

Communicator

February 2021



Top Choir Students Recognized

Although the All-Conference Band and Choir event was not held as normal this year, each school in the conference still recognized their top music students. The Neillsville Choir students receiving this honor are pictured below.



Left to right: MacKenzie Keller, Jayda Harris, Bella Opelt, Terren Stockheimer



Left to right: Rylee Courtney, Emily Hanson, Arianna Rochester

Calendar Notice

Please monitor school communications for information on activities and holiday breaks, as dates may change.



Access the current operational plan on the district home page:
www.neillsville.k12.wi.us

Fifth Graders Master Decimals

Time is always speeding by in fifth grade! A lot going on in math; we are working on mastering word problems and real life situations after studying how to multiply and divide decimals; and adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing fractions.

The students recently finished their research reports on Native Americans. The reports were amazing! They included multiple sections, text features, and citations!

In science, the students learned about atoms and researched an element and shared what they learned with their classmates. We celebrated the end of the first semester with a movie, and are ready to achieve great things in the second half of the year!

Superintendent's Message



A New Beginning: With the beginning of the second semester, students in all grades were approved to come back to school four days a week for in-person instruction. We are excited to report that kids are happy to be back and that they are doing very well. I know

that parents are excited for the kids to be back in school, too. Every Friday continues to be a virtual day that our staff uses to serve our remote learners and provide extra help to any students in need of extra time or instruction.

Safety Protocols are Working: To date, we have found little evidence of the spread of the coronavirus occurring in school. Almost all positive cases have been identified as exposures outside of school. Nationwide research is indicating this to be true as well. Currently, we have no positive cases amongst staff or students in our building. All of this would indicate that the safety protocols

that schools have in place are working. Based on the information made available to us from the health department we will need to keep the current safety protocols of masking, distancing when possible, hand washing, and sanitizing surfaces in place for the remainder of the school year. We really appreciate everyone's support in helping us enforce these safety measures.

Governor's Budget: The governor has proposed a 2021-2023 budget that can significantly help low revenue districts like ours. Several of the measures in his budget are to provide more equity in the ways that schools are funded. For decades, this has been an issue which our district has been fighting to resolve. If you have any questions about the proposed budget, or how the budget proposals would impact our district, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you for your ongoing support of our children!

John Gaier
Superintendent

Strengthening Reading Skills in Kindergarten

We are having a great time in kindergarten as we get into the third quarter! The end of winter is a busy, busy time as we celebrate and enjoy activities related to Dr. Seuss, our 100th day of school, and St. Patrick's Day. The students have learned so much in school so far! Our reading skills are improving greatly and we're enjoying being able to read our own books as we learn to sound out words. We are practicing many phonemic awareness skills and the repetition helps us become comfortable and confident in each area as we become readers!

In math, we have been working on number partners in addition and finding 10-groups in larger numbers. Soon we will add subtraction to the list of things we can do!

We love the snow we have gotten recently as it means bigger hills and more fun to be had when we play outside!



Middle School Principal's Message



I started off my Middle School Principal Quarter 1 Communicator article with these 3 words; flexibility, communication, and collaboration. I felt it was appropriate to reiterate those three words again as students, families, and faculty have demonstrated these characteristics in greater depth this entire school year than any other before. Again, thank you all for that!

Beginning with the second semester we have been able to double the in-person learning time in school for grades 7th through 12th to match the 4-day in-person learning model that grades kindergarten through 6th grade have been experiencing all school year. A huge thank you to the parents and guardians for screening your student each morning and communicating with school when your child needs to stay home as well as another thank you to the students for practicing the health safety protocol while here at school. These efforts have paid off and have allowed us to maintain our goal of not having to go 100% virtual this year.

With the increase to 4 days per week of in-person learning, the 7th through 12th-grade schedule has been adapted to add back in our 8th hour. The addition of the 8th hour was welcomed by teachers and students. The 8th hour gives students time to get additional help from needed teachers. For 7th and 8th graders, this also provides a structured time for students to develop a daily routine of checking their grades in Infinite Campus and their school email.

Our teachers continue to navigate two learning models as we continue to offer 100% at-home learning for any families that prefer the virtual format as we navigate through COVID. I do want to make sure that all families are aware that next year if you prefer your student to learn at home, we will not be offering the 100% at-home learning mode through the teachers in our district. Instead, the School District of Neillsville is a consortium member of Rural Virtual Academy (RVA). Next year, 100% virtual learners will be instructed through RVA.

Even though this school year has looked different, our middle schoolers have still been busy growing academically and socially. The middle school has a character trait of the month where students are recognized by staff and peers for demonstrating the monthly character trait. The submitted character cards are hung up on our "Character Board" in the middle school hallway. At the end of the month, the students get to keep the character card that was filled out for them along with a small token of appreciation. Some of the monthly character traits have been gratitude, courage, and kindness.

