



THE WILDCAT'S ROAR

Lebanon Borough School Family Newsletter

December, 2025

Dr. Arcurio's Corner

December is a wonderful month—joyful, busy, and full of energy. As we approach winter break and the natural pause that comes with it, I'm launching a new **monthly series** in our newsletters focused on two important themes that strengthen student well-being:

1. Mediation & Conflict-Resolution Skills

2. Outdoor, Screen-Less Habits That Support Healthy Brains

Both are essential parts of helping children grow into confident, balanced, and resilient learners.

Why These Themes Matter

Conflict is a normal part of childhood. What matters is how we teach children to navigate it. When students learn to pause, listen, understand, and communicate clearly, they build empathy and confidence—skills they will use for the rest of their lives.

Similarly, research is clear that **movement, outdoor time, and reduced screen exposure** support better focus,

improved behavior, stronger emotional regulation, and deeper learning. Even a few minutes of outdoor activity each day can make a meaningful difference.

By combining these themes, we are supporting the whole child—mind, body, and relationships.

Important Dates

Dec 1	1st Trimester Ends
Dec 1	PTA Mtg 6:30pm
Dec 2	BOE Mtg 6:30pm
Dec 3	Trep\$ Marketplace
Dec 8	1st Trimester Grades Available in Portal for Parents
Dec 10	12:45 Early Dismissal - Teacher InService
Dec 12	PTA Kids Night Out Fundraiser
Dec 17	LBS Winter Concert
Dec 24-Jan2	School Closed - Winter Break
Jan 5	School Reopens - Full Day

This Month's Focus: "Understanding Before Responding"

A core mediation skill we teach at school is helping students slow down and genuinely try to understand another person's perspective.

A powerful phrase you can use at home:

"Help me understand what you're feeling or needing right now."

This question opens the door to calmer conversations, better listening, and collaborative problem-solving—especially during the busy holiday season when emotions run high.



Outdoor Time in the Winter: Small Habits, Big Impact

Although colder weather makes outdoor time trickier, it's still incredibly valuable. Here are winter-friendly, screen-free ideas that align with our schoolwide initiative:

Quick 5–10 Minute Ideas

- A brisk family walk after dinner—even once around the block
- "Photo scavenger hunts": find 3 things of a certain color or shape
- Neighborhood holiday-lights walk
- Count how many types of birds you can spot
- Hot-cocoa talk time on the porch (yes, even for 3 minutes!)

At Lebanon Borough School, we believe we are Better Together as we work to help every child reach their full potential. We value each student's unique abilities and foster both academic growth and independent, critical thinking. Through strong partnerships among students, staff, families, and the community, and with programs and curriculum aligned with New Jersey's standards, we equip students with the skills and tools they need to succeed

Weekend Winter Activities

- Visit a local trail for a short hike; bring thermoses
- Play “follow the leader” or obstacle courses in the yard
- Build small snow structures or ice sculptures
- Take “mindful minutes” outdoors—listen for sounds or notice how the air feels

Indoor Alternatives for the Coldest Days

(when outside just isn’t realistic)

- Family puzzle or board-game hour
- Stretching, yoga, or simple indoor movement games
- Snack-making together without screens on in the background

These habits strengthen attention, reduce overstimulation, and support calmer interactions at home—directly reinforcing the conflict-resolution strategies we teach at school.

Better Together,
Bruce Arcurio, Ed.D.
Superintendent

Update on Sixth-Grade Planning for 2025–2026

As part of our ongoing work to ensure that every Lebanon Borough student has access to the strongest possible academic and developmental opportunities, our Board of Education is continuing to explore the possibility of sending our 6th-grade students to **Clinton Public School** beginning in the 2026-2027 school year.

Last November/December, we conducted a **community-wide survey** to gauge family and community perspectives. Approximately **80% of respondents indicated support** for this option. That level of engagement and feedback has been extremely valuable.

At this stage, the Board is reviewing two key factors:

1. Educational Benefits for Students

Clinton Public School offers expanded academic programming, additional exploratory courses, and increased social and extracurricular opportunities that align well with what many families expressed interest in for their children’s middle school experience.

2. Financial Feasibility

We are analyzing the full financial picture—including tuition, transportation, staffing implications, and long-term budget planning to ensure that any decision we make is responsible, sustainable, and in the best interest of students and taxpayers.

