



# P. S. 98 SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

Home School Connection

Winter 2025

## Principal Chan's Message

Dear PS 98 Families,

I want to take a moment to share some exciting updates with you and express my gratitude for the continued support from our wonderful school community. So far this year, our students have shown tremendous growth academically, socially, and emotionally.

Our teachers have been working diligently to provide engaging and meaningful learning experiences that challenge each child to reach their fullest potential. Students engage in hands-on science investigations and learn science concepts through informational literature that is part of our standards-based Amplify science curriculum. The school purchased science test preparation materials for grades 4 and 5 to support their preparation for the 5th grade Science State Test. It's been inspiring to see the hard work of both our staff and students come to life in the classroom.

The week of February 10th was Kindness Week. Students engaged in various activities, such as buddy reading and sending kindness grams, to celebrate acts of kindness. Our ongoing efforts to strengthen social-emotional learning and character development has had a positive impact on our school culture.

We've made strides in enhancing our communication with families. Our goal is to keep you informed about your child's progress, school events, and important updates. One of our school events this year was Family Math Night where parents and children played math games together with teachers and staff. This year we offered additional parent workshops for you to learn more about our school curricula. Additional Coffee and Conversations were scheduled to provide more opportunities for parents to speak with school administration. If you ever have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out to me or any member of our staff.

As we move forward in the second half of the school year, we remain committed to ensuring every child's success. Together, with your continued partnership, I am confident that we will make even greater strides in the months ahead.

Thank you for your ongoing support and dedication to our school community. We are excited about the journey ahead and look forward to celebrating many more achievements together.

Warm regards,

*Kristy Chan*

**The Douglaston School Vision Statement:** P. S. 98 is a place where school and home come together to promote learning to meet standards of excellence. Our students will become self-disciplined, creative and independent learners. We believe every child will succeed in ways that reflect his or her own aptitudes and interests. We value student and community voice and collaboration. P. S. 98 encourages a strong partnership between school and home to support leadership, promote good citizenship and build a strong sense of community.

**Instructional Focus:** P. S. 98 ensures high expectations and rigorous instruction for every student across interdisciplinary content. We implement inclusive curricula and assessments. Our curriculum includes diverse perspectives that reflect and affirm all students' identities, lived experiences, and cultures. We foster students to be independent lifelong learners.

**School-wide Instructional Priority:** P. S. 98 develops and strengthens a welcoming and affirming school environment by fostering communication between school and home and attending to the social and emotional needs of all students.

**Social Emotional Learning Mission Statement:** P. S. 98's goal is to provide evidence-based social and emotional learning (SEL) as part of our instruction. We believe in educating the whole child, equipping students for success in school and in life by fostering positive relationships, self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, and responsible decision-making. We strive to know our students well, collaborate with families and support SEL to build supportive relationships between students and between students and staff.

**Diversity and Inclusion Policy:** At P. S. 98, we strive to create a diverse and inclusive environment that values the experience, perspective, and contributions of all students, families and faculty. As a result, we seek to foster an inclusive environment where the individual differences among us are respected, understood, and recognized as a source of strength that enriches our school community.

## Pre-K News

Mrs. Tulimieri

### Building Unit

In Pre-K this month we completed our Building Unit of Study. The students explored the diverse buildings in our community. We also discussed how the buildings are the same and different. The children learned about jobs in the construction field and the tools that they use. Finally, the students learned what buildings are made of and how we can make a community with our buildings.

Throughout this unit, the students took part in many read-alouds on the subject of buildings. *The Three Little Pigs and the Somewhat Bad Wolf* and *The Three Javelinas* were two of these books. As a class, we had a chance to explore a variety of building materials such as sticks, bricks, wood, straw and cardboard. We discussed the positives and negatives of each of these building materials. The children had a fun time constructing buildings out of these materials at home and at school.

The Pre-K children were encouraged to think like engineers and builders as they built structures in the Blocks, Art and Discovery Learning Areas. The children drew blueprints of the buildings that they wanted to construct and explained their thinking after constructing them. In class we also discussed how adhesives such as concrete and steel cables make buildings sturdy. The students spoke about the adhesives and materials that they used to make their buildings strong. They also tested out the stability of their buildings by trying to blow down their structures with the air from a hairdryer.

Now that our Building Unit has end the children are excited to make predictions and test out their thinking about water in our Water Unit! The children are learning about volume by doing experiments with containers of different shapes and sizes. They are also making watercolor creations in the Art Learning Area. The students are excited to make oobleck, a mixture of cornstarch and water.

Pre-K is full of discovery and fun!

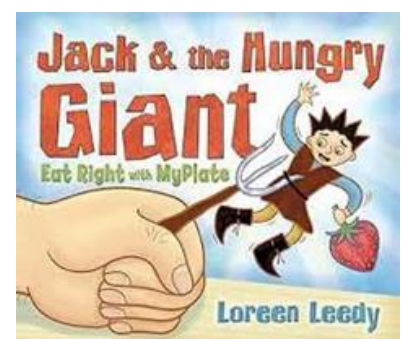
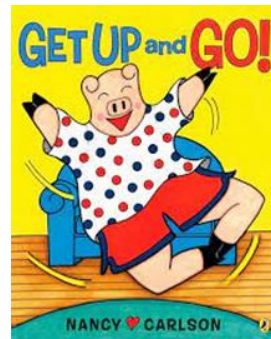
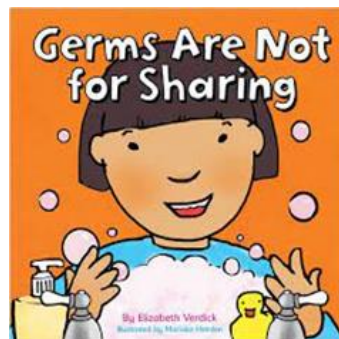
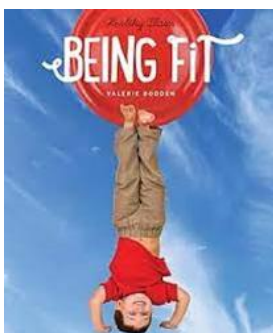
### Word Work

We just completed Unit 2 in Foundations. The children learned how to blend and read three-sound short vowel words by tapping out using their fingers. These words are often called CVC words. The children learned CVC words that began with the consonants f, l, m, n, r, and s. These consonants have sounds that can be “held” into the vowel sound and are easier to blend. The children are also learning how to form capital letters A-Z. These letters are taught to the students in alphabetical order. For Unit 3 of Foundations, the children will continue to use their magnetic tile boards and dry erase boards to help them practice sounds and letter formation. We will also continue learning new trick words. The children will also work on tapping and blending nonsense words. The nonsense words have no meaning, but they conform to the English spelling patterns and rules. We will continue to use the Heggerty program to practice rhyme recognition, blending words, isolating beginning and final sounds, adding and deleting parts of words, and language awareness. Over the last few weeks, we have been practicing how to “chop” words to hear the syllables. The children love doing the hand motions while learning word study skills!



