



THE WILDCAT'S ROAR

Lebanon Borough School Family Newsletter

February, 2026

Dr. Arcurio's Corner

February often brings a mix of energy and fatigue. Winter routines are well established, daylight is slowly returning, and students are balancing school expectations with the natural restlessness that comes from spending more time indoors. This makes February an ideal month to intentionally support two areas that remain central to student success and well-being:

- Conflict-resolution skills
- Healthy movement and reduced screen time

These two areas continue to work hand in hand, both at school and at home.

Important Dates

Feb 2	PTA Mtg 6:30pm
Feb 3	BOE Mtg 6:30pm
Feb 6	PTA School Dance 6-8pm
Feb 13&16	School Closed: Presidents Weekend

Winter Wellness Challenge: Move More, Screen Less

Our [Winter Wellness Challenge](#) is underway and runs through **February 28**. Students and families are invited to complete **20 minutes of movement on 20 separate days** as part of our “20 in 20” initiative. Movement can be simple and flexible, including walking, dancing, sledding, stretching, shoveling snow, or any activity that gets the body moving and away from screens.

Students who complete the challenge will receive a certificate. If the school reaches **90 percent participation**, we will celebrate with a whole-school assembly featuring a staff volleyball game, with 5th- and 6th-grade students who complete the challenge invited to participate.

This challenge is not about perfection. It is about consistency, family connection, and helping children build habits that support focus, mood, and overall health during the winter months.



This Month's Conflict-Resolution Focus: "Name It Before You Solve It"

One simple conflict-resolution skill we emphasize with students is learning to name what they are feeling before trying to fix a problem. When emotions stay unspoken, they often come out through frustration or impulsive behavior.

A helpful phrase to practice at home is:

"Tell me what you're feeling before we figure out what to do."

This approach teaches children that emotions are valid and manageable. Naming feelings helps calm the nervous system, improves communication, and leads to better problem-solving. February is a great time to practice this skill, especially during moments of winter frustration or sibling conflict.

Movement and Outdoor Time Still Matter in February

Even short bursts of movement make a meaningful difference for children's attention, mood, and stress levels. Cold weather does not eliminate the need for movement. It simply requires flexibility.

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

Simple Daily Ideas (5 to 10 minutes)

- A brief walk or fresh-air break
- Stretching between homework tasks
- Dancing to music while getting ready
- Indoor movement games

Weekend or Extended Ideas

- Snow play or winter walks
- Sledding or skating
- Outdoor chores done together
- Visiting a local park or trail

Indoor, Screen-Free Alternatives

- Board or card games
- Cooking or baking together
- Building projects, drawing, or journaling
- Calm movement like yoga or balance challenges

These activities support patience, cooperation, and communication, the same skills we emphasize through conflict-resolution work at school.

Update on Sixth-Grade Planning

As part of our ongoing planning to ensure the strongest possible educational experience for all students, the **Board of Education will continue discussing the possibility of sending 6th-grade students to Clinton Public School beginning in the 2026–2027 school year.**

This conversation has been thoughtful and ongoing, informed by community feedback, educational considerations, and financial analysis. Approximately 80 percent of respondents to our community survey expressed support for exploring this option. The Board is currently focused on two primary areas:

1. **Educational opportunities for students**, including expanded academic programming and extracurricular experiences
2. **Financial feasibility**, including tuition, transportation, staffing, and long-term budget planning

No final decision has been made. This topic will be discussed, and potentially voted on, at the **February 3 Board of Education meeting**. Families are encouraged to attend or reach out with questions. We remain committed to transparency and ongoing communication throughout this process.

Moving Forward Together

February is a reminder that progress often comes from small, steady practices. By supporting children in naming emotions, staying active, and maintaining balance during the winter months, we are reinforcing skills that matter far beyond the classroom.

Thank you, as always, for your partnership and support.

Better Together,
Bruce R. Arcurio, Ed.D.
Superintendent

Health Office...

Bully-Free Zone: As we go into February, the students will continue learning about Fairness. Fairness includes: Playing by the rules

- Being open-minded, Listening to others
- Not taking advantage of others
- Not blaming others carelessly

Please encourage your child to treat others equally regardless of their ideas, opinions, or moral standards. Let's all be better together!