This year again, the Teen Leadership Council (TLC) has been joining the 8th-grade monthly guidance lessons. Initially, the lessons took place virtually between the TLC members and the 8th-grade classes, but recently they have been able to join in person for their monthly guidance lessons. In addition to TLC, our new School Resource Officer, Deputy Dylan, has been joining Mrs. Neville for our middle school guidance lessons. The Middle School Student Council coordinated a Mock Presidential Election for the Middle

... next year if you prefer your student to learn at home, we will not be offering the 100% at-home learning mode through the teachers in our district.

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Middle School Principal *continued . . .*

School. Votes were collected through a Google form. Prior to the election, students learned about the process in their social studies class, along with an emphasis on how to respectfully have various opinions. In-person and remote students both participated.

In addition, the Middle School Student Council created a “Gratitude Tree.” The middle school students wrote names of people, places, and things they were grateful for both in and out of school on paper leaves to be added to the tree. The tree was located by the middle and high school cafeteria entrance. The “Gratitude Tree” was featured on the front page of the December 2nd *Clark County Press*. For our December service project, the middle school students made ornaments that were donated to frontline workers, local facilities, and the Tomah Veterans Hospital. Furthermore, we had a few middle school students participate in the “Fall Chorus Virtual Solo and Ensemble.” Each of the participants submitted a video of themselves performing their song at home while using a recording of Mrs. Rueth playing the accompaniment.

January 25th-29th was “Course Registration & ACP Week” for students in 8th through 12th graders. Parents had the opportunity to view virtual presentations. 2021-22 course registration materials were handed out to 8th graders that week when Mr. Anderson visited their social studies classes. 8th grader’s registration forms were due back to school the week of February 8th to register for their freshman year classes.

We honored “World Read Aloud Day” on Tuesday, February 3rd, in Miss Opelt’s English language arts classes by having Mr. John Gaier and I read a story out loud to the students. Most recently, middle school students have been able to partner with WCCN to record the “Warrior Wrap-up” which is an announcement that is played on the radio station to announce school activities for the week. We value the partnership we have with WCCN.

Looking forward, “Middle School Week” will be the week of March 1st-4th. Activities for “Middle School Week” will be organized by the Middle School Student Council. Furthermore, the State Forward Testing will be taking place for the 6th-grade students the week of April 19th and for the 7th & 8th-grade students the week of March 23rd and April 26th. Please encourage your student to get a good night’s rest and do their best. Registration for current 6th and 7th grader’s music/academic elective selection for next year and Summer School registration for all grade levels are currently in progress. Current 6th and 7th graders are able to choose from chorus, band, and academic elective for next year. Academic elective is a class that consists of a variety of activities including coding, robotics, and problem-solving. The registration forms are due back to their homeroom teacher by February 25th with a parent/guardian signature. Also, there are many wonderful and fun opportunities for Middle School students during Summer School. Please see our school website for the Summer School Course Offering Booklet or ask your student to pick up a hardcopy from their ELA teachers.

Again, in conclusion, I want to reiterate what a wonderful job and how proud I am of students, families, and faculty for all they are doing during this unprecedented time.

Have a wonderful day,
Kory Poeschel
Middle School Principal

Elementary Principal's Message



Welcome to the year 2021! These are exciting times. With the new semester comes the beginnings of transitions to new grade levels, events, and weather. Our Neillsville Elementary staff can assist in making these transitions as smooth as possible.

What's New? In the Elementary/Middle School office you may have heard a new voice and/or have seen a new face. Mrs. Kerry Vance is now working alongside Mrs. Allie Laufenberg. Mrs. Morgan Spencer has not left our school family. She is working in the board office alongside Mrs. Michelle Kranz. Mrs. Vance has worked for Neillsville schools for a good number of years in the High School office. We welcome her in our Elementary/Middle School office.

A new activity that we have started up again is student council. Our elementary student council is composed of 4th and 5th graders. These students wrote about why they wanted to be on the student council. Their teachers then choose one student from each homeroom. Also, 5th grade selected one extra student. Therefore, there are seven students on the student council. We are already getting ready to put into place a coloring competition, reading activity, and a community service event that will donate cereal to our local food pantry. The students are energetic and ready to serve. I'm extremely proud and impressed by the enthusiasm and ideas.

Neillsville Elementary's reading instruction has new components. Our elementary school is focused on using the science of reading to assist us in making instructional decisions. The science of reading is the systematic, explicit instruction in phonics and the other areas of reading. The science of reading focuses on explicit phonics instruction because it is the necessary foundation of reading. Even in 4-year-old kindergarten, we are working on foundational reading skills like rhyming, letter recognition, and sound segmenting. Therefore, our days have been restructured to give students needed phonics and phonemic awareness instruction. I'm proud of the hard work the teachers and students are doing each and every day. We are looking forward to seeing the positive results from our hard work.