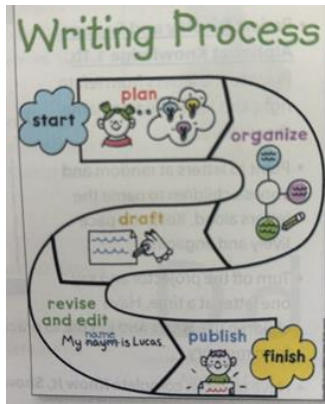
### Reading

We just completed Module 4 of the HMH program. Our essential question for this module was: How can I be my healthiest me? The children have been reviewing and learning many skills such as: how to ask and answer questions, recognize and use academic vocabulary, use text features, identify the central idea and key details, identify the characteristics of informational texts, identify the characteristics of fairy tales, retell a story, and describe the plot using beginning, middle, and end details. The children have also continued to learn print concepts such as directionality. We continue to practice reading from top to bottom and left to right. The children are identifying their trick words in stories and using their Foundations skills to help them tap out unfamiliar words when reading aloud or independently. The children also loved working in literacy centers, both working independently or in pairs with their classmates.



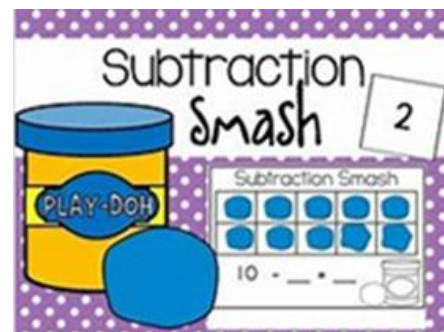
## Writing

We continued to use the writing process to learn about Research Writing. We reviewed how to plan, organize, draft, revise and edit, and publish. The children learned that they could do research to learn about a topic they don't already know. The children learned that they could use multiple sources to find information about a topic. To learn more about a topic, you can read a book that teaches about a topic, look online for a website that talks about the topic, or ask an expert who knows a lot about the topic. Writers of research share what they know about a topic by stating a central idea and key details that give more information about this idea.



## Math

We just finished learning how to subtract. The children learned how to represent subtraction as taking apart and taking from. We solved subtraction word problems using objects, drawings, and even ourselves to represent problems! The children enjoy working in math centers to make math even more fun! We have been playing the game, Subtraction Smash. The children use Play-doh to show a subtraction sentence. They are having so much fun rolling the die and smashing the number to show subtraction on their mats! We are now working on more addition and subtraction number sentences. The children are learning how to break down and represent numbers. The children will continue to use cubes and counters to show their thinking.



## Science

The children continued learning about living and non-living things. We learned that living things find nutrients, water, sunlight, shelter, living space, and other essentials they need to survive. We helped the children in Mariposa Grove figure out what happened to the caterpillars when they turned a field into a garden. The Kindergarteners learned that animals can only live in a place where they can find food. This helped them solve the problem for the children in Mariposa Grove. When the field was



turned into a garden, all the milkweed plants were removed, so the caterpillars could no longer live there. Now we are learning about plants and what they need to grow. The children are studying why plants grow better under certain conditions.



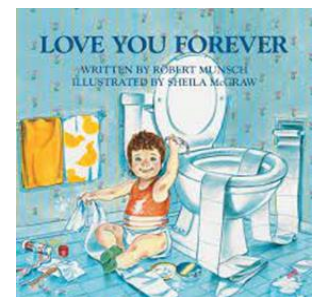
### **Social Studies/SEL**

In our last unit, the children learned the role and responsibility of members in a school community. We also learned that we are alike in many ways, and we are different in many ways. We celebrated what makes us unique!

We learned about Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and his impact on our world. The children learned that he was considered one of history's greatest speakers and social activists. His leadership in peaceful protests helped end segregation during the American civil rights movement. We learned how important it is to be kind, respectful, and caring for one another.

We continue to learn about World Heritage. This month we celebrated Asia. We learned about Lunar New Year and loved hearing about the wonderful traditions. We celebrated with a Lunar Year celebration in our classroom and had the opportunity to sample traditional foods. It was so special, and we are so grateful to all our parents who helped make this celebration a success.

We are now learning how people change and grow over time. We read the story *Love you Forever* to show how a baby changes over time. Each child will write about what they were able to do as a baby, as a toddler, and now as a child.



### **Word Study/Fundations**

The first-grade students are word wizards! In our Fundations learning, we are enjoying hearing the contrast between long and short vowel sounds. Students discuss and show how this vowel sound can affect the words they read. We have also enjoyed learning various "glued sounds," which are sounds

that “stick together” in a word, such as; “ank” “ink” or “onk.” Students have been using these glued sounds to sound out unfamiliar words. The teachers are so proud when first graders find glued sounds during their independent reading and excitedly point them out to the class! In addition, students are working with suffixes that are added to a base word. First graders examine how the suffix can change the base word and how to read a base word and a whole word. First graders have been introduced to blends, such as “bl” “pl” “st” “dr”. During Heggerty, students are working with the sounds within words. We chop and blend sounds in order to deconstruct and create words. In addition, students are working on adding, deleting and substituting sounds in words. These manipulations give students a deeper understanding of the way words work and strengthen their word work skills. We are also listening for the beginning, middle and ending sounds in words. First graders enjoy our Word Study and they are continuing to thrive each day!



### **Reading**

In our current reading studies, first graders are beginning a module entitled, *Now You See It, Now You Don't!* This module has an emphasis on nonfiction texts and connects nicely with our current science unit of study. In this module, we explore elements of light and dark, examine shadows and make connections using scientific concepts such as day, night, seasons and temperature. In the story, *The Black Rabbit*, a rabbit tries to avoid another rabbit that seems to be following him, only to discover that he is running from his very own shadow! In nonfiction texts such as *Day and Night*, or *The Best Season*, students compare and contrast, gather information, utilize reference sources, identify text features and more. As we build our students' stamina for comprehension, we will encourage them to ask and answer questions they may have, while clarifying their ideas with their classmates. This module invites exciting discussions, scientific investigations, and fun findings. We are so proud of our readers as they continue to utilize strategies to support their understanding. We are excited to build upon the strategies we have already developed, while gaining new strategies and possibilities as we read and explore. Our first graders are radiant readers, and we know they will continue to make us very proud!