Nurse's News: *Tips for staying hydrated during the winter*

1. Encourage regular water intake: Even when it's cold outside, make sure your children drink plenty of water throughout the day.
2. Offer warm drinks: Warm beverages like herbal teas, hot chocolate, broths or soups can both soothe and hydrate.



3. Hydrating through foods matters: Include fruits and veggies like oranges, cucumber, and apples that help keep you hydrated.
4. Avoid sugary drinks: Limit sugary sodas and juices. Opt for water or naturally flavored drinks instead.
5. Use a humidifier: Prevent dry air from causing dehydration by using a humidifier at home.

February is Dental Health Month:

To get your best smile ever, follow these tips.

1. Brush your teeth twice a day
2. Limit sugary and acidic foods
3. Visit your dentist regularly
4. Wear protective gear during sports



Art

Our K–6 artists have been diving into an exciting and colorful exploration of art inspired by some truly remarkable artists: Wassily Kandinsky, Keith Haring, Alma Thomas, and Friedensreich Hundertwasser. Across all grade levels, students are learning how artists use line, color, shape, and pattern to express ideas, emotions, and movement. Inspired by Kandinsky, students experimented with abstract compositions and bold color relationships. Keith Haring’s energetic figures encouraged our artists to think about movement, storytelling, and how art can communicate messages. Alma Thomas’s vibrant, rhythmic brushstrokes inspired joyful explorations of color and repetition, while Hundertwasser’s whimsical architecture and organic shapes sparked imaginative designs that celebrate individuality and creativity.

Throughout these projects, students are not only developing technical art skills, but also building confidence, creative problem-solving, and a willingness to take artistic risks. It has been wonderful to see students proudly explain their work, make thoughtful choices, and support one another’s creative journeys. Every class is filled with curiosity, bravery, and a genuine love of making art—and the results have been as meaningful as they are beautiful. We have been enjoying our time together!

Enrichment/Media/Technology

January was a chilly month! We are now back in the full swing of school.

Kindergartners and 1st graders learned about Martin Luther King Jr., and discussed how we can be better friends and classmates in honor of Dr. King, Jr. They also listened to many different snowman stories over the past few weeks. 1st graders built digital snowmen by

manipulating Google Slide and wrote about what they do at night!

Kindergartners built “igloos” with building materials for their snowman to stay cold!

2nd graders learned about Wilson Bentley, the man who photographed snowflakes and discovered that there are no two alike! We then created snowflakes in google drawing according to the patterns he has found. The trick will be following the patterns but making sure they are unique. They also created winter rebus stories using emojis and words to tell a story.



3rd and 4th graders learned how to use google slides to create an image to show through text. Each student created a “ONE WORD” project for the new year, the word is a personal goal for the 2026 year. This is a skill that the students can use in slideshow presentations for years to come.

5th and 6th grade students finished a digital scavenger hunt using Google Earth. They are also working on researching the 2026 Winter Olympics. They are researching the two cities where the games will be taking place and facts about the Olympics. Next they will complete an Olympic Sport project, the students will all choose an olympic winter sport to research and create a Google Slides presentation to teach the younger students about the various sports in the upcoming winter games.

Music

The cat is out of the bag! This May, LBS will be performing Seussical kids! In grades pre-k, kindergarten, first, and second, we have been focusing on keeping a steady beat for an extended period of time. This higher the grade, the longer amount of time. We show understanding of the beat by clapping, patting, marching, and tapping. We can show this by listening to music and finding the beat, or following the music played from the piano, or even following a class leader and keeping in time with them. This foundation music skill is vital when students start to learn to play instruments and play in ensembles. In third grade, we are learning how to read the notes on the treble clef staff. The students will learn how to identify the line and space notes on the staff by playing games, singing songs, and working on various worksheets. Grade 4, 5, and 6 have been remixing music using code.org and the Chrome Music Lab. The skills obtained in code.org are twofold. The students are learning code concepts such as functions, but applying it in a musical way. For example, if we want to two measure loop to play for four measures, then we need to create a function that will play that loop two times, and later call that function when putting the song together. [Code.org](https://code.org) provides some popular songs that the students can experiment with. As lessons progress, the students have to use analysis skills via listening to identify when an instrument needs to be added or how the form of the song is constructed.



