

Communicator

November 2021



Congratulations All Conference Band & Choir

The All-Conference Choir and Band members for the 2021-22 school year have been chosen. The event is scheduled to be held in Fall Creek on January 15, 2022. Students rehearse all day with professional clinicians and the other conference school members. The day culminates with a concert open to the public.



Choir members left to right: Kati Mayer, Rylee Courtney, MacKenzie Keller, Malana Gurney, Victoria Ratsch, Ella King, and Ana Laroche.

Important Dates

WED	10	Late Start: 10:05 AM
NOV		No AM 4K
WED	24	Holiday Break - No School
NOV		November 24 - 26
WED	8	Late Start: 10:05 AM
DEC		No AM 4K
MON	13	Winter Choral Concert - 6-12
DEC		Fieldhouse - 7 PM
THU	16	Elementary Christmas Concert
DEC		Fieldhouse - 6 PM
THU	23	Holiday Break - No School
DEC		December 23 - 31
MON	20	Winter Band Concert
DEC		HS Auditorium - 7 PM



Band members left to right: Jacob Kopp, Kaden Sheikh, Evan Gilbert, and Dayne Loberg.

Superintendent's Message



The School District of Neillsville is constantly looking for ways to better serve our students and community. Our focus is to help our students become College Ready, Career Ready, and Life Ready. Our district has identified research-based indicators in all of those areas to help measure a student's overall readiness. These readiness measures help prepare Neillsville students to pursue their goals after high school. Our success as a school district will be measured by the success that our students achieve after graduation. All students in our schools will now graduate with an academic and career plan that will help make their transition to life after high school much more seamless. Please take the time to discuss the importance of this type of planning with your children.

The school tax for the School District of Neillsville will be increasing for the first time in decades. Our tax levy rate will be rising from 7.15 to 7.46, and our total cash tax levy will be increasing from \$3,813,510 to \$4,175,000. The increase in costs have to do with a few different factors. The district was able to use an increase in federal funds to operate last year, which reduced the spending of normal state and local funds. That significantly reduced our state aid for the current year, which causes the district to tax more reach its revenue cap. The district's enrollment is

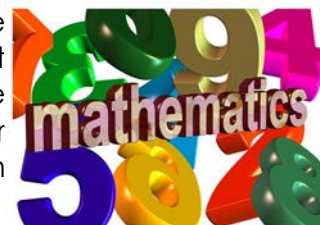
also continuing to decline, which gives the district a one-time exemption for the funding lost and goes on local property taxes. Unless something regarding funding changes for next year, the property tax rate will, again, begin to decline. If you have any questions about school funding, please feel free to contact me.

Neillsville students, staff, and board of education members are dealing with the challenges presented by COVID for the third consecutive year. Our district has strategically budgeted to provide food security, emotional supports, academic supports, and facility improvements throughout these challenging times for our entire community. Please watch for continued information on the district's efforts in these areas. During these challenging times I have been so grateful for how our school and community faced the COVID challenges together. Even though there have been differing opinions about what might be best to do, everyone in the community has kept the best interest of our kids in mind. This has been incredibly important for the health and safety of everyone here. Even though it seems like there are a lot of forces in the world trying to divide us, there is still so much good in the world. I get to see it every day in the people I meet. We still have a lot in which to be thankful.

Happy Thanksgiving Everyone!
John Gaier
Superintendent

Fifth Graders Focus on Fractions & Decimals

Math started out the year with adding and subtracting fractions, and we have just completed adding and subtracting decimals. Social studies we studied the first Americans and made our own version of painted buffalo hides. In health we learned about the skeleton and lined our halls with dancing skeletons for Halloween. Our students were excited to have one of their favorite authors, Kevin Lovegreen, come and talk to them about becoming a writer!



High School Principal's Message



Adapting to change can be difficult for many reasons. Over what is now our third school year that has been impacted by the global pandemic, we are all trying to find "normal" again. The impact on the school environment cannot be overstated. Over the past three years our students have lost daily routines and this has created unforeseen changes for them and us as a school.

As the year has progressed and the end of the 1st quarter arrives, we continue to look for ways to provide our students and staff with the necessary structure that allows us to have the best learning environment possible. As Mrs. Poeschel mentions in her article, the middle and high school are both actively involved in being a Unified Champion School District as well as building upon the Rachel's Challenge Program and the Friends of Rachel (FOR) Club that has been started. The goal is to create a school environment where all students are accepted for who they are. We stress, at all grade levels, that kindness matters! We have spent the entire month of October encouraging and documenting intentional acts of kindness toward others. We are hopeful that our efforts will help provide a kind and welcoming atmosphere for all who come to our schools.

On another front, we will have a change to our disciplinary process here at school. We have experienced some staffing changes which no longer allow us to have detention held during the regular school day. Starting on Monday, November 8th, all detentions will be scheduled after regular school hours. After school detention will be held on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays from 3:30-4:15pm on days that school is in session. Students that have a detention will not be allowed to attend their athletic practice that night. Students must bring along homework and a book to read. Students will not be allowed to use their phones during detention.

Detentions are given as a consequence to students that receive an office referral. The number of detentions a student is assigned will be determined by the severity of the behavior. If a student does not show up for their scheduled detention, another detention will be added. If a student doesn't show up a second time for detention, it will result in a one day out-of-school suspension. In addition, and in accordance with our Athletic Training Policy, student athletes who receive three office referrals during a single sports season must sit out for one contest date. Each additional office referral during the same season will result in an additional ineligible contest date. Students who are assigned to after school detention will be responsible for their own transportation from school grounds immediately following their scheduled detention time.