No final decision has been made yet. We remain committed to a thoughtful, transparent process and will keep families updated as soon as more information is available.

Retreat to Broadway

On Saturday, November 22, some LBS community members, families, and friends had a whole new world experience together in NYC! Retreat to Broadway and Mrs. Ingram coordinated the trip for participants to connect with the musical

theater community in a special way. First, the group was able to learn from Broadway professional Ilona Alfonso during a special meet and greet opportunity. She spoke to us about her life in the world of dance, acting, singing, performing, directing, and producing. And she answered all of the questions we had for her about her childhood, her theater experiences, and more! The group then split



up to bop around the city for lunch, shopping, and sightseeing before we met at the New Amsterdam Theater for a truly spectacular performance of Disney's *ALADDIN*. The performers, special effects, dancing, and singing transported us to a magical place. Thank you to all of those in attendance for making the trip a truly memorable experience!



Health Office...

Bully-Free Zone: During the month of November, our character trait was Caring. Our focus as a school community was on kindness, compassion, gratitude, forgiveness, and helping people in need. The students enjoyed the Wingman Activity Day and the LBS Float Parade. The students will continue the character trait of Caring for December.

Nurse's News: Students go outside every day for snack breaks and recess, if weather permits, for fresh air and

exercise. Please send your children to school with the appropriate attire depending on the weather. Coats, layered sweatshirts, accessories like hats, gloves, scarves, and boots help to protect students from the cold and wind. If it is a gym day, don't forget to pack their sneakers into their backpacks to change into later.



Safety Patrol

Happy Thanksgiving. Take time out to enjoy your family and friends. I am so proud to recognize Teddy Ables as Safety Patroller of the Month for outstanding dedication and service. He is a natural leader who always demonstrates responsibility, arriving on time and setting a positive example for the younger students at LBS. Teddy is caring and kind, treats everyone with respect. He often goes out of his way to make them feel comfortable and supported. These qualities have helped Teddy earn the role of our Newest Safety Patrol Captain, where he continues to shine.

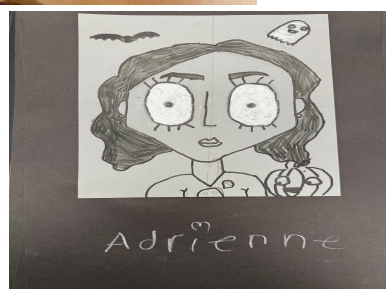
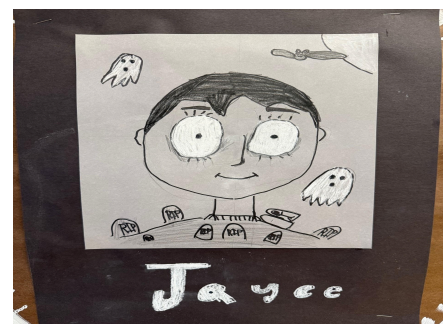


Art

It has been such a joy joining this wonderful school community and spending my Tuesdays creating with our talented K-6 artists. Even though I'm here just one day a week, the imagination and enthusiasm I see in every class fills the art room long after the day is over. As

Henri Matisse said, "*Creativity takes courage.*" And let me tell you, your children are some of the bravest artists I've ever met. They take risks, try new techniques, and let their beautiful ideas shine!

Our Kindergartners are wrapping up their "*Oh, the Places You'll Go!*" hot-air-balloon art. They painted with watercolors, explored oil pastels, and practiced careful cutting and gluing. Their bright balloons truly look ready for adventure





First through fourth-grade artists recently finished their mixed-media *Fall Reflections* pieces. Students experimented with printmaking to create reflections of the warm-colored trees they painted... each artwork as magical as a crisp autumn afternoon.

Our fifth and sixth-grade artist completed their Tim Burton-inspired illustrations, showing off bold lines, expressive characters, and wonderfully spooky imagination.

Every single project turned out so beautiful, and I am incredibly proud of each student's effort and creativity!

A selection of the artworks listed above will be on display at the North County Branch Library in Clinton, NJ, next week. I hope you'll stop by and celebrate the courage and creativity of our amazing young artists!

Enrichment/Media/Technology

This month, 3-6 grades learned about the history behind the Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade by reading the book, Balloons Over Broadway: The True Story of the Puppeteer of Macy's Parade by Melissa West.