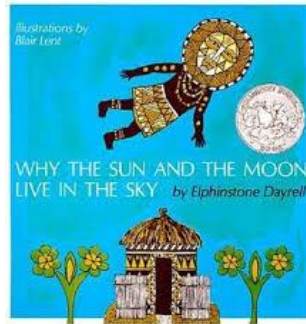


### **Writing**

As we enter a new writing module, the children are excited to learn about the genre of writing known as a Pourquoi Folktale! These folktales specifically focus on elements of nature and describe “how” or “why” something came to be. These tales may explain why rabbits have fluffy tails, why the sun and

moon are not in the sky at the same time, how a tiger got its stripes, or why there are clouds. Our mentor text for this module is called, *Why the Sun and Moon Live in the Sky*. It weaves an engaging fantasy that explains how the characters of Sun and Moon ended up in the sky. These tales are creative, fictional and often use elements of nature as characters.

Each student will begin by brainstorming the elements or concepts they would like to include in their own folktale. First graders will then create a flow map, focused on sequencing the tale and adding details for their imaginative story. As students begin to draft their writing, we will learn about using adjectives to describe nouns. Students will also focus on writing opening sentences that “hook” their reader. We will share ideas for our ending sentences that give the story a powerful conclusion. Each first grader will work with peers and teachers to edit and revise their drafts throughout the writing process. Students will then publish and present their final writing piece in the “author’s chair!” We cannot wait to let our imagination inspire us as we create these unique folktales.



## **Math**

In our Envisions math work, first graders have been diving into patterns found within numbers. Our students have been counting by ones and tens. They have also been circling small groups of items in order to count a larger quantity. Students are utilizing a multitude of strategies to answer the question “how many in all?” Students answer these questions through number lines, number charts, skip counting, making groups, using tens frames and more! As we recognize patterns within 120, we will utilize this foundation to begin to think about place value, as we group tens and ones. As we move forward in our school year, our mathematicians will identify groups of tens and ones and produce a two-digit number. In addition, we will understand teen numbers, add by ones and tens and show quantities using all of the tools we are practicing. We are so proud of our marvelous mathematicians!



## **Science**

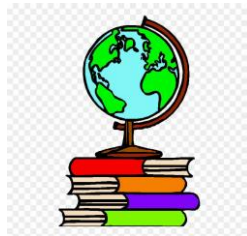
We concluded our plant and animal unit with an animal research writing piece. In our next unit, students have a new title...“engineers.” Our engineers will be “working with” a puppet company,

hypothesizing what will block light to create shadows! To begin this unit, first graders went on a light source hunt around the school. Like all good scientists and engineers, after our hunt we wrote and drew our findings. Our engineers had fun working with partners to discover which materials block light and which did not. Our next step is to design a cutout to make a dark area. During these lessons, we will be drawing observations, coloring our shapes to create dark areas and reflecting on the design goals.



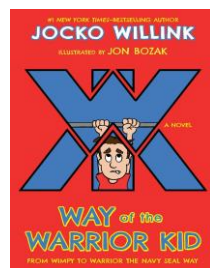
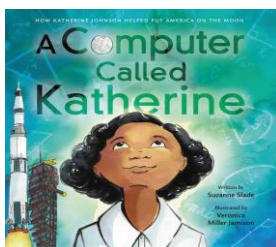
### **Social Studies**

After learning about traditions, values and culture, students began comparing the past to now and shared some similarities and differences. Students are also participating in Civics for All. We brainstormed some issues that affect our community. Students decided that protecting wildlife in the community was an issue they wanted to address. Together we researched and discussed why this is important. Students shared what they could do to help and how they could get others involved too!



### **Social Emotional Learning**

We started off the winter learning about hard work, perseverance and determination. December began with Computer Science for All. We read *A Computer called Katherine*, by Suzanne Slade. Katherine used her math skills to help astronauts explore space! In January, we learned about embracing ourselves, not only our strengths but what we want to work on or learn how to do! We engaged in great discussions about how to overcome obstacles and use positive self-talk. Alongside Marc, the main character from *Way of the Warrior Kid* by Jocko Willink, first graders self-reflected and realized the importance of never giving up on themselves!





**Word Study/Fundations**

Our second graders have become stronger readers. They are now able to read and spell multi-syllable words with glued sounds, long and short vowel sounds, and r-controlled vowels. Next, we will begin our practice with vowel teams. A vowel team is when two vowels work together to make one sound, such as ai or ay (bait, play). Our second graders know how to identify vowels and syllable types to help them both read new words and spell. Marking words has helped them become aware of these sounds and their syllable types to improve their reading and fluency.

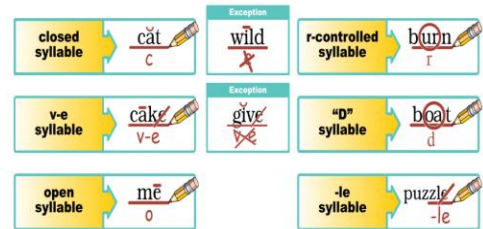
Vowel Teams



R Controlled Vowels



Marking Syllable Types



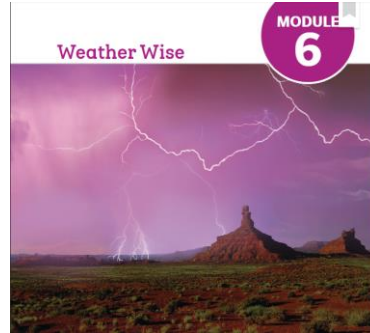
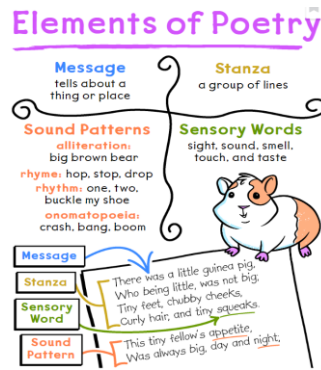
**Reading**

In this module, children read stories and texts that will help them identify the qualities many good leaders possess. They learned to recognize these qualities in themselves so they can work to become good leaders in the classroom and in their school. As we read, we focus on different skills that good readers use to understand texts better. In addition, as we have explored biographies, we use context clues to figure out unknown words. Young readers are learning how to synthesize information given in a text to see the important information the author is trying to say. Summarizing and putting details together help readers get information from a text.



In our current unit, students are learning how the weather changes from day to day and from season to season. Through texts and collaborative conversations, students will explore types of weather we may often experience such as blizzards or hurricanes or weather they may never experience.

Students see how weather affects us and the decisions we make. We will read stories and poems as we learn how they have a mood to express how the author is feeling. The students will then write their own poems about weather. We enjoy reading a variety of genres in our units in second grade.



