

February 2024

Important Dates

The Principal's Message

Greetings Parents, Students and Staff,

We are having a blast at PHES!! Our students came back from their Winter Break ready to make the best of the remaining 5 months of the school year.

This month, we are excited to celebrate their accomplishments academically, behaviorally, and socially. Our students continue to show progress as the rigor increases. Our students are frequently observed sharing their understanding of grade level skills, collaborating with peers to discuss course content, and working independently to show their application of information learned. We are super proud of our students!!

Students in Grades 3-5 completed their Quarter 2 ELA and Math Assessments. Preliminary results show that our students have made growth in both areas. Way to Go Pershing Hill staff, students, and families. Together, we are promoting success and creating memorable moments that we will cherish for a lifetime!!

This month, we will celebrate Black History Month. Our students will engage in many learning opportunities related to the positive contributions of African Americans.

As part of our county's Redistricting Plan, some of our current students will transfer to Manor View ES and we welcome students from Meade Heights ES and West Meade ES in August 2024. Our current students and families will be greatly missed. In the upcoming weeks, we will be working closely with our partner schools to ensure all students have a smooth and successful transition. Impacted families have been notified by AACPS, if you are unsure if your impacted, please click on the link below:

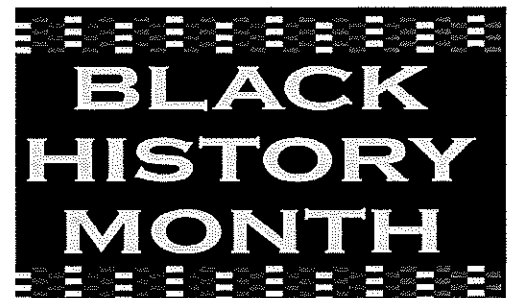
<https://www.aacpsredistricting.org/map>

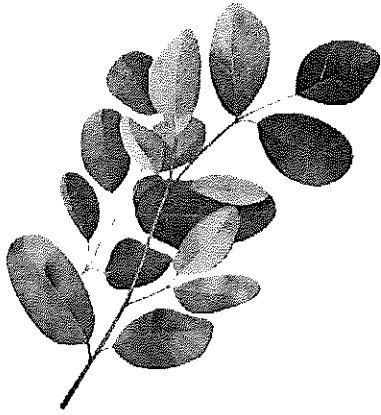
In closing, please on the lookout for pictures that will be shared by classroom teachers that will capture our Valentines' Day at PHES, Extended Day at Arlington Echo (Gr. 4) and Drownproofing (Gr. 5).

Your partner in education,

Selecia Hardy, Principal

Date	Event
February 1st	Report Cards Distributed
February 2nd	2 nd Marking Period Quarterly Awards Assemblies at 8:15 am for Grades 1 and 2 and 9:10 am for Grades 3, 4 and 5
February 5 th – 9 th	National Counseling Week
February 6th	Unity Day – Early Dismissal for Students; Please wear orange; PTA Meeting @ 4:15 pm
February 9th	Behavior and Attendance Incentive
February 14th	4 th Grade Extended Day Field Trip – Arlington Echo Happy Valentines' Day
February 15th	4 th Grade Extended Day Field Trip – Arlington Echo
February 19th	Presidents' Day No School
February 22 nd – 23 rd	5 th Grade Field Trip – Drownproofing
February 26 th	Student of the Month Breakfast at 7:45 am





MS. JOHNSON'S

Assistant Principals' Corner

FEBRUARY 2024

ATTENDANCE

Many of our youngest students miss 10 percent of the school year—about 18 days a year or just two days every month. Chronic absenteeism can predict lower test scores, poor attendance and retention in later grades, especially if the problem persists for more than a year.

If children don't show up for school regularly, they miss out on fundamental reading and math skills and the chance to build a habit of good attendance that will carry them into college and careers. Please ensure students are coming to school each day.

i-Ready MOY Diagnostic

It's hard to believe that we're already preparing for the second i-Ready® Diagnostic. The second Diagnostic is an important benchmark for understanding student growth, which is why it's so important that students try their best. These results allow us to better support students in achieving their goals. The window for the second diagnostic opens February 5, 2024.