They have created paper balloon floats for our own LBS Thanksgiving Parade on Wednesday. PreK-2nd grades came to the parade in the gym. It was a great send-off for the students prior to Thanksgiving break.

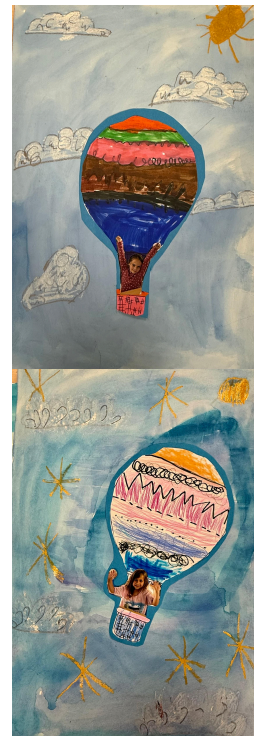


Prek- first grade listened to some Thanksgiving books, including Turkey Trouble by Wendy Silvano. In the book, the turkey disguises himself so he can't get eaten on Thanksgiving. The Kindergarteners and First graders built structures to hide the turkey from the farmer.

K-2 students were able to practice their clicking and dragging capabilities on their Chromebooks. 2nd graders created "Thankful Turkeys." The students

needed to type things they are thankful for and then use the copy and paste shortcuts to move the feathers onto another slide. 1st graders created a digital turkey and wrote a few sentences about their creation. They were practicing the manipulation of the feathers by rotating them and pushing them to the back of the slide.

K-6 also reviewed coding and worked on KODABLE.com. Kindergarten and first grades started by discussing paper coding and logging into their school computer. The children seem to be getting comfortable with the correct way to use their Chromebooks. Next week is Hour of Code and we will be working on our coding skills in Kodable.



TREPS Students have been gearing up for the *Marketplace on Wednesday, Dec. 3rd in the LBS Gym at 5 pm*. The children have been learning what makes a good advertisement, making paper/digital posters for their shops, and practicing 1-minute elevator pitches. Please come out and support our LBS entrepreneurs next week; there will be many unique items in our marketplace. I hope to see you there!

Music

We are in full concert mode in music class. The students are excited to perform a song for Everyone at the concert on December 17th! Each grade level will perform one song at the concert.

The grades five and six band will perform as well! The fourth grade will perform on recorders!

PK - We Wish You a Merry Christmas

K - Feliz Navidad

1st - Festival of Lights

2nd - Jingle Bell Rock

3rd - Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree

4th - Santa Claus is Coming to Town

5th - Oh Hanukkah

6th - Holly Jolly Christmas

Students should dress in their festive best! Colors can include, but are not limited to:

- Blue
- Gold
- Red
- Green
- Black

We are excited for the 17th!

Physical Education/Health

This month, all classes continued to improve on their throwing and catching skills, along with their motor skills and fitness levels.

Below are our preschoolers playing their new PE favorite, “Throw

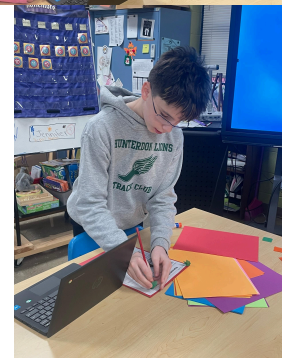
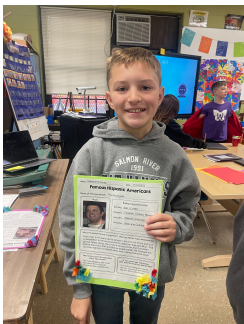
the Trach in the Grouch’s House.” They had a blast while practicing their overhand and underhand throwing cues as they threw an assortment of balls into Oscar’s Trash Can, and the Grouches inside attempted to dump the trash out of their house/can. In health, we focused on our monthly character trait, caring. We discussed the importance of how we can show others that we care, what empathy is, and how to practice care and empathy. In December, we will play games that build on our throwing and catching skills, practice with jump ropes, fitness, and holiday-themed activities. December’s health unit will continue our focus on healthy eating habits, the importance of nutrients, and how to read nutrition labels.



