

PURPLE TIGER TIMES



New Scotland Elementary School Newsletter

June 2021

A note from Principal Lesley Buff ...

It is hard to believe that we are nearing the end of the school year. It feels like ages ago that we were figuring out how to check our students' temperatures and learning new online platforms to get school up and running. It is also sad for me to admit this is the first time that I have put together a complete newsletter instead of just sending out information through SNN.

With that being said, a lot of great things have happened at our school (both in the building and in the virtual world) and I hope you take the time to read all about them in this newsletter. I will keep my comments brief to leave more room to share all of it.

I would like to thank all of our parents that completed the school improvement survey. I recently received our results and I want you to know that we really use this information to change our school for the better. There were definitely some trends in your feedback, one of which was more communication from the school.

Hence, this has prompted me to go back to our newsletter format. You can expect to have newsletters each quarter next year.

I would also like to stress that although parents and guests are not permitted in the building, we are still accessible to you.

Please do not hesitate to call or email me if you need anything.

I hope that you enjoy reading about all of our wonderful happenings.



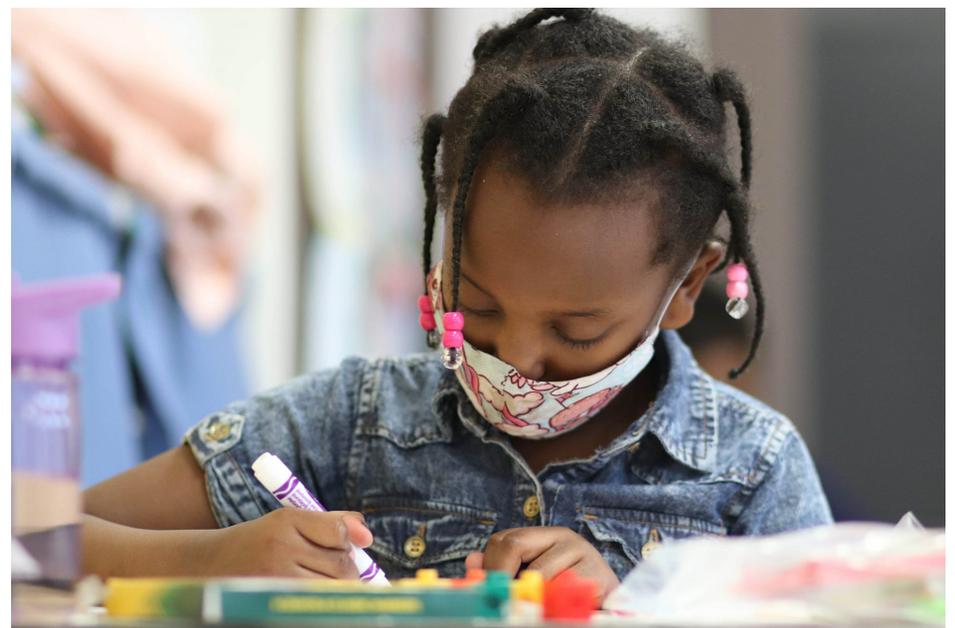
SAVE THE DATES!

JUNE

- 17 Pre-K Moving Up, Mrs. Leigh's class, back parking lot, 2-2:30 p.m.
- 18 Pre-K Moving Up, Mrs. Cusson's class, back parking lot, 2-2:30 p.m.
- 21 K Moving Up, Mrs. Stanton, Mrs. Abrams, Mrs. Pratt and Mrs. Bonacquisti's classes, back parking lot, 1-2 p.m.
- 22 K Moving Up, Mrs. Carter's class, parking lot, 2-2:30 p.m.
- 23 K Moving Up, Ms. Caruso's class, back parking lot, 2-2:30 p.m.
- 24 Grade 5 Moving Up, back parking lot, 10 a.m.

Stay tuned for more info!

MEASUREMENT MANIA



Students in Carla Fuller's first grade recently spent time honing their measurement skills, using cubes to record the length of different objects.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM EACH GRADE

Mrs. Clancy's class: We are learning about poetry. The students are practicing writing their own free-verse poem about something that is important to them!

Prekindergarten: We are learning about life cycles. We welcomed caterpillars into our classrooms and are patiently waiting for them to become butterflies. June will be spent getting ready to move on to kindergarten.

Kindergarten: We are doing a kindergarten countdown! Each day we have a hands-on activity planned for each letter of the alphabet until it's time to zoom out of school. We are learning about 2- and 3-dimensional shapes in math. We are participating in shape scavenger hunts around the classroom, and virtual students are participating at home! Our scholars continue to follow the 3 B's...Be Safe, Be Respectful, Be Responsible!

First grade: We learned about 2- and 3-dimensional shapes and fractions. We learned about insects and butterflies, and about insects we know about and how are they alike and different. We also watched our caterpillars turn into chrysalis, then released our painted lady butterflies.

Second grade: We spent the month of April learning how to leave a greener footprint on the earth. After reading "Ready Freddy! Save the Earth!," students participated in "The Green Team Challenge." Activities included taking a shower instead of a bath, riding a bike to get from one place to another instead of driving in a car, and shutting off water when brushing our teeth. Second-graders also enjoyed collecting data using jelly beans and graphing their results on a bar graph. We are excited to participate in science investigations which help us learn about the three states of matter.