**Writing**

Over the past month, the second graders have been focusing on expository writing. Expository writing, as its name implies, is writing that exposes facts. In other words, it's writing that explains and educates its readers, rather than entertaining or attempting to persuade them. Our topic is... **What makes me unique?** Our young writer's informed readers of the characteristics that make them unique. The students are enjoying discussing themselves and what makes them unique. We began our unit with brainstorming ideas in our circle maps. After that, we created FLEE maps to organize the body of our writing. Once we finish writing expository essays, the students in second grade will become poets. We will learn how to write through a poet's eyes by using descriptive language to create a mental image. The students will learn how to use poetic devices in their poems such as rhyming, simile/metaphors, alliteration, and onomatopoeia. The students will put all these devices to work in creating a poetry book about weather. They will write poems describing different weather and what each weather situation is like.

**Expository**

- Introduction: Attention grabber - statement, question, dialogue; Link - background information about topic
- Main Idea #1, #2, #3 with supporting details
- Conclusion: restate these in own words; summarize main ideas; personal comment on event

**POETRY TERMS**

- Alliteration: Repeating the same beginning sound in more than two words. (The silly, snuggly, snuggly by the coast, crazy fingers, tried, pretty)
- Rhyme: Words that have the same ending sounds. (The long birds in the trees, then could only talk to me)
- Onomatopoeia: Words that sound like the object or action they refer to. (The mosquitoes buzzed, chirped, buzzed, chirped)
- Metaphor: A comparison between two unlike things without using "like" or "than". (My friend is a treasure, Henry is a calculator)
- Personification: Giving non-human objects human qualities. (The sun smiled on the angry clouds)
- Simile: A comparison of two unlike things using "like" or "than". (She was as quiet as a mouse, The water was like glass)

**OUTSIDE / INSIDE**

- Physical Traits: brown hair, tall, brown eyes, boots, shorts, green shirt
- Thoughts
- Words
- Personality Traits: What we learn based on what the character says, does, thinks & feels
- Actions
- Understanding Characters

**Math**

Math has been very exciting for our second graders this month. We have seen them all participate in real world problems with our study and practice of time and money. We have practiced counting money with coins and bills and can show a value of money in several different ways. We are currently learning how to tell time to the nearest five minutes and telling time in different ways. This is something that can be practiced daily at home by using phrases such as "half past 2," "quarter to 5," "15 minutes before 7," or "quarter after 3." The children have each made a clock in class and can

use the hour hand and minute hand to show time on an analog clock and will soon be able to tell the time in different ways using the phrases for the time before and after the hour. In our next math unit, the children will be able to work with three-digit numbers. When spring arrives, our second-grade mathematicians will be able to solve problems using data within charts and graphs and will work with geometric shapes.



### **Science**

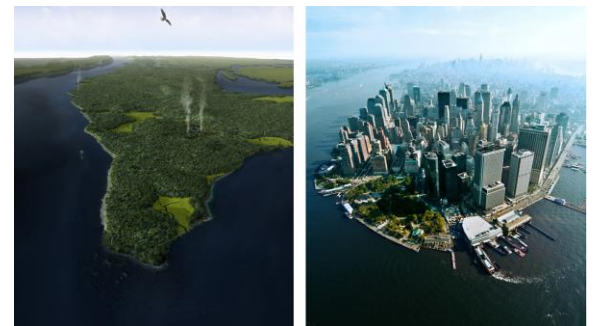
In our unit on Landforms, our second graders were active geologists in our study of changing landforms. We learned about the many types of landforms and bodies of water that make up our world. We also studied how landforms change shape and size. Through analyzing books, making models, and observing different types of rocks and sand, our second graders learned how to make and record observations, investigate, and draw conclusions in science. Our exploration of different landforms gave us the opportunity to see how weather affects our earth in both positive and negative ways.



In our next unit, students will explore different concepts to understand seed germination and seed dispersal. Through observations and scientific inquiry the students will use explanations to describe how things work. Through readings and investigations we will continue to explore the world of plants as botanists and be able to develop conclusions about how plants and animals depend on one another in our natural world.

### **Social Studies**

Second grade is finishing up their unit about New York City over time. Students began the unit by taking a look at timelines and researched inventions that were made famous in New York. This introduction set the stage for our students as they compared how the population, natural resources, homes and buildings and land has changed over time in New York City.





For our next unit, the students will be studying urban, rural, and suburban communities. We will learn that people choose their community based on their needs. As we explore the different communities and their features, we see how different communities have both similarities and differences. Students will analyze and compare how natural resources are used in different communities and compare the population density found in each community. As we learn the qualities of each community, we will debate the advantages and disadvantages of living in each community. The children enjoy giving their opinions to tell which community they would like to live in one day.



**Social Emotional Learning**

Within our current HMH reading module, we are integrating social and emotional learning opportunities. The students are learning about social awareness and how they have the ability to empathize with another person's emotions. They can use empathy to understand someone else's perspective in different situations. We are also continuously discussing ways to show respect. This includes showing respect to classmates, as well as people near and far, including those from cultures and backgrounds that are different from their own.

**EMPATHY SHADES**

How are you feeling?  
I see you are feeling \_\_\_\_\_

I am here for you.

I know how you feel.

I understand where you are coming from . . .

**Empathy is feeling the emotions of another person and seeing their point of view.**

**Community Unity**

People make up a community.  
Who is in my community?

Everyone has different ideas!  
How can different ideas help our community?

We all have the same needs.  
What needs, wants, or feelings might we all have?

Everyone deserves respect.  
How can I show respect to others?

**Reading**

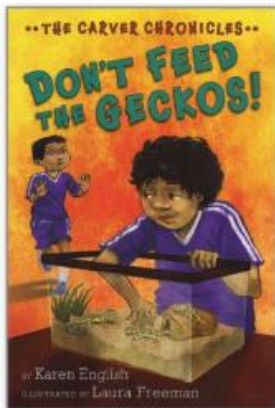
Third grade is currently reading about Teamwork in our HMH curriculum, Module 5. Students are learning through this thematic unit about how to be a team player and what it means to be a good friend. In this module, students are reading stories that touch upon these ideas in stories such as *Soccer Shootout* and *Running Rivals* by Jake Maddox. As third graders read, they are demonstrating their understanding of a variety of comprehension skills. Some of these skills are but not limited to finding literary elements, describing characters, determining the theme, and understanding figurative language.





## Writing

In our writing unit, we are currently drafting persuasive letters to convince our readers that having a friend is important. We first read *Don't Feed the Geckos!* by Karen English as a mentor text to launch the unit. Students are planning their writing by thinking about their audience using the mnemonic device, T.A.P., to identify the task, their audience, and the purpose of their writing. In their writing, students are taught to use persuasive language that is intentional in order to move their audience. They are taught to provoke their audience by gaining their trust with specific examples, rallying their readers' emotions, and using logic and reasoning skills to generate strong evidence to support their reasons. To culminate this unit, students will be able to write a persuasive writing piece with all of these elements in place.