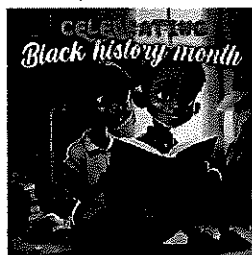
FOURTH GRADE NAEP TESTING

Fourth grade students will participate in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) on February 22nd. NAEP is different from our state assessments because it is a common measure of achievement across the country. Your fourth-grade students may take a mathematics or reading assessment. Please see the parent letter attached to the Testing Updates.

Black History Month

I will showcase a book
every month that
celebrates diversity
and inclusion.

Celebrating Black History Month
by Last Tex

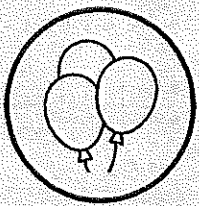


CONTACT:

CHANTE' JOHNSON
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL
PERSHING HILL ELEMENTARY
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410-222-6519

GRATITUDE

Each month, we will show gratitude to our PHES Community!



PHES' PTA

We are extremely grateful for our PTA Board Members: Mrs. Starbeck, Mrs. Meissigeier, Mrs. Yanes and Mrs. Leach. They consistently volunteer their time and talents to support our students, staff, and families. They are seen throughout our building daily with huge smiles, wonderful conversation, and much love for our school community. They continue to go over and beyond the call of duty by hosting evening and weekend events, providing incentives for teachers and students, supporting staff, assisting with school tasks and so much more. We are extremely fortunate to have them as part of our team. Please help us continue to show them how much they are loved and appreciated at Pershing Hill Elementary School.

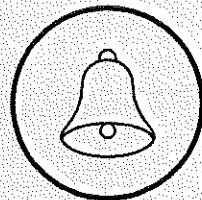
Our Angel

In January 2024, we received a special delivery. One of our beloved grandparents, Ms. Stigall, visited to be a Guest Reader. Before she left the building, she stopped by the office to meet with the Administrative Team. During the meeting, she shared her passion for education and admiration for teachers. Shortly after her visit, we received a donation to support providing incentives for the awesome work that teachers do every day. There are no words to express how grateful we are for her. Thank you again Mrs. Stigall for your kindness. We are extremely grateful for you and will use the donation for our teachers! They were extremely happy to hear about your generosity.

Parent Helpers

Mrs. Francisco, Mrs. Colon, Mrs. Davis, Ms. Mount and Mrs. Menard your support has not gone unnoticed. We are so appreciative of your volunteerism this school year. We truly appreciate you!!!

Volunteering



Thankful:

Mrs. Waltich and her son Cameron, greet staff each morning as we enter the building. They are full of joy, laughter and kind words. Thank you for being a ray of sunshine each morning!

Appreciation is a wonderful thing. It makes what is excellent in others belong to us as well.

-Voltaire

February 2024

Penny Reisler, Principal's Secretary
preisler@aacps.org

Debbie McAlvanah, Secretary
dmcalvanah@aacps.org

Patrice Tucker, Secretary
pctucker@aacps.org

Notes from the Office

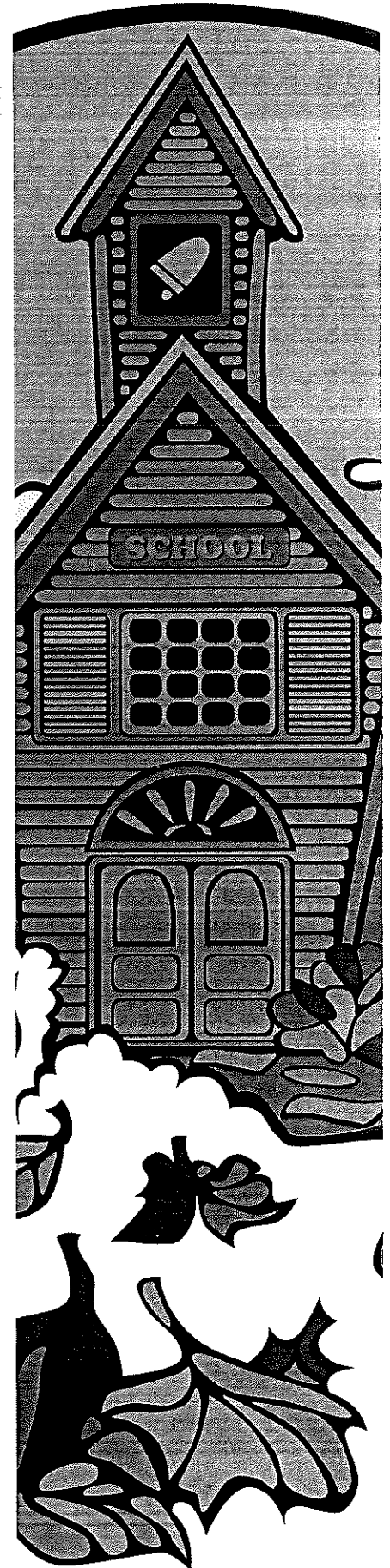
Early Dismissal / Change in Dismissal -- All Early Dismissals or Change in Dismissals must be done prior to 2:00 PM