Third grade: We are continuing to study forces and motion using magnets. We hope to do a fun unit on flight next. In math we are studying geometry: names and attributes of shapes including parallel lines, right angles and side-length relationships. We are enjoying the spring weather and our time on the playground!

Fourth grade (in person): We are using mealworms to study life cycles and practice our scientific observational skills. We plan to release the mealworms outside when they are adult beetles!

Fifth grade (in person): We have been hard at work learning volume and order of operations in math. In English language arts, we are reading expository texts on a variety of science and social studies topics, including global warming, invasive species, planets and heroes from World War II. We will also start with Junior Achievement very soon. We are looking forward to a strong finish here at NSES!

Fifth grade (distance) The class has been meeting with our Junior Achievement volunteer, Stan Simkins, and learning about small businesses. In math, we completed virtual dog house designs to learn about volume and to review decimal operations. Also, we learned scaling, how to write a business letter to get funding, and budgeting. In ELA, we have been completing Wonders activities and our read aloud, "Skeleton Creek." I am planning to have several former students come and visit fifth-graders in my class to be "interviewed" about Hackett and middle school. They will have prepared questions ahead of time, and each person will ask at least one question.



NSES FOCUSES ON EQUITY

Racial injustices that have occurred in our country have forced white Americans to investigate and grapple with their own racial biases, privileges and perspectives. Consequently, New Scotland has started an Equity Team consisting of administrators, teachers and teaching assistants.

The Equity Team began their work by reading the book, “White Fragility.” The team has led many eye-opening, engaging and sometimes difficult discussions on Google Meet during the Principals’ Professional Development sessions. Every student will soon be provided with their own copy of the book, “The Other Side” to read, as well.

We encourage you to read and discuss this book with your child at home to guide them through some of the difficult yet necessary conversations we need to have to achieve racial equity in our school and community. In this way, we can truly become the compassionate community of everyday leaders that New Scotland strives to be.

Additionally, with the many challenges our world is facing, as a school community we used this platform to discuss the importance of teaching students to use their voice in productive ways that improve our democracy, not destroy it. It was from this that the Dove of Peace Project started in kindergarten and then made its way through our entire school.

Teachers engaged students in discussions around social justice, democracy, citizenship and what they imagine a peaceful world would look like. Students then created their own dove and wrote what they wished for to create a world of peace (see Ethan, above right, from Mrs. Carter’s class). Student doves were then used to decorate our building for all to read. You can also visit our Facebook Page to see all of the Doves of Peace! <https://www.facebook.com/NewScotlandCSDA>



Year-end tips for families of distance learners

Navigating distance learning has surely been a challenge this year, but our students have made it look easy! As we begin to think about closing the year, we would like to give some helpful parent tips to help prepare your child for the next grade.

We know it is difficult to resist assisting your child, but independence is a learned skill. At this point in the year, allow your child to navigate the Google Meet. They should be able to log on and off on their own.

As the teacher gives directions, encourage your child to find pages in books the teacher is referencing. We understand they may look to you, but if they were in person they would be doing this work on their own.

Assessments give teachers valuable information about students’ strengths and any unfinished learning. Please allow your child to complete these independently without your assistance. This will give us the most accurate information to support their learning and growth.

Lastly, distance teachers are here for you. They have office hours where you can meet with them if needed.

ARTISTS CREATE FROM LIFE

We have been very busy making art in school and at home.

Younger students learned about the signs and symbols of spring, creating patterned eggs and pictures of flowers using shapes.

Older students learned about pop artist Andy Warhol. They made multiples of a drawing they created of an iconic item for our era and used a color wheel to develop a different color scheme for each copy.

All students in the school are currently working on a project based on our building-wide book read “The Other Side” by Jacqueline Woodson. They brainstormed ways we can work to make the world a fairer more equal place and made pictures to illustrate their ideas. All their drawings will be displayed on a fence throughout the school and online.

Finally, look for an announcement soon about the annual district elementary art show at the Albany Institute of History and Art in June. Each school will showcase ten pieces of art. I have some very hard choices to make. I wish I could feature all the great work I’ve gotten this year!

The artwork on the top right was created by Rashelle in Mrs. Gravel’s third grade and the artwork on the bottom right by Christian in Mrs. Stanton’s kindergarten.



ATTENTION PARENTS OF FIFTH-GRADERS

We certainly know this was not the way our students and our families envisioned their last year at New Scotland Elementary School to be.

Nonetheless, we want to make the end of the year as special as possible.

The school will be having an outdoor moving up ceremony on June 24 at 10 a.m. Please mark your calendars. This ceremony will be limited to two guests per student.

Also, the PTA Fifth Grade Committee is in the process of

planning to honor our students. If you would like to be a part of the planning, please contact Tyleia Harrell at tjw1996@hotmail.com.

Book Arts Program

Fourth-grade classes recently completed the six-week virtual Book Arts Program with the Albany Institute of History and Art. In the sessions, students learned about making observational drawings from professionals in a variety of fields. They also learned about reading and copying pictures from museum educators, drawing a self-portrait from a children's book illustrator, drawing natural objects from an artist, and drawing artifacts from an archaeologist.

In the last session, they put their favorite drawings into their own bound book.

A big THANK YOU to Sarah Clowe and the education staff at the Albany Institute for bringing us this program and all the materials to run it virtually.