and ice have limited our outdoor options for recess these past two months, SME held an in-house winter carnival on Thursday, Feb. 15. Mrs. Lacasse and Ms. Belknap organized games, relays and snow-man building. We have posted a slide/video of the event on our website. Feb. 15 also marked the last day of the Rivendell Recreation Association sponsored ski program at the Dartmouth Skiway. SME had 51 students participate in skiing, 86 students participate in Hulbert, and 17 chose to either not send their child to school on Thursdays, or pick them up and take them home at 10:30. The recent Board meeting provided a platform for parents to air their views on skiing and the Hulbert Center program. I look forward to working on, or advising the ad-hoc Winter Program committee under Dr. Arbour’s direction.

• We are very fortunate to have the support of the UVM Master Gardener Program. Jaci Allen, our liaison with UVM, spent considerable volunteer time helping teachers and our buildings and grounds crew with the new gardens and landscaping. She also spent many hours writing a grant proposal on our behalf, which unfortunately did not receive approval by the review committee because of intense competition. Nevertheless, Jaci will continue to provide support in her current capacity in helping to procure seeds and provide direction so that we get the most for our efforts. We have Mary Bryant to thank for introducing the UVM project to our school, and corresponding support from the Fairlee Garden Club. We look forward to our first clean-up efforts in April.

• The purchase of our outdoor musical instruments having been made, we look forward to their installation this spring. While initially slated for last fall, more pressing and essential building and grounds projects took precedence. Money for the purchase of these instruments was made possible by a grant from the Vermont Rural Partnership last year.

• For the second year now, our two district fourth grade teachers along with Mrs. MacQueen and me, have arranged a special two-day overnight field trip at the Hulbert Center this March. The purpose is to have an opportunity for these two groups to meet prior to their coming together in grade five next August, 2018. This was a great success last year, and helped our new incoming fifth grade students assimilate quickly into the culture of SME.