Spanish

¡Notable noviembre! In November, Spanish classes have been full of creativity and continued learning! Grades 5 and 6 have been hard at work researching their chosen famous Hispanic Americans. Students are using their reading and writing skills to gather information and create presentations that highlight each person’s life, achievements, and cultural impact. Grades 3 and 4 are continuing their exploration of Hispanic holidays, learning to organize their research and share fun facts about unique

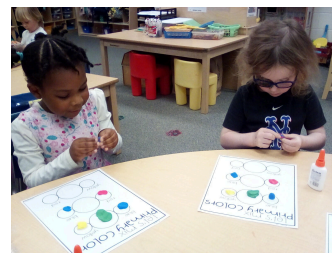
traditions from Spanish-speaking countries. Grades K–2 are continuing to work on calendar talk and common greetings. Across all grade levels, students are practicing all four modes of communication—reading, writing, listening, and speaking—while learning Spanish through engaging music, calendar talks, and cultural exploration.





Preschool

In November, we learned about trees, color mixing, and Thanksgiving. We measured around the tree trunk and learned that this is the circumference. We also learned about the parts of the tree and put leaves, pinecones, and pumpkins in our sensory bin. We worked together as a class to make a class tree with ripped pieces of construction paper. We had a lot of fun using



Model Magic to mix colors together to make a new color. We learned the letters E, H, T, I, U, and the numbers 2 and 3. We continue to practice sorting, patterns, counting, and sharing. We continued show and tell and named things we are

thankful for. In December, we will finish our tree study and learn about holidays

Kindergarten

During the month of November, the kindergarten class learned the difference between fiction and nonfiction texts. They have been listening to a variety of texts read aloud. We have been learning about the parts of a book. The class has been doing an excellent job writing in their journals. They are using phonetic spelling to write their words. We have been enjoying a variety of activities in our literacy and math centers. In our next unit, the students will be learning about opinion writing. We are continuing to build our sight word vocabulary, and we are working each week on multiple

phonics sounds to help us blend and read more words. In our next reading unit, we will read many stories about animals. We will also be learning about adjectives.



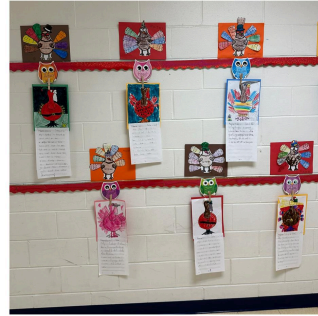
In math, we are currently working on addition and subtraction equations. We have been working in small groups to complete math center activities on various levels. This month in social studies, we have been learning about the past and present. We observed and discussed how things have changed. We learned about the Pilgrims and Native Americans, and the first Thanksgiving. We learned how the Thanksgiving Day Parade balloons are made. We worked on many projects, crafts, and activities for Thanksgiving. We also learned facts about turkeys and made many crafts for Thanksgiving.

First Grade

November was a busy and exciting month for first grade! In writing, the students loved disguising their turkeys and writing about them. They have some pretty creative disguises, so those turkeys don't end up on someone's plate this Thanksgiving!

During Science, we are wrapping up a unit on the moon. The students have learned that the moon's visible shape follows a predictable pattern, or cycle. We also learned that stars are always in the sky, but the sun washes out their light, so they're only visible at night. After our Moon and Stars unit, we will move on to a Social Studies unit, where the students will explore how community leaders are chosen, and how taxes pay for government services, along with the importance of working together to make our neighborhoods nice places to live.

In Language Arts, we are working on retelling stories using the characters, setting, problem, and solution. The students have learned many new spelling patterns and can apply these phonics rules when reading. Lately, we've loved playing spelling games that emphasize initial blends, such as Tic-tac-toe, 5-in-a-row, and Chutes & Ladders. We've also enjoyed some silly Thanksgiving read-alouds like Jack Prelutsky's It's Thanksgiving, Turkey Trouble, and How to Hide a Turkey. In reading groups, we are working on decoding words that align with our spelling books, identifying the main idea, problem, and solution. In math, we just wrapped up our unit on Ways to Add and Subtract. The students learned they can add addends in any order, how to add 3 numbers, and determine whether equations are equal and not equal. Now, we are moving on to the second part of Ways to Add and Subtract, where the students will use addition to help them subtract, identify related facts, and use addition to check their subtraction. Thanks for stopping by! Check out pictures of the students' turkey disguises, and our math fact family turkeys!



Second Grade

This month, our Second Grade students have embraced gratitude. We've shared many reasons to start each day with a smile and a thankful heart. Earlier in the month, our students showed kindness by writing heartfelt notes to Veterans. We also learned a special "Thankful" song in American Sign Language, which we plan to share with our loved ones during Thanksgiving.