Late Arrival -- Any arrival after school begins at 8:00 AM, is considered tardy. **You must bring your student into office to sign them in.**

Absences -- Absences can either be reported through the Parent Portal Account or a note can be sent in with the student when they return to school. Emails and phone calls are not accepted.

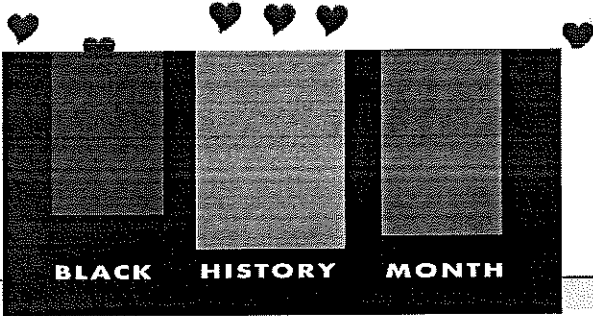
Automated Attendance Calls — When your child is late to school, or absent, you will receive the automated phone call stating that your child is absent. Updating attendance is a manual process done throughout the day and can take up to 24 + hours to be updated.

Are you moving soon? — If you are planning on moving soon, please notify the office via email with when your student's last day will be and where you will be moving to. This will ensure time to make sure an electronic transfer packet is created, as well as making sure items such as chromebooks and media books are returned to the school.



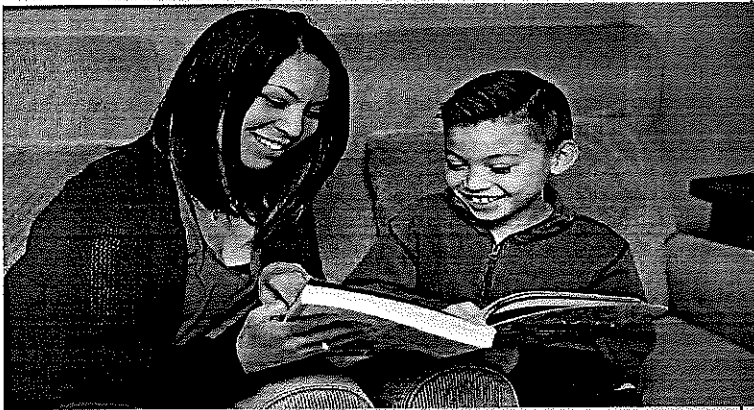
PHES Reading News

FEBRUARY



Bowie Baysox Read and Hit a Homerun Reading Incentive Program

This month we begin the Bowie Baysox Reading Incentive program. Each student who reads four books outside of school by Thursday, April 4th will receive a free ticket to attend Anne Arundel County's Reading Night at the Bowie Baysox Game on Friday, May 24, 2024. Please return the orange Baysox Reading Log to your child's teacher no later than Friday, April 5th to receive the free ticket. Students have two months to read 4 books! Let's get our students reading!



What is vocabulary and why is it important?

Vocabulary is word knowledge. Vocabulary is knowing what a word means. It is critical to comprehending the overall meaning of what is being read. There are 4 types of vocabulary:

Listening Vocabulary - the words we need to know to understand what we hear

Speaking Vocabulary - the words we use when we speak

Reading Vocabulary - the words we need to know to understand what we read

Writing Vocabulary - the words we use in writing

Robin Parker, Literacy Teacher

• rbparker@aacps.org

Corinne Herrera, Early Intervention Teacher

• cherrera@aacps.org

PHES February Reading Events

Reading and Math Mid-Year I-Ready Diagnostic Window Feb. 5th - Feb. 16th

Check your child's grade specific dates for both the reading and math assessments. These assessments will measure your child's growth from the beginning of the year. Please help your child get a good night's rest, and healthy breakfast. Encourage your child to put forth his or her best efforts on this assessment.

