



Mustang Musings

MORRIS CENTRAL SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

"Hope is being able to see that there is light despite all of the darkness." —Desmond Tutu

March/April 2025



FROM THE OFFICE

As we enter the second half of the school year at Morris Central School, the excitement of spring and warmer weather is upon us! This season brings new opportunities for growth, achievement, and community involvement.

Our students continue to excel in academics, music, and athletics. With the arrival of spring, we can't wait for the musical performance of *The Wizard of Oz* put on by our ever-talented music department. We also look forward to baseball, softball, and track and field events that promise more excitement and success!

With the arrival of spring also comes NYS assessments. Families with students in grades three through eight, please take note of the upcoming NYS testing dates:

ELA:

Grades 3-6April 7 & 8
Grades 7 & 8.....April 9 & 10

Math:

Grades 3-6April 23 & 24
Grades 7 & 8.....April 28 & 29

Science:

Grade 5May 5
Grade 8May 7

All NYS tests will be given on the computer this year. We encourage students to prepare for these assessments by maintaining good study habits, getting plenty of rest, and reaching out to teachers for support when needed.

One of the most heartwarming aspects of this school year has been the incredible parent involvement at our events. From attending our morning program, music concerts, and sporting events, to actively participating in parent-teacher conferences and the upcoming People as Reading Partners (PARP) program, your support continues to make a significant impact on our students' success. Thank you for your dedication and commitment to our school community!

As we embrace the energy and renewal that spring brings, let's continue working together to make Morris Central School a place where students thrive academically, socially, musically, and athletically. We appreciate your ongoing support and look forward to a fantastic remainder of the school year!

—Mrs. April Vunk, Principal





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Wendy Moore

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NEW WEBPAGE

www.morriscsd.org

*You may have noticed MCS has
a new webpage. Please check it out.
It is full of important and useful
information.*

THREE CHEERS FOR

- * Our maintenance staff for keeping the sidewalks and parking lot safe.
- * The Battle of the Book Winners
- * Spelling Bee participants and winners
- * Thank you to 6th grader, *Lucas Galesky*, for making the 5th grade some wooden bathroom passes. He even engraved them with a wood burner!
- * Ms. Rozanski for standing inside the parent drop-off doors and acting compassionately when a little extra help is needed!
- * Student Council for coming up with fun ideas to spur MCS spirit.
- * Ms. Galbreth wears several hats at MCS, including bus aide!
- * Mrs. Smith, former MCS principal, for continuing to help MCS learn and grow in positive ways.
- * Mr. Matson for often picking up extra hours to keep the school in tip-top shape over weekends!
- * Mrs. Parker for all her help with proofreading for yearbook staffers.
- * All the faculty and staff who attend outside school activities.
- * Mrs. Harrington for all her behind the scenes work with budgets and other financial issues
- * Mr. Szokoli, Ms. Thompson, and Ms. Rhone deserve a round of applause for their balancing acts of being coaches, teachers, and graduate students at the same time.
- * Mrs. Vunk, for building community with a Souper Bowl lunch and "Kindness Counts" pins.
- * Everyone who supported the sophomore class' spaghetti dinner and carnation sales.
- * Everyone who has supported the Safety Patrol and the Booster Club as well.
- * Booster Club for setting up a fun costumed bball game, it was funny!
- * The yearbook staff for kicking out pages and meeting deadlines even though the staff is a very tiny bunch this year. A special thanks goes to Seniors *Delaney Coveny* and *Brooke McKinney* for helping their classmates meet their deadlines when time was crunched.

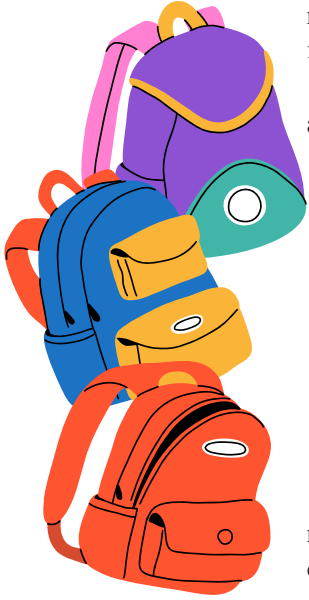


*Adley Foerster and Riley Hull as
Bluey and Bingo for duo day today*



*Nik Pegg, Roark Commerford, and Austin
Mondore as Mario and Luigi.*

BACKPACK PROGRAM GETS SOME BACKING



I am excited to announce that our Backpack program providing food to our students has received a grant allowing us to provide weekly backpacks to our students. Additionally, we are in the process of setting up a small food pantry in the cafeteria for students to use when needed.