Consequences for our actions have always existed. There is an expectation for everybody's behavior here at school. Detention will not be the cure for any issues that arise, but having a penalty is very appropriate. The best way to ensure that nobody is inconvenienced by having their time scheduled in this manner, is to not put yourself into that situation. As we embark on the rest of our school year, I look forward to positive days ahead and celebrating the efforts of both our students and staff.

Have a safe holiday season!

Mr. Anderson
High School Principal

Starting on Monday, November 8th, all detentions will be scheduled after regular school hours. After school detention will be held on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays from 3:30-4:15pm . . .

Middle School Principal's Message



Wow, have you ever thought where did the time go? That is my feeling as I turn the page of my calendar to November and realize that the end of the first quarter snuck up on me! Our middle schoolers have 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. October's character trait is kindness. Kindness is defined as the quality of being friendly, generous, and considerate. Being kind is doing intentional acts of kindness, not only when it is easy to be kind, but when it is difficult. This month we are starting a chain reaction of kindness. Students and staff record intentional acts of kindness on paper links that are hung up in the hallway. The goal is to connect the middle school paper chain with both the elementary and high school's paper chain. The students also received a bracelet in our school colors that has "spread kindness, start a chain reaction" printed on them.

Our kindness character trait goes hand and hand with Neillsville being a Unified Champion School District. The goal is to create a more inclusive environment for all. Unified champion schools have three facets: an inclusive youth leadership opportunity that is run through the student council, unified physical education, and whole school engagement. For our whole school engagement, we had a program on the second day of school called "Rachel's Challenge." The guest speaker shared a message of kindness, compassion, and inclusion through the story of Rachel Joy Scott, the first student killed in the Columbine High School shooting in 1999. The middle school also held their first Friends of Rachel (FOR) Club meeting. This club is student led and made up of student volunteers. The FOR Club exists to create a cultural change that inspires compassion and hope throughout our school. FOR Club members have been working hard on subcommittees to help spread the message of kindness and compassion through various projects.



I also wanted to make families aware of one change that will take place starting with the second quarter. We will no longer be having in-school detention but we will be holding after school detention instead. Detention will be held on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays from 3:30-4:15pm. Students that have a detention are not allowed to attend their athletic practice that night. Students must bring along homework and a book to read. Phones will not be allowed to be used during detention. Detentions are given as a consequence to students that receive an office referral. Number of detentions will be determined by the severity of the behavior. If a student does not show up for their scheduled detention another detention will be added. If a student doesn't show up a second time for detention, it will result in a one day out of school suspension. In addition, athletes that receive three office referrals in a single sports season must sit out for one contest date. Each additional office referral during the same season will result in an additional ineligible contest date, as per the Athletic Training Policy.

In conclusion, I look forward to watching our middle schoolers grow and develop socially, emotionally, and academically throughout the school year.

Have a wonderful day,
Kory Poeschel
Middle School Principal

Elementary Principal's Message



Welcome to the 2021-2022 school year! Along with the Covid-19 precautionary procedures we have implemented this school year, we continue to adjust our reading instruction and have added new staff to our elementary school.

New Staff

This new school year brings new staff to the Neillsville Elementary School. Miss Megan Hanson is our new 1st grade teacher! Miss Hanson comes to us from Thorp, WI; and has worked in the Medford School District. She joins the following 1st grade team of teachers: Mrs. Jenny Robida, Miss Krista Rueth, and Ms. JoAnn Hauge. She brings new ideas and insights into our already fabulous 1st grade

team!

Mrs. Tammy Loberg is our new 2nd grade teacher in the Neillsville Elementary School. She joins the following 2nd grade team of teachers: Mrs. Brenda Bredlau, Miss Amy Kosmosky, and Mrs. Kathy Luchterhand. Mrs. Loberg is from Neillsville. She taught many elementary grade levels at Loyal. Her experience and leadership gives our stupendous 2nd grade team support and inspiration.

Miss Riley Anderson is our new 3rd grade teacher. She joins the following 3rd grade team of teachers: Mrs. Mari Guibord, Mrs. Wendi King, and Mr. Reed Lehman. Miss Anderson came to us from the University of Wisconsin Stevens Point. She is from the Siren, WI area. She is excited to teach in a small community that values children and their education! We are so excited and happy that she is a member of the amazing 3rd grade team.

Mrs. Connie McDonald joins our Neillsville Elementary family as our art teacher. Mrs. McDonald is from Neillsville. She is very familiar with our school because she subbed for a few years before we were lucky enough to have her permanently join our team! She brings organization, creativity, and routine to our art program. In addition, she is always rewarding the students for their kindness and helpfulness.

In addition to our new teaching staff, we have added a few teaching assistants. They are a tremendous help to our staff. They provide guided instruction, supervision, and support for all of our students.

Reading Instruction

We continue to make changes in how we teach reading. Neillsville Elementary follows the Science of Reading. The Science of Reading consists of research proven strategies and systems that teach the five areas of reading. The five areas of reading are: phonemic awareness; phonics and word study; vocabulary; fluency; and comprehension. Neillsville Elementary School is still teaming up with a reading consulting company based out of Denver, Colorado. The teacher leaders and I have developed our vision and goals in reading. Our team looks at universal instruction methods, assessment, professional development, data-based decision making, and reading intervention. We also spend time discussing lesson plans and materials used to assist students in learning how to read.