Physical Education/Health

This start of the new year focused on hand striking games, sports and activities while in PE class. This included 4 Square, Table Ball, Gaga Ball and volleyball. K through 1st grade played 4 Square Balloon Bash. All of these games help to build on hand eye coordination, teamwork strengthening reflexes and more, while having fun. Pre-K continued to work on building on their

motor-skills and practiced striking hitting balloons with their hands and different body parts like their knees, elbows, shoulders, feet and heads. They also had their first experience with Gaga Ball. This coming February the focus of PE will be basketball skills, games and activities as well as some Olympic related games. In Health all classes will work on the monthly topics of their Great Body Shop workbooks.



Spanish

¡Enero emocionante! Spanish class has been busy and full of learning across all grade levels. Grades 5 and 6 are exploring the 21 countries in the world where Spanish is spoken. Students are learning where each country is located, its capital, flag, and interesting cultural facts. Each student is creating a country report on a Spanish-speaking country of their choice. We have been using maps, practicing country and nationality names, watching short videos, and comparing similarities and differences between countries. Students are also sharing fun facts with classmates and practicing reading and writing in Spanish as they work on their projects.

Students in grades 3 and 4 are learning fruit vocabulary. We are practicing listening skills by watching short Spanish videos and songs that introduce and reinforce our new words. Activities include matching pictures to words, playing memory and movement games, sorting fruits by color or preference, and responding to questions like *¿Te gusta la manzana?* We've also practiced drawing and labeling fruits and acting out words to show comprehension. Grades K, 1, and 2 are learning winter and winter clothing vocabulary. We talk about what we wear when it's cold and practice words like coat, hat, gloves, and boots in Spanish. Students sing songs, listen to stories, and play movement games where they "put on" winter clothing using gestures. We also sort clothing by season, act out winter scenarios, and use visuals to help build understanding—all while keeping learning fun and active! It's been wonderful to see students using Spanish through movement, listening, speaking, and creativity. Ask your student to share a new word, song, or fun fact they've learned!



Preschool

This month in preschool we learned about winter and started our clothing unit. We continue to move through our handwriting without tears program leaning letters, numbers and shapes. We completed our mid year assessments, practiced patterns, sorting, rhyming and enjoyed a lot of inside playtime. In February we will celebrate the 100th day of school, valentine's day and learn about including everyone, we will start our wheels unit and continue to move through our alphabet. We hope to have more outside time in February.



Kindergarten

This month in reading the kindergarten class has been learning about animals. Next month we will learn about why exercise is important. We will be reading poems and persuasive texts about exercising. We will also be working on reading and writing words from the short "e" and short "o" word families. We are continuing to build our sight word vocabulary. We recently began a new "sight word challenge" called: "Read the Rainbow" where the students can move along at their own pace and learn as many words as they are



ready to learn. We continue to work each week on multiple phonics sounds to help us blend and read more words. We are also learning to include adjectives in our writing. They are continuing to write in our journals.

This month in science, we have been learning all about weather. We are able to recognize the different types of storms and various weather conditions. We are learning what we need to wear for each type of weather. We have also been learning about the circle of seasons and the weather patterns for our seasons here in New Jersey. Next month, in science, we will finish our unit on seasons with a lesson about why birds lay eggs in the spring.



In math we completed our module focusing on comparing numbers to 10 and also counting and sequencing numbers to 100. We are currently working on addition and subtraction within 10. We will continue to work on math story problems with putting together and taking apart in our next few lessons. We have been writing numbers to one hundred and getting excited to celebrate our 100th day of school soon!

The kindergarten class will also begin learning about the Lunar New Year! The students will begin learning about the Chinese culture including customs, language, clothing and foods. We will also make projects, and use Chinese math tangram puzzles and listen to folktales. These activities will help us learn about the traditions during the Lunar New Year. We are also looking forward to celebrating Groundhog Day next week with our fifth and sixth grade mentor friends.