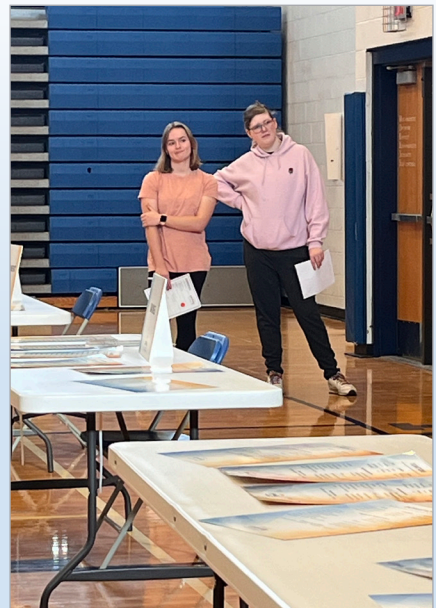
Because there will be more frequent deliveries, we will be sure students receive their backpacks as discreetly as possible. Backpacks will be delivered on Thursdays.

- If a student is picked up by a parent, Mrs. Walling will hand them their backpack as they leave the building (old front entrance).
- If a student has a parent who works in the building, their backpack will be given directly to their parent.
- If a student rides the bus, Mrs. Bolton's class will be delivering the backpack directly to the bus they ride so that they can take it with them when they get off the bus.
- CROP students will receive their backpacks when they leave with their families from the program.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you for your support of this much-needed program. Additionally, thank you to the committee who is helping make this possible and Mrs. Bolton's class for all of their help in accepting our weekly food delivery, packing backpacks, and delivering them to our students. We couldn't do this without them!

—Mrs. April Vunk, Principal



BUDGET SIMULATION

Visions Federal Credit Union hosted a Budget Simulation activity for all students in grades 9-12. Students were able to experience a life of luxury with an endless budget. Some students bought multiple cars, houses, fancy clothing regularly, while others lived a modest lifestyle. Students were asked to pick potential careers during the weeks prior to the activity. In this activity, those wages finally became a reality for them. Those career choices required students to realize, they couldn't afford lavish lifestyles anymore and they had to be more practical. While some struggled financially, some flourished with their budgets. It was a great experience to watch our students realize all the hard work that goes into balancing work income with living expenses. Visions Federal Credit Union talked about transportations (vehicles/insurance), food, entertainment, student loans, housing (rent/mortgages), savings, utilities, subscriptions, and also giving back to the community. Students were engaged in the activity for three hours.

—Mrs. Teresa Kane, Math

WELCOME NEW FACULTY AND STAFF



Ms. Angela Garruto, Elementary Counselor and DASA Coordinator

I am thrilled to begin my role as your elementary counselor. I was born and raised in Oxford, NY, and I consider myself very fortunate to have the opportunity to support a terrific community of rural learners just like myself. I am a graduate of The University of Buffalo (Go Bulls!) and the University of Southern Maine. I was an elementary teacher (4th & 5th grade) in Maine and Colorado. I completed my School Counseling degree from William & Mary and cannot wait to bring all that I have learned to MCS. In my free time, I enjoy all outdoor activities, playing with my corgis, traveling, cooking and making happy memories with family and friends. You can find me in the office right next to Mrs. Catella's in the Guidance Office. Please stop by and say hello!



Mr. Peyton Mackey, Permanent Substitute

As many of you already know, I'm Mr. Mackey. I have been a staff member of MCS CROP since 2021 and have served as a substitute teacher for the past year. Currently, I'm a full-time student at SUNY Oneonta, working toward my Bachelor's degree in Childhood Education which I'll complete in December 2026. You'll see me at MCS on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays until May, and then I'll return full-time. I absolutely love being part of this incredible community of students, teachers, and staff, and I'm honored to have Morris as the starting point of my educational journey. In my free time, I enjoy playing soccer, skiing, photography, and spending time with my loved ones. A fun fact about me: I'm on a mission to visit every national park in the USA—two down, 61 to go! I'm beyond excited to continue my journey in education at MCS as a permanent substitute. I'm here to support all of you and look forward to a fantastic year ahead!



Ms. Shannon Deignan, Secondary Science Teacher

I am so excited to begin my teaching journey here at Morris! After earning my Bachelor of Arts in Biology from Hartwick College in May 2024, I officially graduated this past December with a specialization in Secondary Education following my student teaching experience here at Morris. I have one NYS teaching exam to pass and then I will be a certified teacher. Originally from Pennsylvania, I have a deep passion for science and enjoy spending my free time hiking, reading, swimming, and spending time with my family and friends. My decision to pursue teaching was inspired by the incredible educators who guided and encouraged me throughout my own education. My time at Morris has already been wonderful, and I look forward to getting to know the students better as we learn and grow together. I am grateful and excited to begin my teaching career in such a supportive and welcoming community.

LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

Robert, Carter, Jonah, Ali, Grace, and I (Brodie) went to SUNY Oneonta to a leadership workshop where we learned how to work together as a team and take charge when facing problems. Robert and I were nominated to give a speech at the next workshop to describe our leadership and what it means to us. I learned how to be a true leader and how to make and be sure they are followed through.

—Brodie Coleman, Junior

MORRIS CENTRAL SCHOOL 2ND QUARTER • 2024-2025



HONOR ROLL

7th GRADE

*Kent Bankowski
Annaleen LaTour
Elizabeth Melius
Alexander Parker
Maximillian Schott*

8th GRADE

*Kristena Barringer
Tomas Fernandez
Mark Johnson
Peyton Ritchey
Bentley Stockin*

9th GRADE

Aniya Kogut

10th GRADE

*Ryan Townsend
Jason Valentine
Timothy Wood, Jr.*

11th GRADE

*Zandra Aliya
Natalie Barley
Hailey Canfield*

12th GRADE

*Delaney Coveny
Zeithan Dunham
Marc Hoyt
Mason Linton
Benjamin Newell*

HIGH HONOR ROLL

7th GRADE

*Cameron Bankowski
Hollin Stabler*

8th GRADE

*Jordan Ard
Landen Atcher
Noah Baldo
Aubree Canfield
Michael Coffyn
Sierra Coyle
Brenan Fraser
Bryden Wyckoff*

9th GRADE

*Richard Pegg
Chloe Ross*

10th GRADE

*Josiah Dugan
Lainey Fraser
Nathan Gregory
Kara Hand
Hayden Kolvik
Johnathan LaTour
Lucas Waffle
Kiarra Walker
William Weber*

11th GRADE

*Brodie Coleman
Luis Cruz
Robert Hill
Ryan Murphy
Katrina Romano
Grace Wing*

12th GRADE

*Georgia Kolka
Emmy Lentz
Sera Lentz
Levi Waffle*

PRINCIPAL'S LIST

7th GRADE

*Isaiah Jones
Isaac Moore
Kendra Smith*

8th GRADE

*Ethan Fallon
Kendall Gould
Charles Kolka
Aurora Kopp
Hannah Moore*

9th GRADE

*Julia Barrett
Kylee Canfield
Brodan Connally
Alanna Davies
Samuel Schiller
Delilah Triolo*

10th GRADE

*Savannah Coyle
Jacob Johnson
Jacob Knapp
Gabriel Melius
Matthew Schiller*

11th GRADE

*Jonah Baldo
Zackary Chase
Alisandra Farmer
Amira Ross
Michael Saggese
Carter Swayer*

12th GRADE

*Leah Gregory
Makenzie Hoyt
Matheus Martins
Brooke McKinney
Grace Schiller*

STUDENT VOICES STUDENT CHOICES TEAM DOES IT AGAIN



The 2024 MCS Student Voices Student Choices Team (*Brodie Coleman, Robert Hill, Savannah Coyle, Matthew Schiller and Hayden Kolvik*) was awarded \$2,500 from the Community Foundation of Otsego County. The money will be used to set up the Morris Second Saturday Food Pantry at a permanent location in the Morris Town Building. If you would like to make a donation to support the Morris Food Pantry, please contact Diane Walling at 607-263-6100 Ex 102 or dwalling@morriscsd.org.

—Mrs. Diane Sneddon, Reading Specialist



ALL-COUNTY SUCCESS

All-County Festival I featured Senior Band, Junior Chorus, and Jazz Chorus. It was held at Worcester Central School on February 1. The following students auditioned, were selected to participate, and did an incredible job in the concert: *Brodie Coleman*—Bari Saxophone, *Hannah Moore*—Alto, *Sophie Myers* and *Delilah Triolo*—Sopranos, *Richard Pegg* and *Hayden Marshall*—Baritones.

The next festival, featuring Elementary Band and Chorus, Junior Band, Senior Chorus, and Jazz Band will be held at Unatego Central School on Saturday, March 1.

—Brianne Thompson, Choral Director



COLLEGE BIOLOGY STUDENTS SHOWCASE INTERESTS WITH GENIUS HOUR PROJECTS

On Fridays, Mrs. Fredette's College Biology students work on Genius Hour projects, an innovative and self-driven assignment that allows her students to explore topics they are passionate about. This project, inspired by a concept used by major companies like Google, gives students dedicated time to research, create, and present something meaningful to them.