### Persuasive Language

**Appeal to Trust:** language that persuades the reader to trust the writer

- The same thing happened to me, so I understand what it is like.
- I was voted the most helpful person in the class last year.


**Appeal to Emotion:** language that triggers emotion or feelings

- You can come over to my house if you want. I have two cuddly dogs.
- You won't feel alone anymore, because you'll have lots of friends.


**Appeal to Logic and Facts:** Language that explains why something is good for the reader

- As my friend, it will be easier for you to get to know everyone.
- I can work with you on projects and homework.


Before you write... **T.A.P.**



**Task:**  
What is the topic, prompt, or assignment?








**Audience:**  
Who am I writing this for?



**Purpose:**  
Why am I writing this?

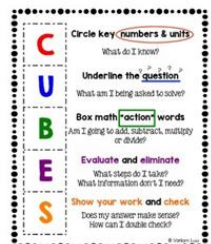
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**Common Purposes for Writing**

-  **To entertain** ... as in a story or personal narrative
-  **To inform** ... as in a research paper or response to reading
-  **To persuade** ... as in a letter to the editor or opinion essay
-  **To express how you feel** ... as in a journal or poem
-  **To request information** ... as in a letter

## Math

Students have been working hard practicing their multiplication facts. They have mastered the properties of multiplication which include; the Identity Property of Multiplication, the Commutative Property of Multiplication and the Distributive Property of Multiplication. Currently, they are actively engaged in division and solving multi-step word problems using CUBES. They will continue to work on labeling their answers, displaying all of their work, and being able to explain how they arrived at their solutions.



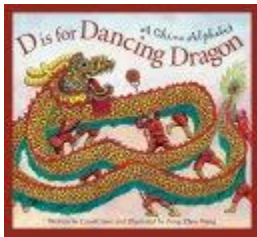
## Science

In this unit, third grade students will take on the role of being wildlife biologists. People have many misconceptions about how organisms get their traits and about the role that inherited information and environmental factors play in determining variation in the traits of organisms. This unit addresses these concepts directly by providing numerous opportunities for students to construct an accurate understanding of the influences that inheritance and the environment play in determining organisms'

traits. Through photos, videos and articles students will investigate a family of wolves and determine why the children look both similar and different from their parents.

### **Social Studies**

Currently, the third grade is studying how culture, geography and history affect different communities. The first community we have been learning about is The People's Republic of China. Students are working together to discover more about the culture, geography, and history of this distinct country. Students are currently working on a research project pertaining to China, their culture, food, art and geography.



### **Social Emotional Learning**

Along with our HMH program in Module 5, we are incorporating Social Emotional elements in our daily lessons. Relationship Skills are the ability to build and maintain healthy relationships. When you are skilled in relationships you communicate clearly, resolve conflicts, reach out for help, and cooperatively work with others. When you are skilled in relationships, you are engaged with others and can say “no” to situations that are not good for you. Students will begin building their knowledge about teamwork and what sports can teach us about working together.

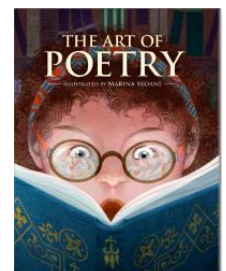
The image contains three educational graphics. On the left is a mind map titled "Working Together as a Team" with three branches: "Skills", "Beating the Odds", and "Supporting Each Other". In the center is a soccer field diagram titled "TEAMWORK" with the subtitle "Teamwork Takes Cooperation". It features several speech bubbles with phrases like "I've got your back!", "You've got this! Take the ball and run!", "We tried our best and we will get the goal next time!", and "I need help over here. Is anyone open?". Below the field is a box stating "When you cooperate, you work together to achieve a goal." followed by a list of bullet points: "Encourage one another by giving constructive feedback.", "Work together to resolve conflicts quickly.", "Forgive others when they make a mistake.", and "Ask for help when you need it and help others." On the right is a "Communication Skills" grid with four quadrants: "Change your expression to fit the conversation" (with a cartoon of a boy), "Use I-statements to share your feelings" (with a cartoon of a girl and speech bubbles for "I think...", "I feel...", "I need...", "I like..."), "Be an active listener. Ask appropriate questions" (with a cartoon of a boy and girl), and "Use verbal and nonverbal skills to express yourself" (with a cartoon of a girl at a laptop).

## **Fourth Grade News**

**Ms. Fejzullaj, Ms. Camhi & Ms. Healy**

### **Reading**

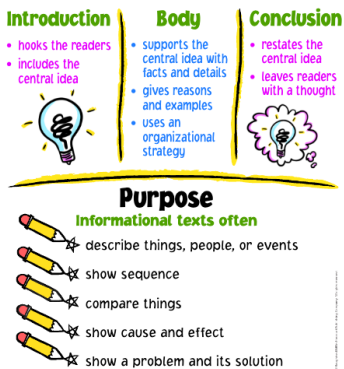
Fourth grade is currently working on Module 5 where we are focusing on the essential question “How far can your talents take you?” During this module, we read a biography about the Beatles, informational text about types of dancing and multiple poems. Comprehension skills such as central idea, text structure, asking questions to monitor our thinking, themes, elements of poetry, visualizing and figurative language were taught and utilized throughout the module. Fourth graders also learned new vocabulary words to go along with the text and how to use different suffixes and prefixes to help them identify unfamiliar words. During the next unit, we will be reading about the Marvels of Nature while we explore more informational texts and literary nonfiction.



### **Writing**

Our current HMH Module 5 writing piece aims to get students to strengthen their expository writing skills. Fourth graders take on the role of researchers and writers within this unit, starting by researching an extraordinary Black American influencer then organizing

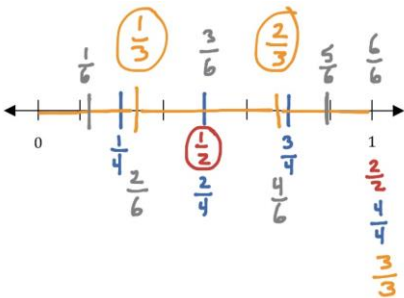
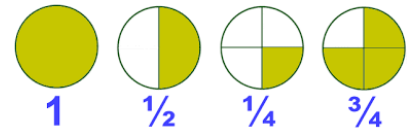
## Informational Text



their points into a note catcher. After research, students create topic sentences for each paragraph and start logically putting together their research points using transition words. Once done with their initial draft, students learn different revising strategies such as how to create a well thought out introduction using an emotional tug, a startling statistic, a vivid image, or quote. Furthermore, they learn how to revise for descriptive language, how to check for appropriate text structure, how to revise for grammar and punctuation, and how to write a well thought out conclusion paragraph that speaks to readers. Finally, students learn how to peer edit and get ready to publish and share all about their extraordinary Black American influencer.