Home Reading Tips to improve Your Child's Vocabulary

Build Listening Vocabulary: Don't hold back in using words that your child may not understand. Example: Instead of saying "That clock is old," say "That clock is an antique." Ask: "Do you know what antique means?" and then explain. You are your child's first and best teacher! Explain words that are heard on TV, encountered in video games and in books that your are reading to your child.

Build Speaking Vocabulary: Ask: "Can you think of some other antiques you've seen?" "Why were they antiques?" Get your child to use this word. Once you have explained a word meaning to your child, you can have your child use the word in a sentence to check that your child understands and can use the word. Praise your child for using the new word in future conversations.

Helping your child to have a good listening and speaking vocabulary is a prerequisite for your child to become a good reader.

Build Reading and Writing Vocabulary: Reading to your child and pointing words out in print is critical to your child's reading growth. For our above example of "antique" you can put the word on a card and use it in a simple sentence. You can then have your child read the sentence and trace the word. See if your child can either dictate to you or write his or her own sentence with the word.

Black History Month Book Suggestions:

- **The Little Leader Books** by Vashti Harrison (ages 4-8)
- **The Fierce 44: Black Americans who Shook Up the World** (ages 10-12)

Counselor's Corner

February 2024

Happy February, families!

Our School Counseling department is hard at work delivering curriculum in our classrooms. Everyone should have received a letter from us letting you know that Erin's Law required lessons are beginning February 1. If you have any questions at all about these materials, please don't hesitate to reach out to one of us.

We have begun planning for our Career Day which will take place on March 13. Keep an eye out for an invitation to sign up if you would like to share information about your own career with our students.

If we can support your or your student in any way, please don't hesitate to reach out.

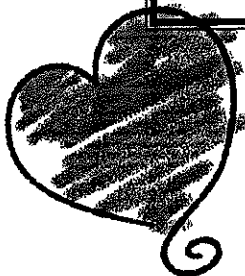
Christine Jackson
cmjackson3@aacps.org

Evy Gelvar
egelvar@aacps.org

Coffee with the Counselors



Please join Ms. Gelvar and Mrs. Jackson on Tuesday, February 27 at 8:15 a.m. for a group discussion on Managing Anxiety in Children. Bring your questions, your successes and your challenges. We will share strategies and information about this common struggle for kids.



AACPS Family Academy

The county has a wonderful resource of in-house videos on over 100 topics in the areas of Wellbeing & Growth, Navigating AACPS, and Academics & Programs. Videos are available in English and Spanish and can provide valuable information and insights.

Check some out today:

<https://sites.google.com/aacps.org/familyacademy>

Pershing Hill PTA

The PTA is hosting its 2nd annual Chili Contest for February's Unity Day. Our staff can't wait to try all the wonderful food donated by our Pershing Hill families.

The PTA will be seeking executive board nominations for the 2024-2025 school year. Nominations will be announced at the March PTA meeting. For additional information please contact us via email at pershinghillmdpta@gmail.com

We will be hosting Read-A-Thon again this year. This fundraiser helps the PTA support school events and activities. Additional information on how to participate will be sent home with your students later this month.

The next PTA meeting will be held February 6th at 4:15pm.

Box Tops

You can support Pershing Hill PTA by uploading your grocery receipts to the Box Top app.