The basis of Genius Hour is simple: students choose a topic of interest, conduct research, and develop a final product or presentation showcasing what they've learned. Unlike traditional assignments with strict guidelines, Genius Hour encourages curiosity, creativity, and independent thinking.

This first round of projects include cryptocurrency, the

genre of heavy metal music, taxidermy, whittling and science career choices. The variety of topics highlight each student's unique interests and talents. Students are really excited at the prospect of learning about things they are interested in, and some have a list of future topics they would like to explore.

At the end of the project round, students will present their work to classmates and teacher, and starting with the second round, we will open up the presentations to whoever is interested and available to join us. These presentations not only showcase the students' hard work but also help develop public speaking and critical thinking skills.

Genius Hour allows students to take ownership of their learning, explore new ideas, and apply real-world problem-solving skills. By the time they graduate, these students leave with a deeper appreciation for self-directed learning—an essential skill for future success in college and beyond.

—Mrs. JoAnn Fredette, Science



BOCES VISIT

This winter, sophomores had the opportunity to explore BOCES programs in Milford. They looked at automotive, electric, cooking, cosmetology, and many other programs.

They even saw one of Morris' own students learning about welding.



OUTWARD BOUND & ODYSSEY

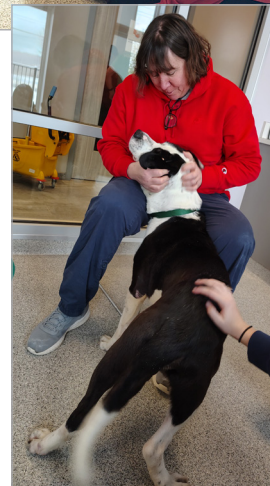
In February Outward Bound and Odyssey representatives visited Morris to explain the programs and hand out applications. Both programs are supported by the Clark Foundation and are awesome leadership and character building programs.



PET THERAPY

The MCS Outdoor Club visited the Cooperstown SPCA on Saturday, January 11. We toured the beautiful new building where we saw the kennels, surgical rooms, and adoption spaces. We learned how an animal is processed when they enter the shelter and what is done to keep them healthy until adoption. We helped out by sanitizing some kennels and then had time to play with the dogs, cats, and Bunny. Those who participated were *Kiarra Walker, Alanna Davies, Lainey Fraiser, Anaya Kolgut, Ms. Rhone, and Mrs. Deysenroth.*

—Mrs. Maria Deysenroth,
PE and Outdoor Club Advisor



TRACK AND FIELD SPRING PREVIEW

Welcome to the 2025 Track and Field season! We're excited to start off another year of amazing athletic performances and personal bests. Our track members have been working really hard during the indoor track season, preparing for the challenges of outdoor competitions. Their dedication and effort has been truly inspiring, and we can't wait to see how all that hard work pays off.

Whether you're a returning athlete or a new to the team, this season promises to be full of thrilling events, team spirit, and the pursuit of excellence.

Rylan Boss said he is looking forward not just to the competition but also "hanging out with old friends and new."

Let's make this season the best one yet!

—Delaney Coveny, Senior

MORRIS MUSTANGS GET CREATIVE IN CHEMISTRY

Our chemistry students recently took a creative approach to learning about the concept of the mole—a fundamental unit in chemistry—by designing and crafting their own "moles" as part of a class project.

The mole, which represents 6.022×10^{23} particles of a substance, is a crucial concept in chemistry, but it can be challenging to grasp. This project encourages the students to design and create stuffed mole mascots, often incorporating a chemistry-related pun in its costume and name.

Students used fabric, felt, and other craft materials to bring their moles to life, with some creating mole athletes (LaMole Jackson), literary moles ("Sherlock Moles"), theater inspired designs like "The Phant-mole of the Opera" and even a little product placement "Pepto Bismole."

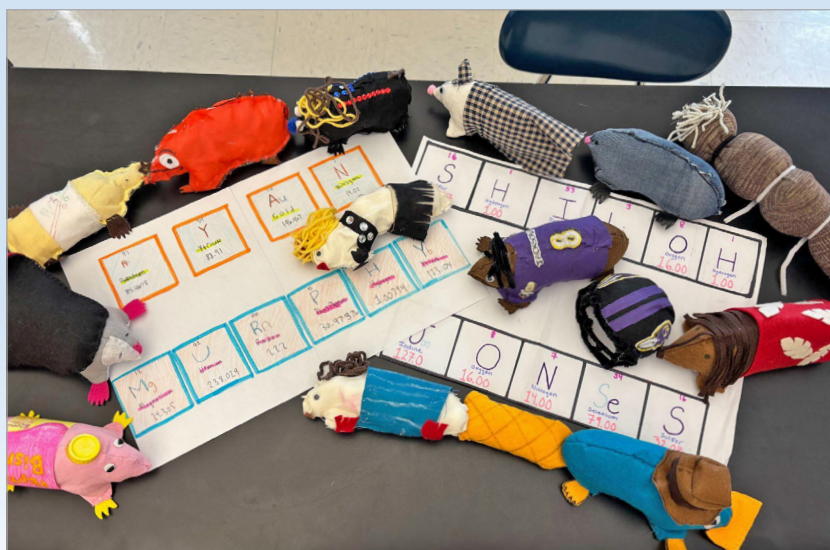
The chemistry students also combined creativity with science by designing posters that spell out their names using chemical symbols from the periodic table. This engaging project challenged students to think critically about element abbreviations while reinforcing their familiarity with the periodic table.