## Math

Fourth grade has recently embarked on the journey of fractions. Throughout these units, we will develop a deep understanding of the value of whole numbers and their fractional parts. Our work will include finding equivalent fractions, comparing fractions, as well as



computing with fractions- adding, subtracting and multiplying. Students learn different ways to represent fractions and compare them including using fraction strips, number lines, benchmarks and operations. Remind your child that fractions exist everywhere in the real-world. Help them develop mathematical language by encouraging "fraction talk." For example, rather than eating 2 slices of pizza for lunch, point out that they may be eating 2/8 of a pie. Ask them how it's possible for someone to eat the same amount of pizza as them if the pie was cut into a different part of a whole!

## Science

As we begin our unit on Vision and Light, fourth graders take on the role of Conservation Biologists! In this unit, we will discuss the different sensory structures animals have, which help them collect information about the environment around them. We heavily focus on the structure of the eye and its function in collecting sensory information. Through readings, hands-on-investigations, and simulations, fourth grade conservation biologists will investigate why the number of Tokay geckos living in an area of a rainforest in the Philippines is on a decline. Students will come to see how human changes to the environment affect the survival of a species and problem solve how to reverse this. Students will also be preparing for the state performance-based task on Energy.



## Social Studies

We are moving on from Native Americans to the Colonial and Revolutionary Periods. Within this unit, we will be learning about what life was like for colonists in the 1700s. We will be analyzing what led to the American Revolution by focusing on key events such as The French and Indian War, The Battle of Golden Hill, The Quartering Act, Taxes, The Boston Massacre, The Boston Tea Party, and The Battles of Lexington and Concord. Students will have an opportunity to role-play

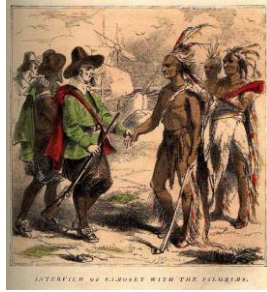




a Loyalist or Patriot and write to King George III. They will make a claim and support their perspective with historical evidence.

### **Social Emotional Learning**

In this module, we are focusing on social awareness. Social Awareness is the ability to empathize with another person's emotions and understand his or her perspective in different situations. We are teaching our students that when you are socially aware, you appreciate and respect people near and far, including those from cultures and backgrounds that are different from their own.

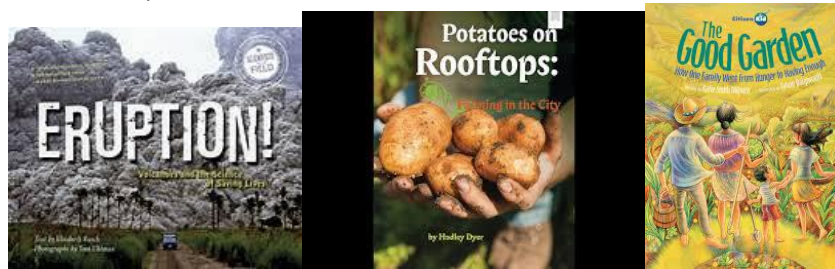


### **Fifth Grade News**

**Ms. Barongi, Mr. Grossman and Mrs. Kelly**

### **Reading**

The last module we finished was Natural Disasters. Here, students read numerous texts and watched media that presented them with information about the types of natural disasters our Earth faces. The informational texts provided students with opportunities to identify central ideas, summarize events, and to ask and answer questions in order to better understand unfamiliar texts. We also encountered narrative nonfiction, realistic fiction and persuasive texts to build knowledge across genres. The module we are working on currently is Project Earth. This module has a genre focus on persuasive texts that give students the ability to identify the author's purpose and support claims about how important it is to conserve and preserve natural resources.



### **Writing**

This month's HMH Writing Topic focuses on editorials. Students are sharing their opinions about environmental issues. Students asked questions about issues they find important, and researched facts to help persuade others to help make a change. Students are continuing to use their writing strategies, such as including credible sources, transitional words and phrases, thesis statements, conclusions, and clarification statements, to assure their ideas are clear to their readers. Students will use editing checklists to correct their sentence structure, including capitalization and punctuation.





## Math

Our math topics this winter will focus on representing values as fractions. We will explore the relationship between multiplication and division of fractions, and work to create real-world concepts of mathematics. At home, help your child make sense of the math by discussing scaling as it relates to recipes, portions, and measurement. Turn breakfast into math by scaling a pancake recipe up by  $\frac{1}{4}$ , or think about serving sizes for a greater number of people.

## Science



Amplify's Ecosystem Restoration unit is giving students opportunities to explore the question, "How do organisms in an ecosystem get the matter and energy they need to grow and thrive?" Students analyzed simulations portraying the movement of matter in a rainforest ecosystem, modeled food webs, and read scientific texts to help develop their understanding of food molecules and matter. Students practiced writing scientific arguments to answer questions and provide evidence from these different sources. In addition, students are attempting to restore their own terrariums by using what they are learning about what plants need to thrive.

## Social Studies

Fifth grade is taking a look at multiple topics about how our nation was formed, ranging from the key forces and events that shaped our nation, to the physical landscape of certain areas. We looked at regional characteristics that influenced human settlement, land use and economic opportunities based on the area. Additionally, we interpreted paintings, texts and artwork throughout our country's history to determine what our ancestors valued while our country was being formed and beginning to grow. We also analyzed physical, political, census and weather maps to see what we can learn from maps and how it impacts the people that live in those areas.



## Social Emotional Learning

As we head toward graduation, we will prepare for middle school by taking a close look at what makes us "unique." Fifth graders will have opportunities to identify their strengths, skills, beliefs, opinions and values to form a working understanding of their own identity. We will do this through guided discussion, cooperative learning, and reflection on our time at P.S. 98. We look forward to this time of self-learning ahead!

## Physical Education

**Mr. Sciabarassi**

As the weather has not been in our favor to go outside for many weeks now, we have been doing our indoor Fitness Unit. This includes our Fitnessgram Fitness Testing for our students in grades 4 and 5.

All other grades are doing very similar activities, with modifications for practice. The NYC Fitnessgram is a City Wide initiative that involves different aspects of fitness for the students to be "tested" on. This includes:

Cardiovascular: Fitnessgram Pacer Test (Running)

Muscular Strength & Endurance: Push-ups, Sit-ups, trunk lift

Flexibility: Sit and Reach

This is mandatory for New York City Elementary grades 4 and 5, but will be practiced and modified for the younger students as well! For Pre K - third grade students, these exercises are performed with modifications such as less repetitions and in a game format. We make teams and have relay races with exercise obstacles to make working-out fun. We come together at the beginning and end of every class to talk about having proper technique for these exercises so students can avoid injury and see the best success.