In math, we've been extending counting sequences within 1,000, including counting by 1s, 5s, 10s, and 100s. Students have also been

working on identifying 10 more and 10 less for three-digit numbers. Additionally, we're enjoying learning about coins and their values. Our reading sessions have been filled with engaging fiction as well as nonfiction stories. Our fiction stories have helped us understand dialogue to better comprehend story characters. We've also been honing our inference-making skills by connecting our unique background knowledge to the text, allowing us to explore the author's purpose and the characters' thoughts more deeply. Our nonfiction, informational stories allowed us to explore text features in a deeper way. In writing, we delved into descriptive writing through our senses, culminating in a holiday piece. We also wrote informational summary "wheels" and list articles highlighting research on an animal from the USA prairie land.

For social studies, we've been learning to navigate various maps using intermediate directions and grids to locate places. In science, students explored maps as tools for understanding where landforms and bodies of water are located. They identified different land and water features based on their shapes and used those landmarks to complete a map and locate a "treasure spot."

We look forward to December and the exciting seasonal learning activities ahead. We wish everyone a Happy Thanksgiving!



Third Grade

November may have been a short month, but it was filled with meaningful learning and exciting activities in our 3rd grade classroom. In Reading, we explored two persuasive texts and focused on analyzing text structure and comparing and contrasting texts. We also read an informational piece that helped us practice identifying the author's purpose and visualizing important details. As we move into December, we will begin studying historical fiction and use strategies such as analyzing plot, setting, and characters, as well as making predictions and connections.

In Writing, students completed their How-To articles and enjoyed sharing them with classmates, learning more about one another's interests along the way. While writing these How-To pieces, we focused on using clear facts and details, organizing steps in a logical sequence, choosing strong verbs, and developing a clear main idea.

We also practiced writing persuasive pieces to connect with our reading focus. In honor of Thanksgiving, students wrote from the perspective of a turkey trying to persuade the reader to choose a different holiday meal—a fun and creative activity! Looking ahead, students will begin writing their own historical fiction stories.



In Math, we began our first unit on division and learned how to solve division problems using equal groups, arrays, and bar models. Soon, we will explore the relationship between division and multiplication.

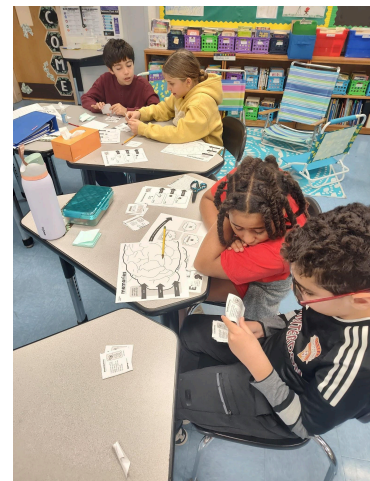
We've wrapped up our Social Studies unit on the Role of Citizens, where students learned that being a citizen means being a member of a community and that all citizens have both rights and duties. As December begins, we will begin our new Science unit on Forces, Motion, and Magnets.

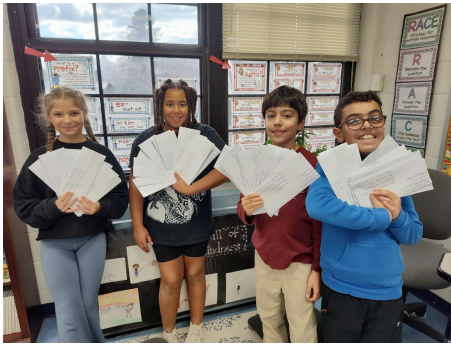
We are proud of all the hard work students put in throughout November and look forward to the learning and excitement that December will bring!

Fourth Grade

This month in fourth grade was jam-packed with gratitude, thankfulness, creativity, and lots of learning! We are fully involved with our *Frindle* novel study. The students have identified the meanings of many new vocabulary words. They are developing character trait studies and understanding the themes and main ideas Andrew Clements introduced. We created wonderful gratitude turkeys, which highlight the special traits each of our classmates has. The class also wrote a friendly letter from a "Turkey in Disguise," following our read-aloud of *Turkey Trouble*, by Wendy J. Silvano. Their turkeys will be disguised and on display for all to enjoy!