Get Active in the PTA

You can sign up to be a member of the PTA by submitting a PTA form, along with \$5 membership dues paid by cash, check, or Zelle (pershinghillmdpta@gmail.com)

Got questions? Contact us at PershinghillMDPTA@gmail.com



	IMPORTANT DATES
2/6/24	PTA General Meeting @ 4:15PM in the Cafeteria
2/26 - 3/8	Read - A - Thon
3/12	PTA General Meeting @ 4:15PM in the Cafeteria

First Grade Team Newsletter

Mrs. Noel nanoel@aacps.org

Mrs. Tibbetts ktibbetts@aacps.org

Ms. Gruss cgruss@aacps.org

Mrs. Graham tjgraham@aacps.org

Ms. O'Connell mvoconnell@aacps.org



Instructional Focus for the Month of February:

Writing: We will learn the difference between fact and opinion so we may express our opinions and back them up with facts. As we do so, we will use the elements of a sound paper. Under Communicates Effectively, students will state their opinion, add 2-3 facts to support it, and finish with a closing statement. Under Conventions, students will use capital letters appropriately, end marks, spell phonetically, and spell with the aid of the word wall.

Science: We will be able to describe how sound helps us communicate.

Explicit Comprehension: In Reading, we will be focusing on retelling a story using key details. This includes the characters, setting, events, problem, and solution.

Foundations: We will learn and apply grade-level phonics and word skills when decoding words. FUNdations will focus on suffixes and then more glued sounds ending with -ng and -nk.

Math: We will be IReady testing in Math on February 5th and 6th. We will also be wrapping up unit 7: Meanings of Addition and starting unit 8: Meanings of Subtraction. This unit kids will be able to answer the question, How can I solve subtraction problems? They will be working with take from and take apart subtraction problems.

Upcoming Events:

I-Ready testing: February 5 - 8

100th Day of School: February 5th

Valentines Day Party: February 14th

President Day: Schools Closed

2nd Grade February

●●●●● NEWSLETTER

REMINDERS

- Please be sure to have your child bring their take home folder home and back to school daily!

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Feb. 7th- I-ready Reading Diagnostic
- Feb. 12th- I-ready Math Diagnostic
- Feb. 14th- Valentines Day Classroom

Party

2nd Grade Contacts

Ms. DeCrispino-

mdecrispino@aacps.org

Ms. House- chouse@aacps.org

Mr. Das- sdas@aacps.org

Mrs. Smith- tasmith5@aacps.org

Mrs. Carter- ncarter@aacps.org

Mrs. Hawkins- Khawkins@aacps.org

WHAT WE'RE LEARNING

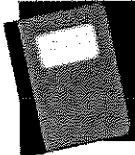
Math: Measurement using inches, centimeters, yards, and feet.

Reading: Fiction- Understanding the plot and structure of a story, identifying character traits.. Nonfiction- Formatting a friendly letter, responding to a prompt using RUNOW, understanding key details.

Writing: Opinion Writing- Students will learn the difference between fact and opinion, as well as how to construct an opinion based argument through writing.

Science/Social Studies: We Are Economic Stewards- Students will learn about different conditions and features of habitats.

FEBRUARY



Learning Focus

Reading: This month we will begin looking at poetry. We will look at figurative language, stanzas, and understanding meaning. We will also continue reinforcing skills such as central message and responding to a prompt.

Writing: This month we are exploring opinion writing! Students will learn how to state their opinions, and back it up with reasons.

Math: This month, will be continuing our fraction unit. We will be using what we have learned so far about fractions to compare fractions with similar numerators and denominators.

Science: During science this month we will explore fossils. We will look at how fossils help us understand our past. .

Social Studies: In social studies we will learn about economics. Some topics we will cover are production, scarcity, and supply and demand.