Playground Recess is a time to socialize and have fun. We stress respectful speaking to recess teachers and other students. In addition, physical aggression will not be tolerated. I have reviewed playground/recess expectations to some separate elementary classrooms. The students are very receptive. In addition, these review sessions have brought about great discussions between teachers and students. Every day we are working at improving behaviors of students in unstructured settings. Discussions with staff bring great ideas, as well as discussions with students. It continues to be a process of making adjustments based on student and school needs.

Happenings During Dr. Seuss Week (March 1-4) you may hear students read Dr. Seuss stories on the radio! Our local radio station, WCCN, will be recording students reading these stories. We have around 30 students who have volunteered to read! This is wonderful! Thank you to Logan Grap and WCCN for giving our school this opportunity!

The Forward Exam will be administered to students in grade 3rd - 5th in April. The Forward Exam is the "state test" that is usually given in the spring of the year. This school year, adjustments were made to the
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Elementary Principal *continued* . . .

assessment based on the fact that students were not in school learning the spring of 2020. The grade level teachers will inform parents of dates and times as the event gets closer.

Summer School is just around the corner! It will be held from June 7th to July 2nd from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. Monday through Friday. We would like the registration forms returned by April 16th so that we can plan the courses and schedule the students. Please call the Elementary office if you have any questions.

This year our 4-year-old kindergarten had two cohorts. We had a Monday/Wednesday cohort that attended school all day, as well as a Tuesday/Thursday cohort. This was a big change from the previous years. We are still in the planning phase for next year. The school is researching whether to keep 4-year-old kindergarten all day with two cohorts; or go back to four half days. This decision will be made very soon. Please look to our school website for updates.

In Closing Thank you for supporting our elementary school. School is a very important part of a community. Neillsville Elementary School is very fortunate to have such a supportive and caring community. In addition, I'm extremely proud of our teachers and students for all of the hard work they do, and their willingness to adjust this school year. I'm looking forward to spring!

Mrs. Marcy Kunze
Elementary School Principal

Crafting Imaginative Stories in Third Grade

In reading, we continue to work on improving our reading skills and strategies as well as independent reading levels. Students need to be able to read and comprehend 98% of the words and concepts within a text to be a successful reader. **More than ever, it is important that your child spend at least 20 minutes reading every day.** We have written step-by-step directions and are working on imaginative stories. We have some pretty creative third graders!



In math, third graders have been focusing on solving problems using critical thinking and real-life applications. Students are gaining a better understanding of how to use math strategies every day. They have also been working very hard learning their multiplication and division facts. They have quickly discovered that it is faster to multiply than to add again and again! **Please continue to support your child at home by practicing the multiplication and division facts every day.**

This spring students will be administered the state assessment called the Wisconsin Forward Exam. Third graders will be preparing for this in the coming weeks. You should be seeing more information regarding specific testing dates and times soon.

Thank you for your continued support and encouragement. It really makes a difference when your child knows we are all in this together! Keep up the good work!

High School Guidance



Greetings! As I looked over the information I typically communicate at the end 2nd quarter, I realized much of it has already come and gone at this point. Given this, I thought it would be appropriate to share a few keys concepts from a reflection I wrote a couple years ago about resiliency. After the year we have all had, it seems like a very fitting topic! 😊

Key Concepts from “Building Resilience in Children & Teens...A reflection for parents & educators...”

I would like to share Ginsburg's “**7 Crucial C's of Resilience**” with you in hopes that they might introduce you to some new perspectives or just remind you of beliefs you already hold and encourage you to continue doing what you are already doing. Ginsburg states that people who are **resilient**, meaning they have “*the capacity to rise above difficult circumstances and move forward in their lives with optimism and confidence,*” possess these 7 qualities:

Competence: The ability to handle situations effectively.

Confidence: The solid belief in one's own abilities; deeply rooted in competence.

Connection: Close ties to family, friends, school, and community; family being the central force.

Character: A fundamental sense of right and wrong.

Contribution: An understanding that the world is a better place because I am in it.

Coping: Possessing thinking skills and action strategies to positively adapt to change and stress.

Control: The basic understanding that I have some control over the outcomes of my decisions.