When reading with children at home, it is helpful to follow the "I do, we do, you do" method. This method provides repetition of text, along with practicing decoding. What parents can do is read a book

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MISS HANSON



MRS. LOBERG



MISS ANDERSON



MRS. MCDONALD



Grammar Skills are Key in Sixth Grade Narratives

Sixth grade's first quarter has been a blur, with every week being a new experience and adventure! Despite the craziness of the year, our 6th graders have been working hard and staying busy.

In English Language Arts (ELA), 6th graders just wrote their FIRST essay for the year! Prior to starting the writing process, we reviewed and practiced a variety of strategies that lead to a successful personal narrative. Step by step, we worked together to plan and draft our own personal narratives. Once it was all drafted, we were able to transfer it over to our final document to have it peer edited and revised.



On top of writing a personal narrative, 6th graders have been working hard on their grammar. So far this year we dove into the eight parts of speech, subject and predicate, coordinating conjunctions, and compound sentences. Make sure to ask a 6th grader what experience they wrote their personal narrative on or ask about one of the grammar units!

Elementary Principal *continued . . .*

or page to the student while the student is following along. It is extremely important to have text in front of the student. Then the parent and the student can choral read the same page or book together while following along. The student is hearing it again, following along with the text, looking at the words. The next step is to have the student read the page or book to the parent/guardian. This process really helps with decoding words and reading fluency. I have to also stress the importance of reading to children of all ages, too. This builds on their reading comprehension and fluency skills.

Social Emotional Learning

The Neillsville Elementary School is implementing a new social emotional program called Positive Action. Positive Actions philosophy states that people feel good about themselves when they do positive actions, and there is a positive way to do everything. The classroom teachers teach these short lessons about twice per week. In addition, our guidance counselor supports these lessons in her guidance and small group lessons.

In addition to Positive Actions, our PBIS committee has implemented a system that incorporates positive character traits every month into our daily life here at school. September's character trait was respect and October's character trait was kindness.

During the month, if we "catch" students displaying the character trait, we give them a "golden" ticket to place in a bucket in the office. At the end of the month, we draw names from the bucket. These students then participate in a fun activity/game in front of the other students. The teachers also participate in these activities. These activities really bring our school family together and show school spirit!

In Closing

I want to thank each and every one of you for your continued support of our school. It's amazing to me how quick school years pass by. Our number one priority is to make sure everyone is safe while getting the best quality education possible. I appreciate your trust in us!

Mrs. Marcy Kunze
Elementary School Principal

Exploring Careers & Science in the 8th Grade

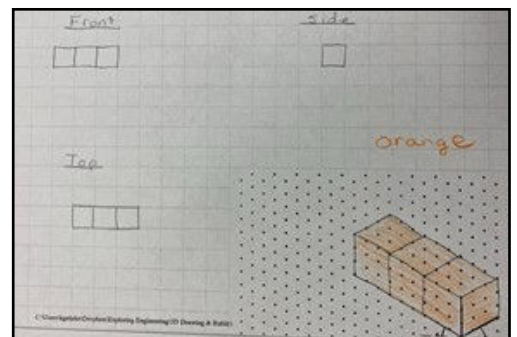
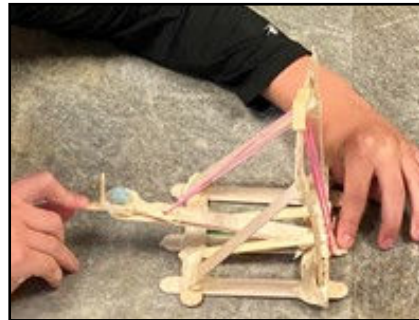
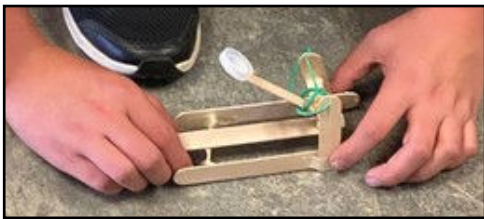
The 8th Grade is off to a great start this year. Science has been filled with learning about classifying living things and using a microscope. Next they will be learning about and comparing different types of cells.



In Careers class, students have been learning about different types of careers and the education/training they require. They took several interest inventories that then paired them with lists of careers that match their interests and to consider for the future. They learned what is required to graduate high school. Such things as the required classes they need to take and the many electives they can pick from. They are finishing the quarter by creating their own cover letter and resume and practicing interviewing for a job. All real life skills that they will be able to use in the future.



A few students chose to take the academic elective class this year, which focuses on exploring engineering and STEM activities. One project was to design, build, and test a catapult. They are currently learning about technical drawing which includes 2D and 3D perspectives. They combine these to create a multi-sketch view of a shape and then create it with building blocks.



High School Guidance



Greetings! Happy Fall! It sure has been nice to be back to “normal” this year. It’s been a pleasure meeting with seniors and juniors and their parents this fall to hear about their plans for life beyond high school. One thing I have noticed during our conversations is that the past couple of years have *really* affected the way our students have been able to be involved here at school and outside of school. I’m sure this isn’t a shock to anyone, but I did want to take a moment to remind students and parents about how important it is to get involved during high school so students can be prepared for any path they choose after high school. Below are a few points to consider regarding this.

(1) Unless being awarded for specific criteria, most scholarship committees follow the “**ACE rule**” (*Academic Excellence, Community Service, and Extra Curricular Involvement*) when selecting their recipients. Being a strong scholarship candidate requires more than just getting good grades and often some of the determining factors are volunteer experience & extracurricular involvement!