To complete the assignment, students had to find element symbols that corresponded to the letters in their names. For example, a student named Ben could use Boron (B), Einsteinium (Es), and Nitrogen (N) to spell "BESN." Some students with longer or more complex names had to get creative, adjusting spellings or incorporating additional design elements to complete their posters.

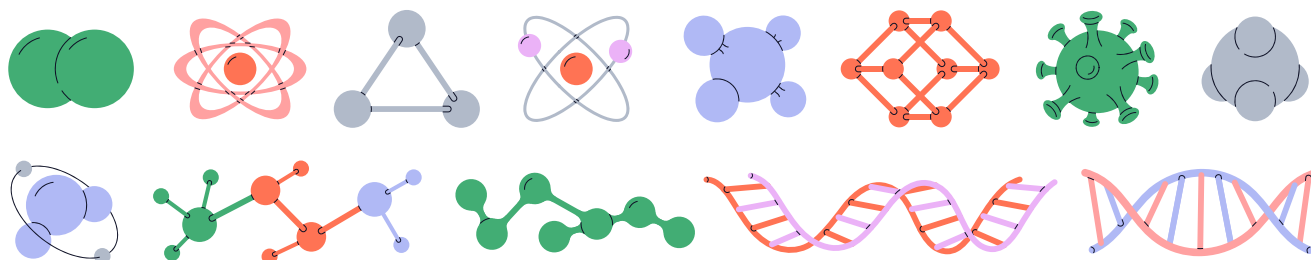
This activity not only reinforced students' understanding of chemical symbols but also allowed them to express their creativity while engaging with chemistry in a fun and memorable way. By connecting science to something personal, the project helped students see the periodic table in a whole new light.

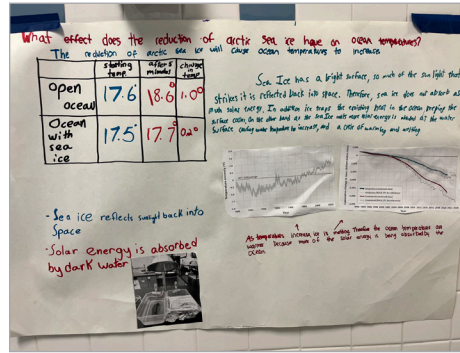
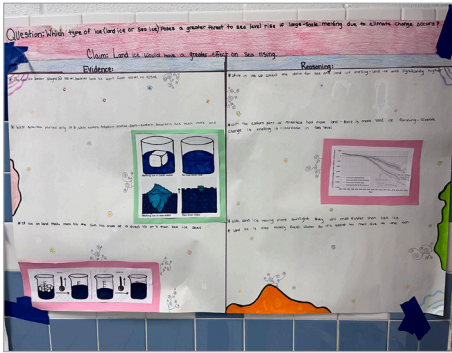
These hands-on projects not only allowed students to explore chemistry in a fun and memorable way but also helped reinforce their understanding of an abstract concept. Through projects like these, chemistry continues to show that science isn't just about equations and formulas—it can be fun, creative, and hands-on!