The 7 C's in light of the past year . . . Yes, it's been a tough year and probably most of us can say we've struggled with the loss of control and connections we've been accustomed to having in our day-to-day lives. We may have lost confidence in things we once felt were secure and our ability to be contributing members of our community may also look very different. Our own competence to handle normal routines and firmly established character may even feel like they have been shaken to the core. What's left!?! **COPING** or **our ability to positively adapt to change and stress** is most likely the “7 C's Quality” many of us have been relying on most this past year! If you feel like you are at the end of your own coping skills, check out the next page for a quick reference to “25 Positive Coping Skills for Stress and Anxiety” with some Neillsville-specific tips! Perhaps it will remind you of a few favorite things you enjoy doing that you can weave back into family routines for you and your children. As always, if you or your child feel like you need to connect with local, professional resources, please feel free to reach out anytime and I will help you get connected with the appropriate people. Be encouraged; spring is on its way and good things are happening each and every day! 😊

Mrs. Backaus
MS/HS Guidance Counselor

find us on social media



@NeillsvilleWarriors



@NeillsvilleSD



neillsvillewarriors

25 POSITIVE COPING SKILLS FOR STRESS AND ANXIETY











1. Write your thoughts/feelings in a **journal** 
2. **Play an instrument** 
3. **Listen to music**- lay back or sit down and focus on the music
4. **Write a story** 
5. **Write a letter** to the person you are stressing over (you don't have to actually send it) 
6. Eat a **healthy and nutritious** meal or snack 
7. Go for a **walk**
8. Go to the **gym**  
9. **Exercise** at home 
10. Do **yoga** 
11. **Meditate** 
12. Take some **deep breaths**

Consider getting healthy foods at the Neillsville farmer's market this next summer and fall!

<https://neillsville-wi.com/farmers-market/>

Consider uplifting your spirits by attending a local worship service; see website below for local places of worship:

<https://neillsville-wi.com/churches/>

13. **Stretch** 
14. Watch a **feel-good movie or TV show**
15. **Read** 
16. Take a **social media detox**
17. **Paint/draw/color** 
18. **Crochet/knit/sew** 
19. **De-clutter or clean** your living space 
20. Go for a **bike ride** 
21. Go to the **park**
22. Have a **picnic** 
23. Listen to a **podcast** 
24. Spend time **playing with a pet** 
25. Spend time **with family** 

Visit the Neillsville Public Library;
<https://neillsville-wi.com/public-library/>

Consider reading "Building Resilience in Children and Teens" ISBN: 978-1-58110-866-8 by Dr. Ginsburg for a great book jam-packed with helpful, practical tips.

Consider visiting some of our great Neillsville Parks or other Outdoor Recreation sites; visit the websites below for more information.

<https://neillsville-wi.com/parks-department/>

<https://neillsville-wi.com/outdoor-recreation/>

Middle School Social Emotional Learning



Students at Neillsville Middle School have been participating in guidance presentations aimed at improving strategies to deal with some of the challenges of middle school, such as self regulation and internet safety. We also focused on Academic and Career Planning activities to prepare students as they move forward next year.

Eighth grade students have been focusing on scheduling and other ACP activities. Mr. Anderson began Registration Week with a High School 101 presentation for all eighth graders. Mrs. Backaus joined the eighth grade guidance lessons in January, along with the Teen Leadership Council, to help the students as they transition into high school. The students were given the opportunity to evaluate multiple transcripts representing different pathways through high school. Finally, eighth graders were guided through the process of choosing classes and registration.

Seventh grade students have continued to work through the BrainWise program with lessons that focused on identifying internal and external cues that might help them recognize when a potential problem may occur, and take action to handle the situation effectively. The students named signals such as sweating, a racing heart and an upset stomach as some internal cues. Yelling, running away, and fighting were recognized as external cues.

Sixth grade students have also been planning for next year. They were introduced to their seventh grade teachers through video, and then they were asked to choose an academic advisor to help them as they move into their next year of middle school. From those selections, advising lists will be created for the fall.

Neillsville Middle School students were also lucky enough to have Deputy Dylan Baxter, our school resource officer, join Mrs. Neville in guidance class for a presentation on internet safety. The presentation included information on how to keep your information safe and how to be smart when using social media. We are excited to have Deputy Dylan in our classrooms on a regular basis, and look forward to more opportunities for him to join us!

Mrs. Jill Neville
Behavioral & Academic Interventionist

Fourth Graders Learn From Local Trapper

The second quarter of the school year was an exciting time for the fourth grade students and teachers. One highlight was watching a presentation on fur trapping and trading by a local trapper and her son, who happens to be a 4th grade student.

When the students returned in January, we continued working hard in all academic classes in the classrooms. The students are very excited to be starting their first unit in fractions. We also celebrated the end of the first semester by watching a movie and having popcorn in our classrooms.

The fourth graders at Neillsville Elementary had a successful first semester. The fourth grade teachers are proud of the students' achievements. We are all excited about the second semester of the school year.



CHECK IT OUT!

Happy Winter!

