

## Peterborough Elementary School

17 High Street, Peterborough, N.H. 03458 • (603) 924-3828

Susan H. Copley, Ph.D., Principal



February 7th, 2002

To: The NH Council on the Arts , AIR Grant Review Committee

Dear Review Committee Members,

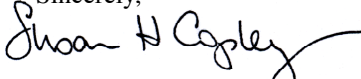
This letter is written in enthusiastic support of the attached grant proposal for a 2002-2003 AIR residencies project with Ron King. As you may know, we are presently in a yearlong residency with Ron King, the landscape architect. It has been an immensely valuable and exciting endeavor to work with Mr. King! He is an ever-patient, resourceful professional who has worked with us on a regular basis throughout the year.

When he first arrived, we had the vague, amorphous idea that we wanted to improve the school grounds so that they would be more welcoming and more educationally useful. From this point, he has worked through the design process with staff, students, and the Planning Committee to create a clear pathway towards realizing a compelling vision for creating outdoor learning environments. This spring we will get started.

However, the 3-5 year plan needs your support for next year so that we can continue to implement the 'next steps.' Our goal is to continue working with Ron King to help us with the overall planning and to work specifically with the project to enhance the new Front Entrance facing High Street. The present concrete and steel entrance structure needs Ron's creative ideas to make it more child-centered and welcoming, for sure! We also want to revive the Japanese 'quiet garden' created during a residency a few years ago, and to create additional bird and butterfly gardens around the school. Teachers are full of enthusiasm for making the children's garden dreams come true' - and for teaching students how to apply their math and science skills in creating and enjoying these garden areas. In addition, students will be visiting the gardens for inspiration for all sorts of creative writing activities, including writing garden-based poetry!

Let me end with a vignette: this afternoon I was driving into the school parking lot after a meeting at the SAU. There was Mrs. Elwell's Fourth Grade class out in front of the school looking around. I stopped my car, and students and teacher came over to say Hi. "Don't worry, Mrs. Copley," Sophia said through my car window, "Our class is going to make this place look really great as soon as the snow melts - we know how to do it!!" I cheered them on, with a huge smile on my face, thanking our good fortune to have our school involved with the powerful experiences of working with an Artist in Residence.

I fully love AIR residencies and the growth and learning they inspire. I will whole-heartedly support this AIR grant proposal, and look forward to its implementation!

Sincerely,  
  
Susan H. Copley, Ph.D.  
Principal