Throughout the year, students will have opportunities to become involved in life-long physical activities through different individual and teamwork sport units. Some things to look forward to:

- Fitness Testing (Fitness gram)
- Teamwork Games & Activities
- Health & Wellness
- Track Unit (Including outdoor tag games)
- And, of course, the Physical Education Day of the Year, Field Day!



## Music

Mr. Carpentieri

Students in Pre-K, Kindergarten, first grade, and second grade have been building off of the success of this school year's Winter Concert. Students in Kindergarten began January with a unit on animals and music singing songs like *BINGO*, *The Animal Train Song*, *Old McDonald*, and *Walking Through the Jungle*. Students finished the month by watching and listening to songs being performed from Camille Saint Saëns' *Carnival of the Animals*. In February, students in Kindergarten are learning about music and space singing songs like *Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star*, *Starlight Starbright*, and *Moon, Moon, Moon*. At the end of the month, students will listen to and watch a performance of Gustav Holst's *The Planets*. Students in first grade began January learning about instrument families and their place in the orchestra. Students finished January by listening to and watching a performance of Benjamin Britton's *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*. In February, first grade students began the "found instrument" unit where they began to use objects not intended to be a musical instrument (zipper, chair, shoe). Throughout this unit we have been watching small clips from the hit show, *Stomp!* In January, second grade students started the "Tell a Musical Story" unit in which they listen to

instrumental music, find the theme, and write a creative fictional story to accompany the song. In February, second grade students began their instrument unit on bucket drumming and street performers. Second graders will be playing various famous songs using buckets such as *We Will Rock You*, *Dance Monkey*, and *Rolling Through the Deep*.

Students in third, fourth and fifth grade are introduced to a new “Artist of the Day” each music class. In January, I featured Italian-American and Greek-American musicians such as Joe Satriani, Lady Gaga, John Fruciante, Arianna Grande, and Kelly Clarkson. Coinciding with Black History Month, February featured various black artists such as Prince, Beyonce, Lil Nas X, and Rihanna. In January, students in third, fourth and fifth grade began the ukulele instrument unit. With the aid of the “Yousician” app, students have been playing chords and melodies from classic songs such as *Youth*, *Riptide*, and *Fix You*. Students are continuing the ukulele unit through February.

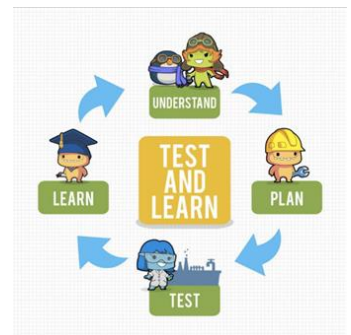


## Technology/Computer Science

Mrs. Mei

Students in Kindergarten through second grade are becoming more proficient in using the mouse to drag and drop while coding! They are creating algorithms (step-by-step instructions) for their characters by using the “Test and Learn” steps. Once a bug (mistake) is spotted, they know to persist and debug (fix the mistake) by looking carefully at the codes and retry.

We also reviewed what it means to be a responsible digital citizen when using media. Through songs, videos, and images, the students are understanding what being safe on the internet means by reflecting on ways to keep passwords and information safe. They also gained a better understanding that not everything they see on the internet is true, and that they can always trust an adult when something doesn't feel right.



We just completed the first round of using Lego Education with students in third, fourth, and fifth grade. They each had 3 STEM/Robotics sessions in the Library/Art room where they worked in groups to create, program, and test their given projects. Students were able to create sequences and loops, decompose problems, and improve programs to meet specific needs. Using Legos, they also developed their engineering design skills, problem-solving skills, and communication skills as they investigated ways of defining problems, brainstormed solutions, and tested and refined prototypes.



Students are currently using Scratch for CS First. They are in the process of completing projects that introduce the core elements of Scratch and foundational coding skills. Projects range from helping a sprite (character) go for a relaxing stroll using code, to creating an interactive scene where they build an interactive scene with characters that respond to events.

**Typing Programs:** In an effort to assist students with their keyboarding skills, they have been practicing in the classroom and in the tech lab. Students from second to fifth grade are highly encouraged to utilize Typing Pal. First graders are encouraged to practice their keyboarding skills using Typing Club. Learning how to correctly type is a skill that will serve them well in the years to come.

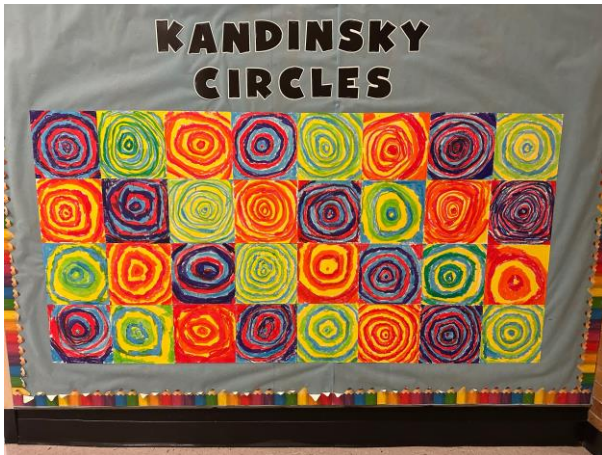
## Art

Ms. Kwong

Students in Kindergarten are learning about textures. In January, they learned about Lunar New Year, and created a lucky cat collage. Using different stamps, they created different textures to create their backgrounds. They are currently continuing their texture unit by creating artwork using texture plates.







First grade students completed their color unit in January. They learned about primary and secondary colors, and learned about Kandinsky. Students studied Kandinsky's concentric circle artworks, and created their own concentric circles using paint sticks in primary and secondary colors. They are currently starting on their pattern unit by creating woven Kente cloth art. Students are learning about Kente cloths from Ghana, and learning how to identify regular and alternating patterns in art.

Second grade students started their color unit in January. They learned about tertiary colors and made their own color wheels to create a collaborative color wheel lion for the lunar new year. In February, second graders will learn about warm and cool colors from the artist, Jen Stark. They will create an artwork using warm and cool colors, inspired by Jen Stark's drip art.

Third grade students started their color unit in January. They are learning about complimentary colors and the art of Japanese marble paintings. Students are using the same technique as traditional Japanese marble art, and are creating 3-D koi fish from folded paper. Students will create a background for their paper koi fish by creating a salt painting.