Students are back in the library with the start of second semester. 4K is enjoying story time and learning to care for and checkout books. Kindergarten through grade 2 are now coming to the LMC during their AMP time; once a week opposite Guidance. Please ask your student's teacher what day they have library time. Grades 3 and up will continue to check out books using the online catalog, along with visiting the LMC once a week.

The High School library is bustling with DL (distance learning) students, working on accelerating their education in a variety of classes.

You can find the Library Website at: <https://sites.google.com/student.neillsville.k12.wi.us/nsd-libraries/home> or School Home Page, Students, Library Media.

Library Staff

Mrs. Melissa Strangfeld
Library Media Specialist
mstrangfeld@neillsville.k12.wi.us
715-743-8835

Mrs. Deb Brey & Mrs. Pernsteiner
LMC Library Staff

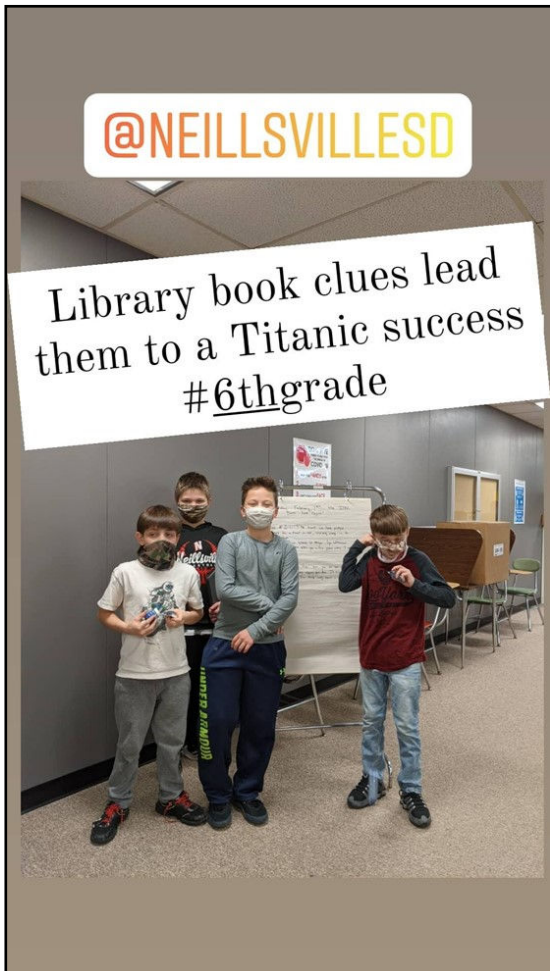
Mrs. Laurie Klieforth
High School Library Staff

Guidelines for borrowing a book:

- ⇒ Check out is for 2 weeks
- ⇒ If a student has an overdue book, we remind the student or send a sheet home & let the student check out 1 new book.
- ⇒ If a student has 2 or more overdue books, the library will remind the student and send a sheet home, while the student will still be allowed to check 1 book to keep in the classroom
- ⇒ We do not charge a fine for overdue books, however, we do charge a replacement fee for lost or damaged books. This includes water damage from snow, swimming, or water bottles.



**Our goal is to
get a book
in every
students' hands!**



Find a book with a school library barcode, just return it to any office.

First Graders Focus on Problem Solving

The first graders have been busy reading many different genres. Our students have been introduced to non-fiction, realistic fiction, fantasy, plays and poetry as we explore our reading series, *Wonders*.

We have begun a new Phonemic Awareness program called Heggerty. It is a fast-paced, action-packed, 12 minutes at least twice per day. Our reading books sent home in our students' Bounce Back Bags have become decodable/phonics-based readers. Our writing is included within our series. We practice using capital letters, punctuation, and correct grammar daily. Our stories have included fantasies, poems, opinions, and personal narratives.

In math the first graders are becoming quite the problem solvers. The students are solving word problems, almost daily, where they must solve story problems with unknown partners or unknown totals. We wrote our own gingerbread story problems for other first graders in our classrooms to solve. This was a culminating project for our cross-curricular unit on gingerbread kids and houses. We are also building on the children's understanding of tens and extra ones. Our activities will provide experience and understanding of multi-digit numbers that will help them master the concept of place value.

In February, we enjoyed Valentine's Day parties in our classrooms. We will also be using dental health experiments from a dental clinic to learn how to take better care of our teeth and practice good oral health habits.

Our second round of Parent/Student/Teacher Conferences is underway. Our families have the option of a phone call, Google Meet, or email due to Covid-19 restrictions. In March, we are looking forward to more learning, the 100th day of school, roller skating in Phy. Ed., and SPRING!