Contacts

Kayla Clements

Krclements@aacps.org

Loren Pardoe

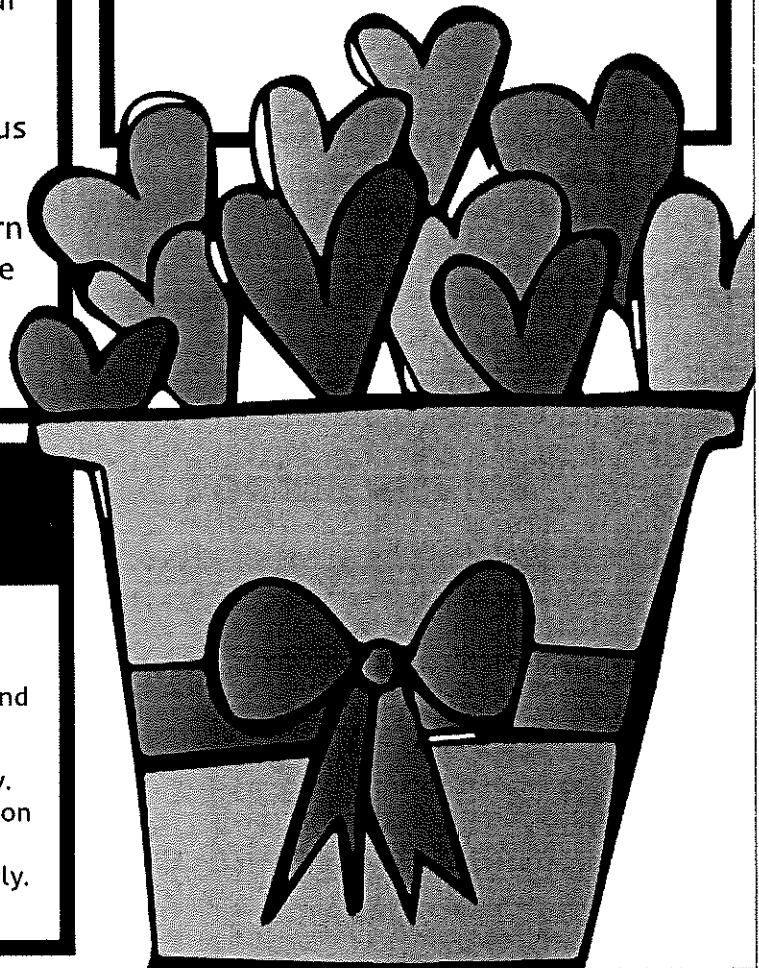
Lpardoe@aacps.org

Katie Scott

Kescott@aacps.org

Sophie Taylor

smtaylor4@aacps.org



Reminders

Recess: We go outside for recess and PE unless it is 32 degrees or colder. Please make sure your child is dressed accordingly. Also, adding your child's name to tags helps find lost clothing quicker.

Holiday Activities: We will be having a Valentine's Day party. Please be on the lookout for a sign up genius and information about valentines coming soon.

Take Home Folders: Please check take home folders regularly. School information does get sent home in them.

Fourth Grade

NEWSLETTER

February

Reminders:

- Feb. 2nd: Awards Assembly at 9:10am.
- Feb. 6th: Unity Day - 2 hour Early Dismissal (Wear Orange)
- Feb 7 & 8th: I-Ready Reading Testing
- Feb 12 & 13th: I-Ready Math Testing
- Feb. 14: Boaten and Corcoran Arlington Echo (Return at 4:30)
- Feb. 15th: Wells and Whittington Arlington Echo (Return at 4:30)
- Feb 19: No School (Presidents Day)

Power School should be checked frequently to review your students grades. Any unfinished or missing assignments are also noted in Powerschool.

What are we learning?

Reading: Fiction & Nonfiction Focus

We are focusing on the following skills.

- Main Idea and Detail/Theme
- Sequencing/Summarizing
- Context Clues
- Character Traits
- Comparing and contrasting texts on the same topic.

Writing:

We are working on opinion writing. Forming opinions and backing them up with reasons and evidence from credible sources.

Science:

We will be working on identifying different types of energy and how energy is transferred.

Social Studies:

We will start learning about the French and Indian War and the events that lead up to the American Revolution.

New Grading Policy per PHES:

Classwork retakes will be allowed if students miss an assignment due to an excused absence or if they score below a 60%. If a student refuses to do an assignment, they will be given a 50% and will not be allowed to retake the assignment. For retakes, the new and initial grade will be averaged to create the grade that goes into the gradebook.

****Assessments/Checkpoints cannot be redone.**

Math:

We will be covering the following skills:

- Adding and Subtracting fractions and mixed numbers.
- Multiplying fractions by whole numbers.
- Decimals (tenths and hundredths)

Contact Info:

Mrs. Corcoran: alcorcoran@aacps.org

Mr. Wells: rnwells@aacps.org

Mrs. Boaten: nboaten@aacps.org

Mrs. Whittington: jewhittington@aacps.org

February

NEWSLETTER

Ms.Crockett & Mrs. Ramirez

tmcccloudcrockett@aacps.org aramirez@aacps.org

Mrs. Edralin & Ms. Nelson

sedralin@aacps.org dnelson2@aacps.org

REMINDERS

Students need to bring
Chromebooks charged everyday!