(2) Most 4-year universities still require students to list all the extracurricular activities (including athletics, clubs, volunteering and work experiences) as part of their application process. Again, being a strong applicant for many competitive universities hinges on being involved during high school.

(3) Most employers prefer to hire candidates who have been actively involved throughout their high school careers as they tend to have better communication skills, attendance, and can get along well with others on the job.

How can you get involved?

(1) Check out the [Ways to Get Involved at NHS!](#) Information Sheet located on the Neillsville High School home page.

(2) Join a community organization that focuses on service like 4-H, Boy or Girl Scouts, etc. or get a part-time job at a local establishment.

(3) Read “For Goodness Sake” in the Clark County Press each week; contact Judy Morrow, Interfaith Caregivers coordinator, at 715-743-2885 or judydonmorrow@hotmail.com for more information.

(4) Ask local non-profit organizations (Clark County Humane Society, Clark County Area Food Pantry, Hospital Auxiliary, etc.) or local churches or simply your next-door neighbor if they have needs you can help meet.

(5) If you’re willing to travel a bit, Marshfield has a whole website dedicated to volunteerism in their community at [Volunteer Marshfield](#) or, if you’re looking to volunteer in health care specifically, check out Marshfield Clinic’s Volunteers program at [Marshfield Clinic Volunteers](#).

Remember, keep track of your involvement throughout high school by routinely updating your **STUDENT INVOLVEMENT PROFILE** sheet with your Career Advisor!

Important Reminders for Seniors:

- All seniors should have had their Senior Individual Planning Conference already. Your advisors will continue on with these discussions to help you stay on track with your plans over the course of the year.
- Please continue to check your **YELLOW SENIOR CHECKLIST** to stay on track.

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High School Guidance *continued . . .*

• *Applications to Colleges and Tech Schools should be completed soon if not already done; Halloween = Ahead of the Game, Thanksgiving = On Time, and Christmas = Slightly Behind.* Remember, the earlier you are accepted, the sooner you can apply for scholarships from your university/college.

• Please remember to **continually check your SCHOOL GMAIL ACCOUNT** for important announcements, specifically scholarship updates. *Please note, our local scholarship program will open in January.*

• The **FAFSA** application opened on Oct. 1. It was great to see many of you at FAFSA Night on Oct. 14 to get great information and complete the application process. If you were not able to attend and need assistance in completing the FAFSA, please contact me anytime and I will be happy to help.

Important Reminders for Juniors:

• **Junior Individual Planning Conferences** are scheduled for October and November; you should have received a letter in the mail with your scheduled date and time. Please contact Mrs. Backaus if you need to reschedule for a different time.

• **ACT:** In accordance with the Wisconsin state testing procedures, all juniors will take the ACT plus writing **on Tuesday, March 8, 2022**. Even though many 4-year universities have transitioned to "test optional" since COVID began, they still use ACT scores for merit-based scholarships so we encourage all students to try their best regardless.

• **ACT Preparation-On Your Own:** It is not too early to start practicing for the ACT. **FREE ONLINE | PREPARATION** is available through **March2Success**. All juniors have been informed about this site and encouraged to register. Although there are several free test prep sites, this site in particular offers 7 full-length ACT tests with great individual question/response feedback.

Important Reminders for Freshmen & Sophomores:

• **CLASSROOM LESSONS:** Mrs. Backaus (or a scheduled guest presenter) will be presenting in your English or history classes every month. This is a great time for us to connect about your academic, career, and personal/social growth! I look forward to these days each month and hope you do as well!

• **CONTINUED CAREER EXPLORATION:** Please remember that you should have completed your first XELLO Lesson by the end of first quarter.

• **SETTING A STRONG GPA EARLY:** Just a friendly reminder, setting a strong GPA early in high school is very important. Remember, semester grades are the ones that go on your transcript; finish this second part of semester one strong!

In the unprecedented times we currently live in, I try to remind myself daily of these simple truths . . . Be grateful and thankful always, be gracious even when someone is undeserving, smile often and forgive always!

Warm wishes for a happy and healthy Thanksgiving and Christmas season!

Mrs. Backaus



Middle School Social Emotional Learning



Some of you may remember what it was like to be a middle school student. It is a transition that challenges students academically and socially; they often find themselves growing physically and emotionally, and sometimes don't quite know how to manage all of these changes. Students grow more during these years than they ever will again in their lives, and it is important for them to realize that what makes them different is what makes them who they are.

To give NMS students the opportunity to build the strategies and coping skills that are necessary for navigating these exciting years, we work with them through guidance lessons that center around social emotional skills, stress management techniques, and learning to use their "TurboButton" when things get difficult. Eighth graders are also connected with high school students that act as mentors for them as they transition into high school next year.

Neillsville Middle School had the opportunity to participate in Rachel's Challenge during the month of September. Students heard about Rachel Joy Scott, a victim during the Columbine school tragedy, and learned about her belief that we are all connected, and that relationships are the key to bringing us all together. We have continued this challenge with the creation of the Friends of Rachel (FOR) Club in the middle school. During the month of October, FOR club members have challenged our students to create a paper chain illustrating the kindness that we share with each other. Our goal is to connect our chain with the other Neillsville schools to show our commitment to starting a chain reaction of kindness.

Band & Choir Perform at Fall Athletic Events

Members of the High School Pep Band and Choirs provided pre-game entertainment and the playing and singing of the National Anthem for volleyball and football games this fall. They look forward to doing the same for the winter sports season!





CHECK IT OUT!

Hola Autumn!