Mrs. Robida's Classroom

Sixth Graders Rap Their Way Through Math

Our Sixth Graders practiced evaluating expressions this quarter in Mrs. Kunder's math class. They were each given a different numerical expression to solve using the order of operations. We learned a fun rap (have them sing it for you!) and solved our expressions on fun colored pennants. Not only did the students learn about how order matters when solving expressions, but we were able to beautify the room in the process! Now students have 57 examples of how to correctly solve numerical expressions! How neat!



Mrs. Kunder's Classroom



Choir Fundraiser

Choir Department Butter Braid fundraiser happening now!! If you have not been contacted by a choir member in grades 6-12, feel free to place an order with Jodi Rueth, jrueth@neillsville.k12.wi.us, or 715-743-8846. **Deadline for orders is March 11!** Delivery to the school will be March 16.

Developmental Screenings Offered

The School District of Neillsville offers developmental screenings for children from birth to age four. If you have questions about your child's development (i.e. playing, socializing with others, behavior, attention, walking, talking, meeting personal needs), please contact:

Deb Vetterkind, Early Childhood Teacher - (715) 743-8870

For more information about developmental milestones, please visit:

<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/>

Your Child's Early Development is a Journey

Check off the milestones your child has reached and share your child's progress with the doctor at every well-child visit.

6 MONTHS

- Copies sounds
- Begins to sit without support
- Likes to play with others, especially parents
- Responds to own name
- Strings vowels together when babbling ("ah," "eh," "oh")

12 MONTHS (1 YEAR)

- Uses simple gestures such as shaking head for "no" or waving "bye bye"
- Copies gestures
- Responds to simple spoken requests

18 MONTHS (1 1/2 YEARS)

- Says "mama" and "dada"
- Pulls up to stand
- Says several single words
- Walks alone
- Knows what ordinary things are for; for example, telephone, brush, spoon
- Plays simple pretend, such as feeding a doll
- Points to show others something interesting

2 YEARS

- Follows simple instructions
- Kicks a ball
- Says sentences with 2 to 4 words
- Gets excited when with other children

3 YEARS

- Points to things or pictures when they're named
- Copies adults and friends (like running when other children run)
- Carries on a conversation using 2 to 3 sentences
- Climbs well
- Plays make-believe with dolls, animals and people
- Shows affection for friends without prompting

4 YEARS

- Hops and stands on one foot for up to 2 seconds
- Would rather play with other children than alone
- Tells stories
- Draws a person with 2 to 4 body parts
- Plays cooperatively

START HERE

These are just a few of many important milestones to look for. For more complete checklists by age visit cdc.gov/Milestones or call 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636).

4K students beat sub-zero temperatures by staying active indoors



Writing Research-Based Essays in 6th Grade

Just like the first, second quarter has flown by in 6th grade! You know what they say, "time flies when you're having fun!"

We started the second quarter of ELA with another essay, this one on ancient civilizations. Students got to choose one ancient civilization to research and write about. Before beginning, we went over reliable resources when researching. They were then able to dig into their two subtopics, start planning, and write their essay showing what they learned.

Just like the quarter began, it ended with yet another essay! Sixth graders got to put their research skills to use again while planning and writing an argumentative essay! Once they determined their argument and stance, they needed to give two reasons why someone should agree with their stance. Within those two reasons, they needed to provide statistics to back up their opinions. Statistics was something they hadn't learned or worked with before, but that didn't stop them from working hard and finding strong evidence to support their claim! In this essay, sixth graders even wrote a counterargument. If you ask one of them what that means, they'll tell you a counterargument is what people would say if they had the opposite opinion or view as you. This is so important in an argumentative essay because it shows the reader you've considered all sides. Once showing the reader that, they gave one last strong statistic or piece of evidence trying to convince the reader that their opinion is the correct one. Students did such a great job on this essay and are looking forward to our next one!

Middle School Fosters Budding Authors

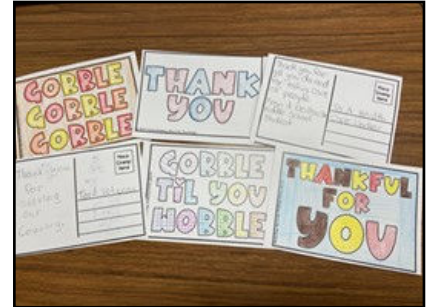
Middle School 7th and 8th grade students focused on gratitude during the month of November. Students kicked off the second quarter by creating a gratitude tree. Students were asked to think about family, friends, places, and things that they are grateful for. They then wrote their thoughts down on leaves that went up on a gratitude tree in the middle school hallway. The students were grateful for so many things! The students then colored and wrote messages for veterans serving our country that are overseas. Veterans received the postcards during the holiday season. The students also chose to color and write messages for healthcare workers in the community. Healthcare workers received the postcards during the holidays as well. The middle school students are grateful for all the hard work that the veterans and healthcare workers do to keep them safe.