—Mrs. JoAnn Fredette, Science



Perry the Platymole by Brodie, Lilomole by Ali and LaMole Jackson by Hailey



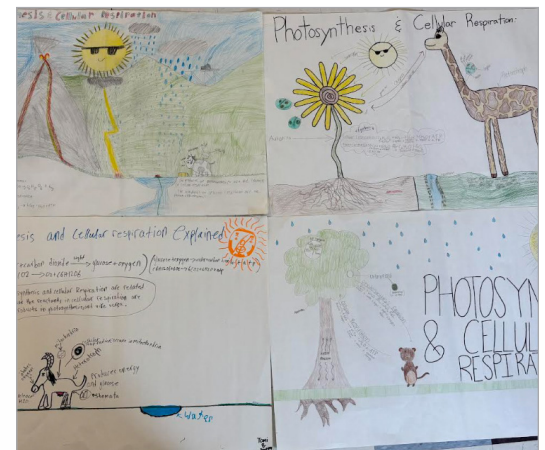
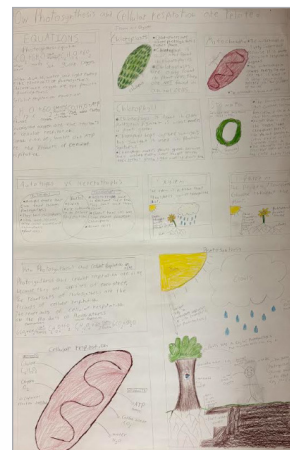
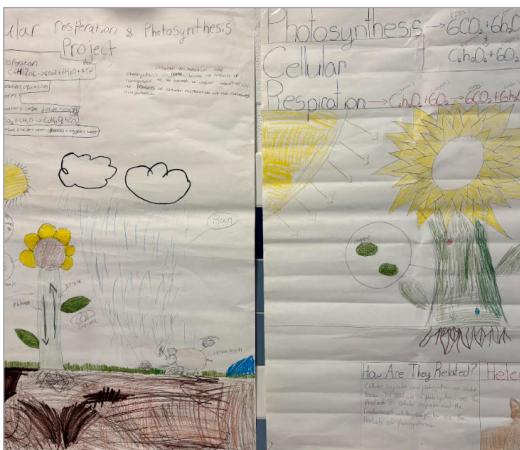


EARTH SCIENCE STUDENTS EXPLORE GLOBAL CLIMATE MECHANISMS

Students recently engaged in an exciting hands-on investigation into the factors influencing global climate. Working in groups, they explored topics such as sea ice cover, the differences between land and sea ice melting, and the greenhouse effect. Through experiments and data analysis, students examined how these variables contribute to global temperature changes and flooding.

To showcase their findings, each group created a scientific poster summarizing their research and conclusions. This collaborative project not only deepened their understanding of climate science, but it also helped develop their scientific communication skills. The posters sparked meaningful discussions and reinforced the importance of studying Earth's changing climate.

—Mrs. Heather Grant, Science



8TH GRADERS BRING SCIENCE TO LIFE WITH CREATIVE POSTERS!

Our 8th-grade students have been diving deep into the fascinating world of cellular respiration and photosynthesis, working hard to create detailed and visually engaging posters that illustrate the connection between these two essential biological processes. Through their research and creativity, they demonstrated how plants absorb sunlight, carbon dioxide, and water to produce oxygen and glucose through photosynthesis, while animals and humans use those products in cellular respiration to generate energy, releasing carbon dioxide and water back into the cycle.

These posters not only highlight the scientific processes at work but also emphasize the interdependence of plants, animals, and the environment in sustaining life on Earth. The students' dedication and effort are evident in their thoughtful designs, clear explanations, and creative visuals. Their hard work has transformed a complex concept into an engaging and educational experience for all. Great job, 8th graders—your work truly shines!

—Ms. Shannon Deignan, Science



8TH GRADE STEM

The 8th graders participated in a STEM trench building challenge today using legos. They invited family members and other teachers to come in and join them.

—Ms. Stephanie Masciola, Social Studies



MAPPING THE WORLD IN MATH CLASS

Seventh Grade math students worked on map scale and scale factors using actual maps. They learned how to use their thumbs to measure distances, how to look up towns in the index in the back of the road atlas and how to use proportions to solve for actual distances between towns. We also looked at what different roads look like on a map, rivers, preserves, and other map features.

