

PURPLE TIGER TIMES



New Scotland Elementary School Newsletter

February 2022

A note from Principal Lesley Buff ...

As I say to students, sometimes we set goals for ourselves and we might not reach them, but that doesn't mean we give up. I fell off my goal of getting out a newsletter every month. I am not sure what happened to December and January (boy they went by fast). Now we are into February, and I have not even wished everyone a Happy New Year! However, this means I have even more fabulous updates to share with you about NSES.

Our students have had an amazing start to 2022. They finished NWEA and easyCBM benchmark assessments. I commend students on their effort – they always try their best. It is clear that NSES students have the AVID mindset to be college- and career-

ready. These assessments give us meaningful data that is reviewed for all students, allowing plans to be developed that support each student on their learning continuum. This means students who may need extra support may receive additional services. It also means that students that are performing on grade level or above are given an extra push to continue to provide them with challenging learning experiences. Please connect with your child's teacher if you have any questions on their progress or the report card you will receive with this week.

Although we do not wait until specific months like February to celebrate the diversity of our students, we want to



recognize Black History Month. Each classroom researched a prominent black person and decorated their

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Samantha Milner Koonce, left, and Cyndy Allen are the first people you meet when you walk into NSES.

MEET THE TEAM!

The front office staff

The phone rings and the door bell buzzes frequently throughout the day at our school. If you are on the other end, you have probably spoken with Cyndy Allen or Samantha Milner-Koonce. Their jobs are a lot more than answering the door and the phones.

Mrs. Allen is NSES's office manager. She juggles many tasks, including substitute assignments, payroll, SchoolMessenger emails, principal-assigned tasks, Chromebook distribution and supply ordering. She has also been known to stay way past her working hours to sit with a child waiting to be picked up.

Ms. Milner Koonce is our attendance clerk. She monitors student attendance closely and communicates with staff and families about attendance. In a time of COVID quarantines, this is no easy feat.

Both are amazing supporters of our students and families and our building would not run without them. Thank you Mrs. Allen and Ms. Milner Koonce for all you do!



City School District of
ALBANY

HIGHLIGHTS FROM EACH GRADE

Prekindergarten. We just finished up our space unit. We are now learning all about winter and working on our rhyming skills. We also continue to work on letter and number formation.

Kindergarten. We are working on addition and subtraction in math. We have been practicing sight words and starting to read short text. We are also working on being culturally responsive to other people's differences and kind to one another.

First grade. We are working on adding and subtracting numbers to 20. We are excited about starting place value. In science, we will be learning about how plants grow and exploring through observations made on our own plants. We are looking forward to celebrating the 100th day of school.

Second grade. We are preparing for our "Virtual Living Museum" to honor Black History Month. Each student is selecting a distinguished African American to research and represent in the first person. They will be presenting their impersonations in Flipgrid videos. In ELA, we are working on finding the main idea in a text and writing in response to texts. We will continue to work on time and money in math, while also building up to adding and subtracting numbers to 1,000.

Third grade. We have been learning about the profound impact that Black musicians have had on music as a part of Black History Month. In math, we wrapped up our unit on area, and we are getting ready to begin fractions! In writing, we are working on responding to texts using expanded sentences and text evidence. Additionally, Mrs. Clancy's second and third grade class had fun with a STEM "tallest candy heart tower" challenge. Each student was given 25 gummy hearts and toothpicks to create towers. The students had a great time and enjoyed the chance to sample their candy hearts afterward!

Fourth grade. In math, we are completing equivalent fractions and moving our way onto adding and subtracting fractions great than one. It is imperative that multiplication facts at this point in time are memorized. In ELA, we are working diligently on text-based questioning. We're discussing point of view and visualization with our kids on a daily basis. We also did an extensive exploration of poetry. In social studies, we're on our way to learning about European explorers. In science, we're starting to learn about the living environment.

Fifth grade. We had a busy last month! In ELA, we continued our work on identifying themes across a variety of genres. We are still focusing on responding to questions using text evidence. In math, we are working on adding, subtracting, multiplying and soon to come dividing fractions. We are finishing up our science unit on mixtures and solutions. Finally, in social studies we are beginning our research projects on important figures in Black history.