The Great American Mail Race is on! The class answered a survey about our class, town, and state. We then identified 50 other fourth-grade classes—one in each state—to mail a survey to, with the hope that we receive a survey back from each class by the end of the year. While we were addressing and writing our 50 letters, we practiced and learned the whole 50 Nifty United States Song!





Our Science unit is Animals and Adaptations. We are answering essential questions such as, “Why would a sea turtle eat a plastic bag?” and “Why do some sea creatures look so strange?” We are enjoying our memory experiments using our senses of sight and touch, and recording our hypotheses and observations in our journals.

Math Module 4 has us working our brains and memories, as we use our knowledge of tens, hundreds, and thousands to explore patterns in multiplication. We are also developing our strategies for mental math to multiply three digits by one number. And we are becoming more comfortable with identifying compatible numbers in our

problem solving.

Enjoy a wonderful and happy Thanksgiving holiday with your families and friends!



Fifth Grade

As we move into the final month of the calendar year, the 5th grade is hard at work across our core subject areas.

In November, we reported on a short story contest being run by the county library. A number of our students entered the stories they wrote here at LBS, and a strong contingent came out to the celebration event to meet fellow authors of all ages, listen to some great stories... and enjoy some snacks! Two students – Greg and Teddy – even stepped up in

front of a packed house to read portions of their stories.

Everyone enjoyed the tales of a daring World War II rescue and a comedian who befriends a kangaroo while performing in the Sydney Opera House. If you happen to visit the Clinton Library, be sure to visit the contest display to read these and many other great short stories by local authors!

We are currently reading a group of stories from our *Reflections* unit. These stories, linked to the arts in different ways, ask students to consider the ways that the arts have subtle influences on their everyday lives. We've looked at legends of long ago

painters, the significance of photographs in telling a story, and read out the short play *The Hermit Thrush*, which is about the way artists can be inspired. Then, we split the class into two, rehearsed, improvised props, and then put on a show for the other half of the class! It was fun seeing and discussing the different ways that a drama on the page can be interpreted as it is brought to life.

Our current social studies unit is *Exploring the Americas*. We're looking at reasons that explorers would want to leave their homes in Europe to explore the New World, and the broader forces that motivated nations to seek expansion. We've also considered the

impacts of these voyages - and eventually of settlements - on the people already living in the Americas. To understand what even made these expeditions possible, students researched a navigation tool (like the astrolabe or compass) or a ship's feature used by the explorers. In a brief presentation, they explained what it was, how it worked, and what people use today to accomplish the same goal. We learned how the night sky provided an invaluable resource for early exploration, and it just so happens that astronomy is our next topic in science!



In mathematics, we are wrapping up our unit on expressions. We began by showing how stories and situations can be modeled with numbers and operations to assess them in a mathematical way. We have used the order of operations to find the value of these expressions, and thought about *why* the symbols (exponents, then multiplication/division, and finally addition/subtraction) are handled in the order that they are, based on the relative "power" of each operation.

Our class sends along best wishes to everyone in the LBS community as we enter the holiday season!



Sixth Grade

In November and December, we are focused on the fantasy genre in reading. We completed *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* and have just begun C.S. Lewis' *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*. We began by learning about the setting of the story: children evacuated from London during the Blitz. The sixth graders spent some time exploring the BBC website on World War II, including primary sources such as photos and first-person memoirs from people who were evacuated as children from London during the bombings. Once we have completed that, we will begin the actual novel! Our adventures with Peter, Susan, Edmund, and Lucy should take us into the middle of December, when we will focus on some short stories and fun holiday activities, including a field trip to see *The Nutcracker* with Clinton Public.

In social studies, we are finishing up our studies on River Civilizations: Mesopotamia, Egypt, India, and China. We will then begin our exploration of Mesoamerican civilization, beginning with the Aztec and Maya. In science, we are continuing with the natural world, but looking at tectonic plates and how they have formed our Earth. We continued our math journey this month by working on ratios in a variety of ways. We have made circle graphs (pie charts) and created ratios to convert the percentages to numbers, and the numbers to percentages of the circle. As a byproduct, we are also learning how to use a compass and protractor.

In addition to all that learning, we also began our Wingman activities, teaching the younger grades about leadership and standing up for each other. November has truly flown by with all the activities, and we can hardly believe we are headed into December!



PTA Information

- [PTA Monthly Calendar](#)
- [PTA Donation Drive](#)