—Ms. Alison Schubach, Math

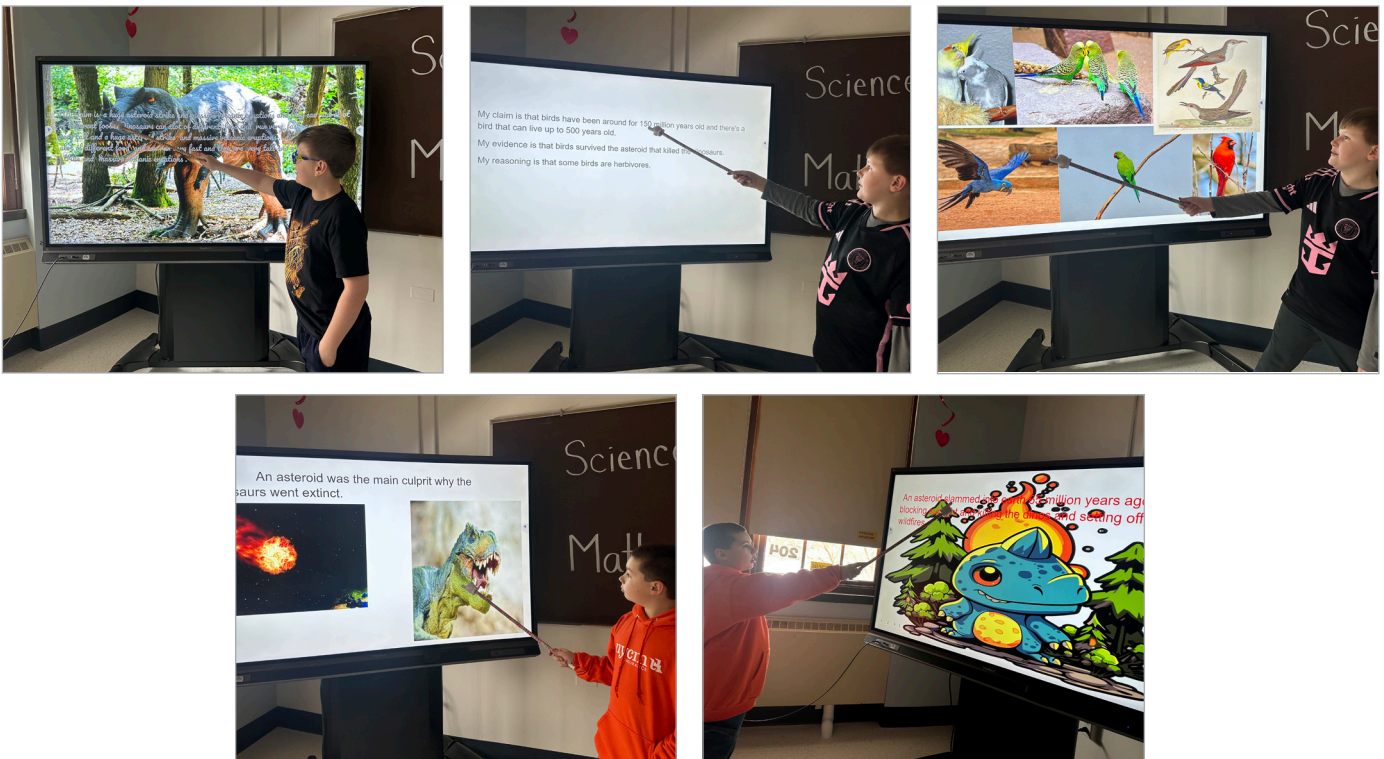
WEATHER FUN



6th Graders using cotton balls to model cloud types and learn how their shapes help predict the weather.

—Ms. Melissa Brown, Sixth Grade

EVIDENCE-BASED REASONING IN FIFTH GRADE



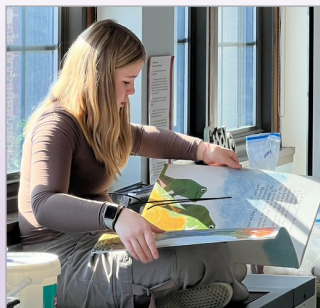
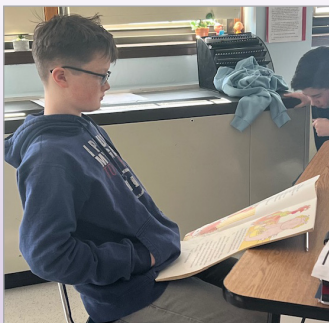
Fifth grade was tasked with finding a Scientific Concept for their Claim Evidence and Reasoning Presentations. Some chose to do life cycles and others chose the extinction of dinosaurs. They had to make a question based on their topic of choice, then they had to answer the question (claim). After that, they had to provide evidence to back up their claim or statement. The reasoning at the end was just a conclusion wrapping everything up. They were given different choices for how to present (slides, video/TikTok, posters, etc.) Before break, they presented their projects to the whole class, and they have been very creative!

—Ms. Killian Harrison, Fifth Grade

BATTLE OF THE BOOKS

On Friday, January 17, four teams competed in our Final Battle of the Books. These students displayed remarkable dedication, determination, and a knowledge of the novels they read. All students attempted answering challenging questions with team collaboration and confidence. In the end, one team emerged as the overall Battle of the Books winner. The winning team consisted of *Abigail Connally* (team leader), *Hunter Glidden*, *Sofia Baio*, and *Bella Marino*. Congratulations to everyone who participated in this year's battle.