Art. It is a very busy time of year in the art room as we work on projects for art shows. We are just completing works inspired by African-American artists for a school-wide exhibition in March. Many grades are now working on abstract projects inspired by work from the Empire State Plaza collection, and 25 pieces will be part of the annual student exhibit there. Everyone is also doing a project for the PTA's Square One art fundraiser. Look for more information about this in March or April and order your child's art on fun and useful items.

Music. Beginner band and orchestra lessons are off to a great start. Please encourage your children to practice regularly and to remember to bring their instruments to school on their lesson day.

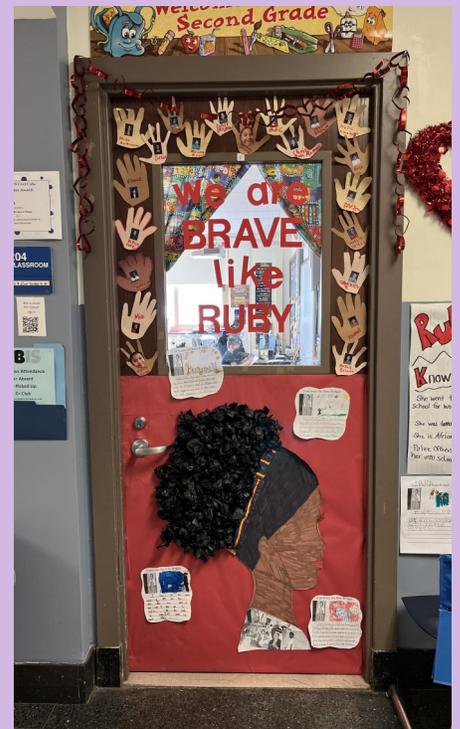


STUDENT LEADERSHIP TEAM

Each member of the Student Leadership Team represents one of the 25 classrooms in the building. Student leaders have been making their way around the school to read to students in the classrooms that they represent. Fourth grade class representative Amina Rais, from Mrs. Pukis' class, read "The Other Side" to her classmates. In addition to reading, she called on students to give details about the story and asked some very thought-provoking questions. Way to go Amina!



Celebrating the achievements of African-Americans



For Black History Month, we have decorated classroom and office doors throughout the school to educate each other about and celebrate the accomplishments of the many Black men and women who have influenced us, our community and our world.

Principal's message (continued from page 1)

classroom door with that person's accomplishments. This allows all other classes to read and learn about that person. With over 40 doors decorated (see photos above), we are learning about some amazing people. Along with our door

decorating, Ms. Rose has mixed in a lot of fun these last couple of months. We have had spirit week, twinning in '22, PBIS celebrations and PJ day. Please enjoy the pictures that are contained in this newsletter.

TWICE THE FUN ON TWIN DAY

You're not seeing double. Feb 2 – or 2/2/22, to be exact – was Twin Day at our school. And with 12 sets of twins (pictured together at bottom right), there was plenty to celebrate.

You didn't have to be a twin to get in on the fun. Students and teachers had the chance to dress alike and be twins, and even Principal Lesley Buff and Assistant Principal Timitra Rose became twins for a day.



Reading to make a difference

New Scotland Elementary School is participating in the Read for Ronald McDonald House Charities program!

The program supports Ronald McDonald House Charities of the Capital Region, an organization dedicated to helping children and families, especially those struggling with childhood illnesses and injuries. They work to keep families together and close to the care that they need.

Students are encouraged to gather donations from family and friends in support of the reading they will do for the month of February. Donations raised will be used to support the families served by the organization.

Read for Ronald McDonald House began Feb. 1. Please encourage your students to participate in this valuable program! Information regarding the program will be sent to you through SchoolMessenger email. We have decided to do this 100% virtually this year. You can check out our school's team page for fundraising at <https://give.rmhcofalbany.org/NewScotland2022>

For more information, contact Jill Lemire at jlemire@albany.k12.ny.us or Marni Neenos at mneenos@albany.k12.ny.us

Thanks to Sage College students for reading to us and sharing their experiences!



WHO'S WHO at New Scotland

Ms. Buff, principal
Ms. Rose, assistant principal
Mrs. Avery-McDonald, social worker
Mrs. Goetz, social worker
Mrs. Capazzola, psychologist
Mrs. Daley-Choudhri and Mrs. John, nurses
Mrs. Allen, office manager
Ms. Milner-Koonce, attendance clerk

Need to reach us? Call (518) 475-6775.