Students are back in the library with the start of the 2021 school year. We are experimenting with new STEAM items that go with the story of the week. 4K is enjoying story time and learning to care for and checkout books. Kindergarten through grade 3 are now coming to the LMC during their GLAMP time, once a week opposite Guidance. Please ask your student's teacher what day they have library time.

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

Reminder: with swimming and snow just around the corner, please keep wet items away from books.

Click here for the [Library Website](#) or go to the School's home page, Students, Library Media.

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



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

Hands-On Fire Safety in 5K

Five-year-old kindergarten is off to a great start this year! We have almost sixty students eager to learn with us! We have been working on skills such as letter and sound identification, rhyming, and onset sounds. The students are really getting the hang of all those letter skills! In math we have been working on comparing and graphing numbers, shapes and their attributes, and numbers through 10. We recently learned a card game called garbage, which incorporates math skills, that the kids love to play!

Kindergartners learned a lot about fall from our field trips and in-class experiences in the beginning of the year. We had a chance to taste test different types of apples and made a graph to see the results of our favorites. Each class also got to do some cooking with apples! We took a nice walk to Schuster Park and enjoyed the sights, sounds, and smells of autumn. In October we visited the Neillsville Fire Department to learn about fire safety. The students enjoyed using the fire hoses to spray water, sitting in the fire trucks, and seeing all of the equipment that the firefighters use!

In November, as we discuss Thanksgiving and traditions, we look forward to sharing what we are thankful for.

Library Staff

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

Mrs. Deb Brey
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.



Elementary Guidance



Classroom Lessons

This year, Guidance has become a part of GLAMP (previously AMP) for students in Kindergarten through 3rd grade. On days a class has Guidance, they also have Library. So half of their GLAMP time is spent with me, the other half is in the Library. Pre-school, fourth, and fifth graders still have Guidance every other week for 30 minutes. Our topics first quarter have been:

September- Kindness

We had the Rachel's Challenge presentation the first week of school. They challenged students to do five things. This challenge was our kickstarter to our September topic. Below are the 5 challenges students were given:

- (1) Use kind words and do kind things
- (2) Accept and include others
- (3) Choose positive influences
- (4) Set goals
- (5) Keep a journal

October- Bullying

October is National Bullying Prevention Month, so our topics in October have been all about bullying. Your student(s) should have brought home a letter introducing the bullying topic. They also will receive some bonus activities that they can bring home and do with you.

Positive Action

Our elementary school has started a new Social Emotional Learning (SEL) program called Positive Action. Positive Action gives all students the motivation and skills to be happy and successful in school and in life. There are two main principles in Positive Action:

1st Principle - The first principle is the philosophy: WE FEEL GOOD ABOUT OURSELVES WHEN WE DO POSITIVE ACTIONS. The opposite is also true: We feel negative about ourselves when we do negative actions. Positive Action brings this philosophy to a conscious level so we can be intentional in our behaviors and experience the benefits of being positive.

2nd Principle - The second principle is there is always a positive way to do everything. Key skills for developing greatness in the physical, intellectual, social, and emotional areas of the whole self are taught through six units. These lessons are in addition to Guidance and are taught in the classroom by your student's classroom teacher.

The Thoughts-Actions-Feelings Circle - shows how our thoughts lead to our actions, our actions lead to feelings about ourselves, and our feelings lead to more thoughts. This explanation of the whole behavior process helps us to stop and think before taking action, then take the action, and after experiencing the reaction or feeling we have about ourselves, have another similar thought. The circle can be positive or negative, and the lessons demonstrate the benefits of choosing the positive Thoughts-Actions-Feelings Circle.



Questions and Concerns

If you ever have any questions about the guidance program please feel free to contact me. Also, if you are interested in getting your son or daughter in a small group or individual counseling with me please reach out.

Thank you and have a great rest of your year,
 Bri Anne Collins, Elementary School Counselor
bacollins@neillsville.k12.wi.us or 715-743-8717

7th Graders Learn About The GIS

Seventh graders started the 2021-2022 school year participating in the Rachel's Challenge assembly and learning how a small act of kindness can start a chain reaction. This idea will be talked about and students will be completing activities throughout the year to keep Rachel's message of kindness to others in the front of their brains. Students even received bracelets with Rachel's message on them so they could have a visual reminder to start a chain reaction of kindness.

In geography, students started their exploration of the world by creating autobiography maps to review landforms and features. They took information about themselves and created landforms and features to show their interests. This fit in perfectly with one of the first topics in science where students had to identify different landforms and features that make up our world. They then continued their year with two guest speakers that showed them what being in the GIS (Geographic Information System) field was all about. The students learned, participated, and interacted with the different equipment and even got to do a little scavenger hunt for monuments using the real equipment.

In ELA, students started their year creating six word memoirs, where they only had six words to write a memoir about themselves. Give it a try, it is trickier than you might think to use only six words to write a memoir! Students are currently reading the novel, The Outsiders by S.E. Hinton and are working on discussing how a character develops in the story, the plot of the novel, and interpreting themes that are present. It is a great novel that looks at the differences and similarities between two classes during the 1960s, and analyzes how both groups of people deal with the hardships put in their path.



Choir & Band Fundraisers

The Club's Choice Choir Fundraiser delivery date has been changed to **November 11th**.
Students and parents should pick up their orders in the auditorium between 3:00-4:30 P.M.



Butter Braid Fundraiser Coming Soon!! The High School Band and Choir departments will be selling Butter Braids from **November 29-December 13** to help fund the March 2022 Florida trip! Please contact Mr. La Mont or Ms. Rueth if you would like a student to contact you. Thank you for supporting our Music Department fundraisers!