The 8th grade students started 2nd quarter in ELA with a dystopian book club unit. During this unit, the students were able to analyze the differences between a dystopian society and today's society. Remote students were able to collaborate with their book club by doing weekly discussion boards. The students shared their thoughts and ideas about the book on their discussion boards and were able to easily connect with in-person students. Over the course of this unit, some students went above and beyond and read the whole book series. At the end of the unit, students created a digital one-pager. This was an analytical way for the students to show their understanding of the novel they read.

After finishing a whole class novel, *The Outsiders* by S. E. Hinton, 7th grade students were eager to start a new writing unit. For this, students were asked to write a realistic fiction piece. The students worked diligently to craft the plot of their stories. During the drafting stage, the students learned how to write an engaging lead, how to include dialogue into their story, and how to make their story come to life. The students were eager when they finished writing their draft to share their stories. However, the students learned how important it is to edit and revise their writing when they have finished a first draft. All students worked tediously with a partner prior to submitting their final draft to edit and revise their work. The students wrote stories about all sorts of topics! Below is an excerpt from a story written by a 7th grader. The 7th grade students were eager to share their stories with others!

"The night was warm; I leaned on the railing of my not so humble home, a lighthouse I renovated not too long ago, and looked up at the beautiful, twinkling stars. The constellations were easy to imagine as real things, that or I'm just a creative person. Even though the stars were quite exquisite, the waves soon captured my attention. "The waves are strong tonight." I noted as I watched them crash into the nearby cliffs with immense force. I never really liked the powerful waves of this area, but my beautiful lighthouse home was worth it. They reminded me of the heavy rain on the navy ships, and the stormy nights with terrible sailing conditions. The waves would crash hard into the ships. Though of course, our boats could take it.

Then, another thing caught my attention. I spotted the silhouette of something in the distance. "A boat?" I asked myself aloud. Surely nobody would be dumb enough to try to combat the water tonight. Though, as the shape grew closer, I could see it was clearly a boat. Who would sail on a night like this? Though, the fact somebody would make an endeavor to go boating tonight wasn't the worst of what was happening. Over near the cliffs, there was a series of jagged, large rocks. All of the locals knew if somebody were to go near there, it was basically a death wish if you weren't careful."



Second Grade Sledding Celebration

The second graders celebrated the end of the first semester with a sledding event at Mt. Moldy. Students had lots of fun. They enjoyed the fresh air and free time with their friends. Many giggles were had by all.



History Students Simulate Land Rush

Freshman US History students are currently in the western expansion unit of US History. In it we discuss the various way settlers impacted the native people living on the plains, and how those issues resulted in modern day reservations. Students simulate how the introduction of a new human population, and new inventions like trains, affected the massive buffalo herds that lived on the plains. We also look at the reasons for why the buffalo were hunted so heavily, as it was not simply for the hides. Students also get the chance to simulate the Oklahoma land rush, in which students race to grab land across our version of 'Oklahoma'. Some students act as sooners who entered the area early to find the best land.



Recommendations Around Screen Time

The use of technology to learn, interact and play has increased significantly in the past year; therefore, so has our screen time. Screen time is time spent using a device with a screen such as a smartphone, computer, television or video game console. Eyesafe Nielsen reported that the average screen time per person rose 60%, to more than 13 hours per day, in March of 2020.

Questions have been asked about the negative effects of screen time. The American Academy of Ophthalmologists states that using devices will not damage your eyes permanently, but staring at them for a long time can cause temporary discomfort. People experience computer/digital eye strain in different ways, but symptoms can include dry eyes, blurry vision, tearing or watery eyes and headaches. This is due to blinking less. Normally, humans blink around 15 times per minute. However, "blink rate" can be cut in half when staring at screens or doing other near work activities (like reading). Likewise, the American Optometric Association states that increased evening use of laptops and other broad spectrum self-illuminated devices rich in blue light has been suggested to interfere with good sleep hygiene, especially in adolescents. Blue light stimulates the brain and tells it to stay awake.

What can we do about this? The American Academy of Ophthalmologists states:

- **Take frequent breaks by using the "20-20-20" rule.** Every 20 minutes look away from your screen and look at an object 20 feet away for at least 20 seconds. This gives your eyes a chance to reset and replenish themselves.
- **Use artificial tears to lubricate your eyes** when they feel dry.
- **Keep your distance.** Sit about 25 inches or at arm's length from your screen and adjust its height so you're looking slightly downward at it.
- **Reduce glare and brightness.** Devices with glass screens can cause glare. To reduce glare, consider a matte screen filter for your device. Adjusting the brightness and contrast of your screen and dimming the lighting near your screen can also help reduce eye strain.
- **Wear eyeglasses.** If you wear contact lenses, you already know they can increase dryness and irritation. To reduce these symptoms, try wearing eyeglasses instead when working on a computer for longer periods.
- **Blue Light Glasses may help.** You can also decrease screen time or set devices to night mode to reduce the effects of blue light.