Fourth grade students completed their unit on balance and symmetry in January. Students learned about radial symmetry and created name mandalas inspired by Tibetan Sand Mandalas. In February, fourth grade students will begin their space unit. They will learn about artworks by Hokusai, and create a cityscape that shows a foreground, middle ground, and background. Students will be learning about the art of printmaking, and will make their own foam prints.

Fifth grade students finished their shape unit in January. They created glass tile mosaics, and learned about geometric shapes and tessellations. In February, students will begin their unit on space by creating an agamograph inspired by the artist Yaacov Agam. They will learn about kinetic art and how to use space in artworks to create optical illusions.



## Student Council

Mrs. Kelly

The Student Council's Crazy Hair Day was a fun and exciting day. Thank you to everyone who participated and showed their school spirit. We will also have our Teacher Swap School Spirit Day. Students were taught by a teacher from another grade for one period. We hope everyone enjoys this swap! The Student Council also has been busy preparing for the Participatory Budget vote. We hope you enjoyed the commercial, and voted for the item you want to use the budget for. Look out for more Student Council events such as Opposite Date, Career Day, and supporting the Ronald McDonald House. Thank you for your support and always showing your school spirit!



## P. S. 98 Ambassadors

Mrs. Holle

Our Ambassadors spearheaded the City Harvest Food Drive in November. They also partnered with Assemblyman Braunstein's office to gather toys for needy and hospitalized children. Your donations helped to make both a great success. Thank you for your support. Ambassadors have partnered again with Assemblyman Braunstein in the Valentines for Vets initiative. Your donations are greatly appreciated. In addition, items in the lost and found bins were donated to the coat drive run by the youth group at The Community Church of Douglaston next door to the school. Ambassadors took part in bringing the items over to the church.



## Congratulations to our Bucket Fillers

### November 2024

K-101 – Ellie Sidibe

K-102 – Mina McCormick

1-108 – Samuel Estella

1-109 – Evaluna Deossa

2-206 – Paige Lee

2-207 – Auden Dadras

3-208 – Lexy Serrano Lopez

3-209 – Bowen Shen

4-201 – Azhar Mizan

4-203 – Harper Hanff

5-202 – Xavier Fox

5-205 – Quinn Baum

### December 2024

K-101 – Benjamin Shi  
K-102 – Emma Corbin  
1-108 – Colette Strohschein  
1-109 – Keito Hsieh  
2-206 – Zac Huang  
2-207 – Junya Li

3-208 – Jonna Chen  
3-209 – James D'Angelo  
4-201 – Amar Smajli  
4-203 – Anastasia Kiouzellis  
5-202 – Anastasia Gofman  
5-205 – Matthew Rodriguez

### January 2025

K-101 – Cecilia Dobry  
K-102 – Avery Qian  
1-108 – Matteo Vargas  
1-109 – Sandy Lipcic  
2-206 – Oliver Melara  
2-207 – Paige Hassan

3-208 – Patrick Han  
3-209 – Everett Kim  
4-201 – Avery Li  
4-203 – Eleanor Dunlap  
5-202 – Peter Zafiridis  
5-205 – Hannah Yong

### **In, Out and Around The Douglaston School**

**Mrs. Holle**

At the end of November, we had our Spelling Bee. Congratulations to all the students who participated. The overall winner was **Bryce Lee (5-202)** and the runner up was **Ari Preston (5-205)**. Both are progressing to the District Spelling Bee at the end of January. The students enjoyed the Nature Nick Assembly and all the different animals he showed the children. The NY Historical Society visited classrooms and taught students about democracy. The PTA had their Holiday Sale. The children are always so excited to shop for their family and themselves. We also had Computer Science Week where students participated in one hour of code each day. Ms. Jain came in for two mornings and taught Bhangra (Indian folk dance). The students had a great time learning the dance and some Indian culture. Mr. Carpentieri and our students put on a wonderful Winter Concert. As we headed into 2025, MYM Chess, Lego Science and STEM started up again. Our morning (Chorus and Test Sophistication) and after school programs (Basketball, Stock Market and Broadway) are continuing. We had an amazing Family Math Night run by Ms. Fejzullaj. The top three winners of the gumball raffle were **Menios Gordos (4-203)**, **Pierce Jozefek (3-208)** and **Clementina Wiygul (5-202)**. Congratulations! The students had a blast at the Summer in Winter Party. In addition to class trips, our teachers organized events where parents were invited to come in and celebrate Lunar New Year and other heritage celebrations complete with food from different countries. It was also wonderful to see parents participate in World Read Aloud Day. Our Kindergarten classes donated over 200 cans of soup to The Community Church of Douglaston in support of their soup drive. Irish Step, K-Pop, Latin and Lion Dance, to prepare for our World's Fair, will begin in March. Marquis Studios (CASA Grant) will start in April. Save the date for Career Day on Friday, March 21. A flyer will be sent home as the date gets closer. We will have our Read a Thon in April. The date for Field Day will be provided as soon as the permit has been approved by the Parks Department.

### **Dates to Remember**

**Ms. Diana Gautier, Assistant Principal**

February 17-21 – School Closed – Mid-Winter Recess  
February 25 – Safety Meeting  
February 28 – 2<sup>nd</sup> marking period ends  
February 28 – Pre-K Application Closes

March 3 – 3<sup>rd</sup> marking period begins  
March 6 – Parent Teacher Conference – 11:40 am dismissal – no morning program or after school  
March 12 – SLT Meeting  
March 14 – Report cards available via NYCSA  
March 21 – Career Day  
March 25 – Safety Meeting  
March 28 – Pre-K Application Closes  
March 31 – School Closed – Eid al-Fitr  
April 7–25 - Read A Thon  
April 9 – Middle School Offers Release  
April 9 – Climate Action Day – Health, Wellness & Green Space  
April 11 – The Planet Earth Challenge Assembly  
April 14-18 – School Closed – Spring Recess  
April 23 – SLT Meeting  
April 29 – Safety Meeting  
May 13 – Pre-K Offers Release  
May 20 – Safety Meeting  
May 26 – School Closed – Memorial Day  
May 28 – SLT Meeting  
June 4 – 3<sup>rd</sup> marking period ends  
June 5 – School Closed – Eid-Al-Adha/Anniversary Day  
June 6 – No Students – Clerical Day  
June 13 – Broadway Musical evening performance  
June 14 – Broadway Musical early afternoon performance  
June 17 – Safety Meeting  
June 19 – School Closed – Juneteenth  
June 23 – Fifth Grade Graduation  
June 24 – Kindergarten Stepping Up Ceremony  
June 24 – Pre-K Stepping Up Ceremony  
June 25 – SLT Meeting  
June 26 – Last Day of School for students  
June 26 – Report cards available via NYCSA