News From Lunch Lady Land



AND IT CONTINUES!

I am sure that everyone has felt the food and supply shortages in your own home. And I'm sure you have seen on the news the information about the food shortages that schools are facing right now. Part of the issue with our shortages is the fact that we are required to serve food (normally the main entrée item) that has a Child Nutrition (CN) label. The National School Lunch Program (NSLP) is a federally run program that schools can choose to contract with. When we sign the contract, we must follow the federally-mandated nutrition guidance. To help us meet these requirements, the Federal Government has companies prepare main entrees that meet the nutrition mandates. These items are then given a CN label and we are allowed to use them in our programs.

One of the issues we are having this year is that companies are limiting the number of foods they make with a CN label. For example, I used to have a choice of about 25 different beef products that I could serve. I just received an email this week that the company we buy our beef products from is going to stop producing most of their beef items with a CN label. When this happens, we look for other sources. Sometimes we are successful, sometimes we are not. No matter what, know that we will continue to work hard to assure that your children receive complete, nutritious meals each day.

Remember that all the first meals are free this year. This includes one breakfast and one lunch each day. If your children choose not to take a complete meal, they must be charged for the individual items that they choose. While there is a cost, we do our best to keep the cost as low as possible.

Thank You!! I cannot express strongly enough how much it has meant to each of us in Food Service to have your continued support throughout the Covid pandemic. We have received tons of calls, emails, thank you cards, gifts, etc. during the last almost 2 years. We have felt the love and it has made our job even better!

Carolyn Orlowski, Food Service Director

Third Graders Hone Critical Thinking Skills

This year third grade welcomes Riley Anderson to our team! Miss Anderson joins us from Siren, WI. She graduated from UW-Stevens Point with a bachelor of science degree in elementary education. She enjoys spending time with family and friends. We welcome her to Neillsville Elementary's third grade team! We have been very busy getting into our classroom routines. Third grade students are now reading to learn, learning problem solving strategies, and learning how to be respectful, responsible, and safe.



Third graders will be participating in the online Wisconsin Forward Exam, otherwise known as the state test, this spring. Both our reading and math series are designed to better prepare our students through a rigorous reading, writing, and mathematics curriculum as well as with the use of technology. **You can continue to support your child at home by reading at least 20 minutes daily.**

Our math series teaches our students to *understand* the how and the why for solving math problems. We have been learning many new terms, skills, and strategies in math. The third graders really are using critical thinking skills and problem-solving strategies. **You can continue to support your child at home by practicing multiplication and division facts every day.** Third grade is an exciting year. We are looking forward to growing and learning all kinds of new things!



Boy it's great to be back! Music classes are operating close to normal these days and I am grateful for that! Another thing I am grateful for is the return to our concert! YES! Mark your calendars. We are planning on having our **Elementary Winter Concert on Thursday, Dec 16, 2021 at 6:00pm** in the fieldhouse. I know the students will be excited to show you their talents and I hope you will be able to come and see!

Besides our concerts, we have already been working hard at having fun and learning about music. Below you will find some highlights from our first quarter!

4K-2 Grade- As we continue being **Tuneful, Beaful, and Artful** we also strive for the joy of making music. This includes:



Acting out the emotions of a song!
(above)



Moving expressly to music - dancing!
(left)

3-5 Grade- While we continue being **Tuneful, Beaful, and Artful**, our focus adds understanding to our experience with a program called **Conversational Solfege**. In a nutshell, this program helps us learn to identify musical patterns and phrases by ear first, then by sight, and finally transfer into writing. The system is set up very similarly to the way we learn to listen, speak/use, and then write our language. It's like language arts only for music (music arts)!

Here are a few other activities we enjoy:



Drumming up a storm!
(above)



Dancing with friends & playing ukuleles!
(left)

First Graders Explore Arboretum

First graders are off to a great start this year! In language arts we have been reading many stories that highlight the short vowel sounds and high frequency words. This gives us good practice on blending sounds into words for fluency. We focus on decodable stories for small group reading. Good phonetic skills lead to decoding, word recognition and fluency. When all those fit into place, there will be good comprehension. Families are encouraged to build the habit of reading into their nightly routine. While reading, we have been focusing on finding **key details** by using **text evidence**, **comparing** and **contrasting** fiction and nonfiction genres, and visualizing. Two goals in our writing are to use capital letters to begin our sentences and choose the correct punctuation to end our sentences.



Our math *Expressions* text keeps us thinking and talking mathematically. We are working on our "math talk" when the students lead our daily routine and explain examples of how they arrived at their answers. We have been using picture and circle drawings to solve addition and subtraction equations. We also have learned what equal and not equal mean. We are practicing the counting on strategy and being able to count on from the greater number. The students love using their math boards for daily math practice.

We have been busy with science, health, and social studies themes, such as fall changes, fire safety, apples, pumpkins, and staying healthy. All of the first grade classes enjoyed a fall walk through the Arboretum. It was a very crunchy hike! Along with our nature hike, the children participated in bark and leaf rubbings. The local fire department donated fire safety bags filled with fun, educational activities. We enjoyed reading and learning from them!

Red Ribbon Week was promoted this year by participating in several school-wide activities. The end of the week we wore costumes to remind us to say "BOO" to drugs! The schoolwide behavior program is being implemented. Students can earn a Warrior Pride Ticket by showing safe, respectful and responsible behaviors anywhere at school and on the bus. Once a week a student is chosen randomly from those Warrior Pride Tickets and is our Warrior of the Week! This student is recognized in the school and our community for their positive choices. Our classrooms also gets tokens for showing the Warrior Way. We earn "Positive Activities" for the class to participate in by collecting these tokens.