I-Ready Diagnostic testing will begin
Feb. 7th to Feb. 16th

All Classes

IReady Reading Homework: 2 Lessons per week

IReady Math Homework: 3 Lessons per week

UPCOMING EVENTS

February 1st- Report Cards Distributed

February 2nd- Quarter 2 Awards Assembly

February 6th- Unity Day! Two Hour Early Dismissal

February 19th- Presidents Day- Schools
CLOSED.

February 22nd & 23rd- Drownproofing Field
Trip

WHAT WE'RE LEARNING

Math: We will be finishing up Unit 8 on Dividing Decimals. Student will be exploring division of whole numbers by decimals using informal strategies. Next, we will begin Unit 9: Add and Subtract Fractions. Students use their knowledge of unit fractions and equivalent fractions to build and represent fractions with unlike denominators in order to add or subtract. Students are exposed to problems for which only one of the fractions must be rewritten, as well as those where both fractions need to be rewritten with a like denominator.

Reading: During the course of this unit, students are exposed to factual representations and narrative descriptions of conflict and collaboration at this point in history. Balancing the informational texts amongst the literary texts enables students to develop an awareness necessary to understand the conflicts experienced by the characters. By the end of this unit, fifth grade students will develop critical thinking skills to prevent or cope with conflict.

Writing: In Quarter 3 students will be learning to write Opinion Essays. They will write on topics they feel strongly about and support their opinions with reasons and evidence.

Science: In Q3 we will be focusing on physical science, specifically the composition of and changes made to matter. We will cover four performance expectations. Develop a model to describe that matter is made of particles too small to be seen. Measure and graph quantities to provide evidence that regardless of the type of change that occurs when heating, cooling or mixing substances, the total weight of matter is conserved. Conduct an investigation to determine whether the mixing of two or more substances results in new substances. Make observations and measurements to identify materials based on their properties.

Social Studies: Students will critically think about the challenges of American economic, political, and civic life from 1865 through 1910.

CULTURAL ARTS NEWS

FEBRUARY 2024

Art

PHES art students are working hard every day. Winter artworks are hanging in the hallways for everyone to enjoy. 1st grade students are connecting with Chinese artworks to create a koi fishpond. Second grade students are exploring how science influences art by creating masterpieces that are out of this world. Third grade artists are working together in groups to design totem poles that are inspired by Native American art. Fourth graders are studying the artist Kurt Pao and learning how to use measurement and value to create realistic gem drawings. The fifth graders are exploring how artists can change the world through positive messages. We are all excited to make wonderful things in this new year!

Music

We had such a great ending to December exploring holiday traditions and music from around the world while understanding the form of music. All classes are continuing to develop their skills and understanding of musical elements. For the month of January, I would like to highlight our 5th graders. To end out the first marking period, students will be using the music elements to evaluate National Anthem performances in a bracket system!

Chorus

Congratulations to our chorus students and thanks for all who supported the event. There will be signs up available for any 4th and 5th graders who wish to join in on the fun!
Chorus families - please be on the lookout for upcoming information about camp, Baysox, and Spring Concert. We look forward to making more wonderful music this Spring!

Instrumental Music

We look forward to more music learning in the second semester of the year. Students are reminded to keep practicing their instruments as we continue to build on the foundation we established in the first half of the school year.

PE

Students will complete units in Rolling a Ball (Bowling), Safe Rock Wall Climbing, Hula Hoops, Individual Short Rope Jump Rope, and Long Rope Jumping during the month of January.

EEE

Students have completed their projects in first, second and third grade, and are starting the new year with new questions around how to tell stories through yoga (first), how to use mindfulness strategies to calm their emotions (second), and how to represent their family's story on an Egyptian-style stele (third). Fourth and fifth grades are hard at work finishing their final projects. These projects should be completed in the next few weeks. Fifth grade will be printing their own logos onto stickers that they will be able to use or give as gifts. Fourth grade has gotten approval to display their rock mandala public art project in front of the school. They also helped design the rock installation. Look out for their display in the coming weeks!

Media

Students enjoyed exploring Dash robots and different coding challenges and activities in December. This month, we will dive into the uses of eBooks on MackinVia, author and folktale studies, and begin an inquiry unit on different parts of research.