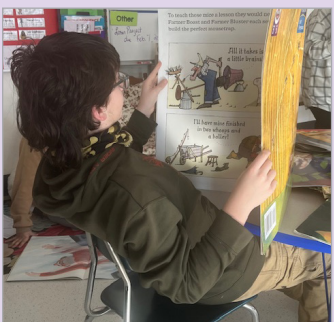
—Mrs. Diane Sneddon, Sixth Grade Teacher



6TH GRADE READING

Armed with giant books, Sixth Grade students broke their readings down into plot diagrams. They were also able to identify theme, author's purpose, tone, and genre. Way to go Sixth Grade!

—Diane Sneddon, Sixth Grade



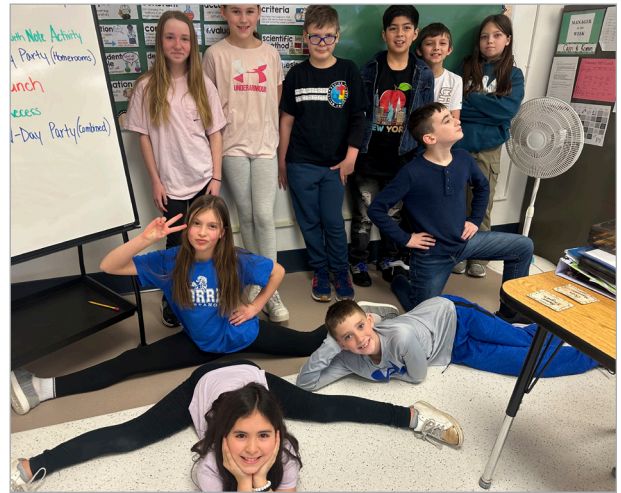
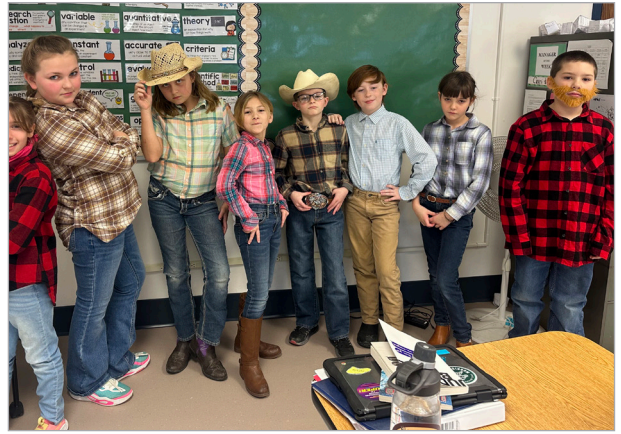
SPRIT WEEK

This year for our Winter Student Council Spirit Week we had many exciting days where students and teachers could dress up and have fun. Students had Wild West vs. East Coast Day on Monday, Iconic Duo Day on Tuesday, Color Wars on Wednesday, Jersey Day on Thursday, and to end the week with a bang students dress up in Valentine's Day Colors Day to celebrate the holiday. Many people went all out for spirit week from dressing in all the same color for color wars to dressing as a cowboy! This year's Winter Spirit Week was filled with a lot of fun for everyone.

Many people had different opinions on what day was the best. *Zandra Aliya* ('26) said, "Dress in Valentine's Day Colors Day was my favorite day because I got to wear colors I don't usually wear." *Jermiah Webster* ('26) said, "Color Wars Day was my favorite because it was fun to see everyone in my class dress in the same color." *Arrow Ard* ('26) said, "Jersey Day was my favorite because I got to wear my favorite team's jersey." *Arrow* wasn't the only one who liked jersey day.

A lot of people said Jersey Day was their favorite because it was so easy and fun to do. Many students wore jerseys ranging from football to basketball. Some students even wore Morris jerseys to show school spirit.

—*Shiloh Jones, Junior, and Brooke McKinney, Senior*



East Coast-West Coast fun on the first day of Spirit Week in February



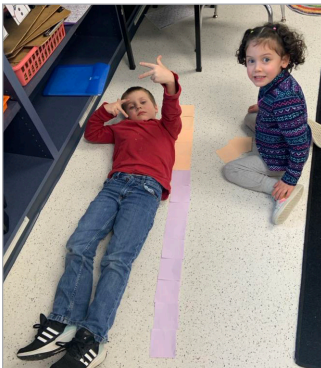
Dynamic Duos in third and fifth grade for Duo Day





MEASUREMENT!

Students in kindergarten recently learned about different measurements. We practiced measuring various objects around the room, including our shoes and our friends! Kindergarteners loved using sticky notes to measure friends and cubes to measure our shoes! Students worked together to count and then they discussed the differences between the measurements!



Pre-K boys loaded up ready for camp!



Pre-K Snowman Party!