Fourth Graders Expand Reading Knowledge

The first quarter of the year was exciting and educational for the fourth grade students and teachers. The students continue to expand their reading knowledge using the reading program *Wonders* and continue to expand their math knowledge using the math *Expressions* program. They have been using both programs since kindergarten. The students are also studying Wisconsin history and different science concepts.

Our first quarter student council representatives were Maci K., Maddie B., and Calvin H. They worked together with the fifth grade student council representatives to plan fun rewards each month. We attended the homecoming parade to show their school spirit. At the end of October, the students participated in different dress-up days that helped make them aware of the dangers of drugs as part of Red Ribbon Week.

Accounting Class Tours Local Businesses

The Accounting Class took a field trip to JBC Screenprinting and Unity Bank on October 12th during 3rd and 4th periods. At JBC Screenprinting, owner Chris Poeschel explained the ins and outs of his business. During his presentation many good questions were asked by students related to the accounting aspect of the business. Chris explained things like payment of employees, owners of the business, fixed assets, liabilities, etc. At Unity Bank, Michelle Friemoth discussed various functions of a bank. Michelle also discussed a variety of career opportunities at a bank. Both presentations helped students understand the relevance of accounting in the real world. Also, students saw accounting calculators in regular use at both businesses. Overall the trip went well, and good knowledge was gained from the experience.



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FFA Members Develop Leadership Skills



The Neillsville FFA chapter has had a great start to the new school year. The chapter continues to provide leadership development, community service opportunities and agricultural education for its members. This fall FFA traveled to Spencer for the Fall Leadership Workshop. These members were able to learn about the variety of opportunities in FFA, as well as strategies to develop leadership skills. Three chapter members also traveled to Indianapolis, Indiana for the National FFA Convention in October. Members enjoyed listening to motivational speakers, attending a large agricultural career fair, and touring several agricultural businesses including Fair Oaks Dairy & Hog Farm and Ozark Fisheries Goldfish Farm. The members attending National FFA Convention included: Tehra Fausett, Courtney Oldham, and Dylan Voigt.

All students in grades 7-12 that have an agriculture class are able to join the FFA chapter at no cost. Students are encouraged to see Mrs. Gerhardt for the enrollment form.



Left: Tehra Fausett, Courtney Oldham, and Dylan Voigt attended the National FFA Convention in October.

Right: FFA members traveled to Spencer for the Fall Leadership Workshop.



FOR Club Promotes Kindness & Compassion



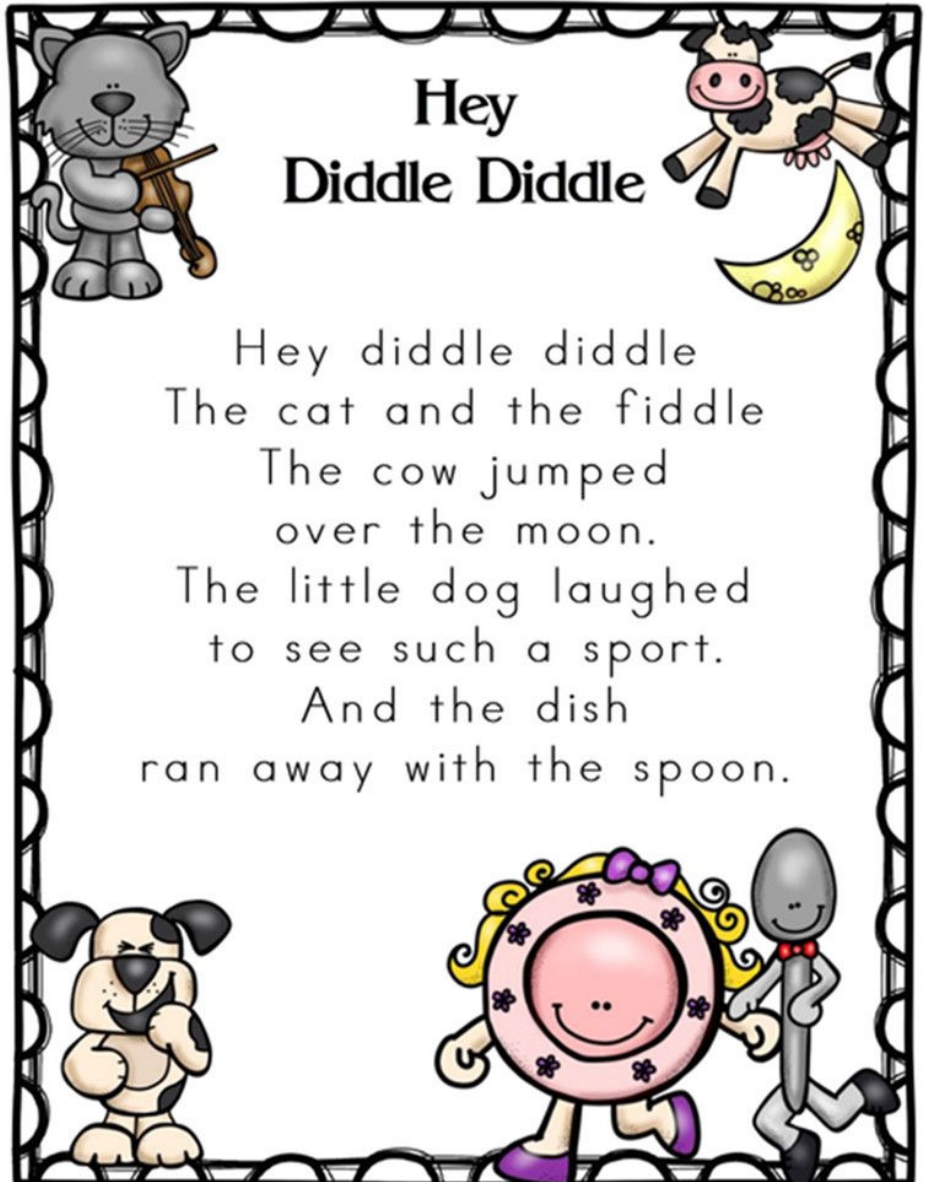
Rachel's Challenge was a school assembly that was held in September and sponsored by CESA 10's Mental Health Grant. Rachel Scott was the first victim of the Columbine tragedy. Since her passing, Rachel's family has created an organization that celebrates her legacy - living a life filled with kindness and compassion. The presentation challenged students, staff, and the school community to: look for the best in others; dream big; choose positive influences; speak with kindness; and start your own chain reaction (of intentional acts of kindness and compassion).