Regarding screen time limits, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends:

- **Children under 2:** Avoid all screen time for children younger than 18-24 months old, except for video-chatting or time co-playing with parents on apps after 6 months of age.
- **Children ages 2-5:** Children ages 2 to 5 years should have no more than one hour of screen time of high-quality, educational content per day.
- **Children ages 6 and older:** Establish personal screen time limits that ensure that media does not interfere with sleep, exercise or other healthy behaviors.



Children's
Wisconsin
Community Services

Family Matters

January — May 2021

Family Events / Ask the Expert

Stop the Battle at the Table:

February 11th 11:30am-12:30pm –Virtual Event

Presented By: Penny Schmitt, FoodWise
Nutrition Educator

Is mealtime a stressful for your family? Do you want dinner to be relaxed and fun for the whole family? This class is for you. Have lunch and connect with other parents to learn new ways to navigate mealtime while choosing healthy foods for your family. Interactive and full of great ideas

Ongoing Programs

Parent Aide Program

This 3-month In-Home program provides visits from a family support worker to help improve parenting skills and teach positive discipline techniques. The program is tailored to meet Individual needs. Call today to register: 715-660-0397

Raising Resilient Children Parenting Class

This FREE 10 week Parenting Class is available virtually now. Parenting is a joy but it can be challenging too. Strengthen relationships in your home. Topics include building self-esteem, child growth and development, communication skills, media, and positive discipline techniques.

6 pm – 7:30 pm Tuesdays call to register.
715-242-7457

LENA Start MC

Jump start your 0 - 33 month old for success in school and in life with this FREE 10 - week program that emphasizes the importance of early communication. Learn how early talk builds babies brains while engaging with other parents. Includes FREE books, incentives, gift cards and all required materials. Join us for this virtual program. Several times and days available. **Spring Groups begin February 22nd Must start on class one. Register at LenaStartMC.org or by texting 715-660-0397**

Myths of Motherhood

February 9th or 16th 4:30-6pm—Virtual Event

Presented by Yonat Piva, MA, LMFT

In this workshop we will be debunking false motherhood myths and creating new healthy personal truths. You will increase your awareness of how to balance expectations for your journey of motherhood and when you may decide to seek support.

All programing is FREE but registration is required to receive the Zoom link.

Call: 715-242-7457, Email: hevans@chw.org or Text: 715-660-8103

This is New—Check it out

Creative Corner



Join Marshfield Family Resource Center Facebook page for fun live videos every Thursday at 9:00am. Enjoy demonstrations of different creative children's activities or storytelling each week. Come get Creative with us!!

<https://www.facebook.com/MarshfieldFamilyResourceCenter>

Registration is recommended for all programs.

Marshfield Family Resource Center

725 S. Central Avenue ~ Marshfield, WI 54449
Call 715-660-8103 or email hevans@cwh.org

These activities are not sponsored by the Marshfield School District or any of its schools. The district assumes no responsibility for the conduct during or safety of the activities. Marshfield School District shall be held harmless from any cause of action, claim, or petition filed in any court or administrative tribunal arising out of the distribution of these materials including attorney's fees and judgments or awards.



Marshfield Family Resource Center
725 S. Central Avenue
Marshfield, WI 54449

Ongoing Programs and Services

January—May 2021

Play and Learn

Tuesdays 9:30 a.m and 10:30am
Griese Park 1001 E 29th St Marshfield

Who cares about the weather! Connect with others who have young children and enjoy early learning activities to enhance your child's development and promote school readiness all outdoors.

Participants MUST register due to limited openings. Email: hevans@chw.org or call 715-660-8103

Parent Chat

Parents can schedule private, individual sessions with a staff person who can provide parenting information and support or connect you with the right community resource. (715) 660-8103

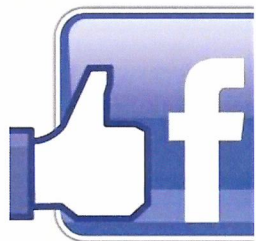
Warmline

(715) 660-8103

This is your connection to 24-hour non-emergency parenting information and a link to expert, non-emergency advice on the day-to-day trials of child rearing.

Lending Library

The Family Resource Center maintains a lending library with a wide variety of parenting information available including books, pamphlets, videos, and handouts on topics such as personal development, communication, pregnancy, stress, step-families, divorce, behavior techniques and more. Stop by and check it out or call : 715-660-8103



Did you know.....

You can find us on Facebook?

Find us at: Marshfield Family Resource Center

All programs are funded by United Way and are provided free of charge.