The Friends of Rachel (FOR Club) is striving to fulfill Rachel's Challenge. This club is for all high school students. It encourages intentional acts of kindness and compassion to build relationships and a positive school climate. The advisors are Tonia Anderson Ruskin and Julia Backaus. Students are welcome to come and learn more about this new organization. The FOR Club is supporting the Chain Reaction Challenge (submitting links with acts of kindness) that has a goal to connect the entire building (elementary, middle & high school) with our kindness chain. FOR Club advertised for our Pink Day to celebrate Bullying Prevention Month, including posting positive messages around school on pink paper. The club will be sponsoring a Canned Goods/Personal Care/Clothing Drive in November. They are taking over the Clothing Closet at school, organizing clothes and shoes for students in need. Future projects include support/resources for students who are new to our school, vouchers for haircuts, cards for community members, etc. The FOR Club welcomes ideas that support their mission of enhancing the school climate / school community. For more information or to share ideas, please email Tonia Anderson Ruskin (Director of Special Education) at tanderson@student.neillsville.k12.wi.us.

Why is it important for 4K students learn nursery rhymes?

- "Experts in literacy and child development have discovered that if children know **eight nursery rhymes** by heart by the time they're four years old, they're usually among the best readers by the time they're eight." Mem Fox
- Rhyming increases your child's phonological awareness (ability to listen and discriminate between the different sounds that make up words) which is one of the biggest indicators of reading success.
- Rhyming helps your child recognize rhythm and patterns in language, which improves their oral language. It helps them notice and work with sounds within words.
- Rhyming teaches your child to make predictions and anticipate a rhyming word, which is an important reading skill.
- The repetition in nursery rhymes is helpful in teaching kids how language works.
- Listening to nursery rhymes builds vocabulary.
- Knowing nursery rhymes can build social skills and promote a sense of community.
- Singing nursery rhymes can improve fine motor skills and coordination.
- Playing with rhymes trains your child's ears to hear the differences and similarities in how words sound.
- Rhyming helps children discover common word patterns. The more familiar these patterns become in oral language, the more easily children will recognize them when they begin to encounter them in print.

4K teachers are using nursery rhymes to introduce four year old students to language play. Each week a new nursery rhyme is sent home for you to practice with your child. By the end of preschool your students will begin to build a repertoire of classic nursery rhymes as they learn to enjoy language play!





Choir Concert



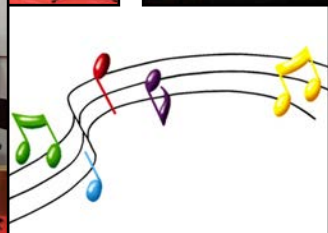
The Choir Department was very excited to put on a concert again after almost two years! It was fun to perform for a large crowd who was also happy to see a live performance at our school once again!



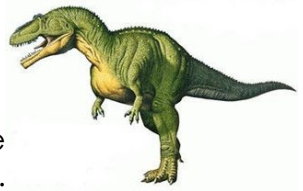
Above: 6th Grade Choir
 Right: 8th Grade Choir
 Below: HS Concert Choir



Above: 7th Grade Choir
 Left: HS Girls Choir
 Below: HS Show Choir



Second Graders Study Dinosaurs



Things in Grade 2 have been very busy this year! It's hard to believe we are done with the first quarter of school. We have been working hard in the language arts area. We have finished our first full unit in our *Reading Wonders* series. We have been talking a lot about how families and pets are important and how we help or take care of them. Our intervention time is up and running, too. During this time, students engage in phonics intervention practices, enrichment activities, and review grade level material. We have also completed our first unit in math. We have covered lots of different topics like addition/subtraction, odd and even, and word problems. Keep working on reading and math at home. In science we covered natural resources and earth long ago, including dinosaurs. For health and SEL (social-emotional learning), we recently covered two very important topics: bullying and being drug free. Each day, to promote these two topics, we had different "dress-up" days. Everyone had a great time participating in these special activities.

This year, the elementary PBIS committee has put together monthly character traits. These are skills that we hope will be instilled into our young students to use now and into their future. So far this school year we have covered respect and kindness. If you see your child doing these wonderful things at home, please compliment them. You can fill out the monthly slip and return it to school for your child to be entered into a drawing for a fun activity like "Pie-ing" a teacher or playing human Hungry, Hungry Hippos. Our students got to put their learned skills to the test. We went around the community and delivered kindness cards and treats hoping to spark some chains of kindness.