First Grade

The first graders are becoming animal scientists! We recently began our new Science unit, *Plants and Animal Superpowers*. So far, students have learned how animal babies look similar to—but not exactly like—their parents, and how physical characteristics, called traits, can help identify different bird species. As we continue the unit, students will learn about animal adaptations, such as why certain birds (like warblers and ducks) have specific types of beaks, as well as how animals use camouflage to survive in their environments. To wrap up the unit, students will choose an animal to research and write about. This month-long project will take place during our Reading/Writing and Science blocks. Students will practice identifying nonfiction text features, taking bulleted notes from nonfiction texts, and turning those notes into a well-crafted report.

Also in February, in honor of Black History Month, students will learn about influential African Americans who have made a lasting impact on our country. We will explore the lives of Martin Luther King Jr., Jackie Robinson, Harriet Tubman, and Sojourner Truth. The students are very excited to learn about these inspiring individuals!

In Reading, students continue to make great progress in their reading groups, where they read both fiction and nonfiction texts. These groups are tailored to each student's reading level, and we continue to focus on decoding, fluency, and comprehension strategies while applying new spelling patterns to our reading.

In Math, students have been working on solving for unknowns using objects and drawings, and writing equations to match word problems in Unit 6. They are learning how to represent equations when both addends are unknown but the total is given, as well as how to solve problems where the total is known, and one addend is missing. We also continue to practice math fact fluency daily. In Module 7, students will learn strategies to solve “How many more?” and “How many fewer?” word problems by using pictures, counters, and bar models to support their thinking.

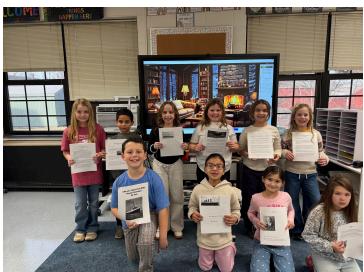
Finally, we are excited to celebrate our 100th day of school and Valentine's Day in the middle of February! Check out pictures of our Valentine's Day Math Fact Family crafts and celebrating Tommy's birthday!





Second Grade

New Year Adventures in Second Grade! The students have kicked off the New Year with enthusiasm and excitement! We've dedicated time to learning about Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., exploring his early life and the challenges he faced. We discussed his mission for equality and how people can unite to make significant societal changes. Thank you, Dr. King, for your inspiring leadership! This month we have been busy with various writing activities. We started by setting New Year's goals for different areas of our lives. Next, we wrote rhyming poems about snowmen and shared how we can stand up for others to promote equality and encouragement. We wrapped up the month by writing about penguins and their unique qualities. In reading, we have been exploring fables, folktales, and fairy tales. We compared and contrasted two unique Cinderella stories using Venn Diagrams. Now, students are preparing to write their own fairy tales as a final project. In math, we're learning new algorithms for regrouping in addition and subtraction. In social studies, we're discovering family history. Students have learned about timelines and are now creating personal timelines using photos for a special project. Can you believe the 100th day of school and Valentine's Day are just around the corner? We're excited to celebrate these fun milestones together!



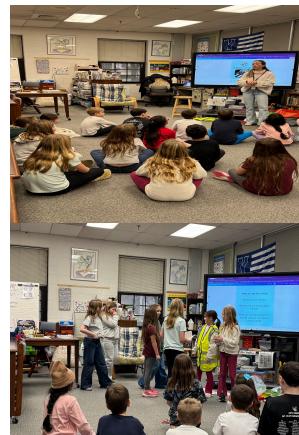
Third Grade

Our third graders returned from the new year refreshed and ready to learn. They have been setting new goals and continuing to grow across all subject areas.

In Math, students strengthened their addition and subtraction strategies within 1,000 while practicing how to explain their mathematical thinking. Next month, they will begin learning about perimeter.

In Reading, students explored the genres of biography and poetry, focusing on text structure, summarizing, figurative language, and making predictions. Next month, they will continue reading biographies while practicing making inferences and discussing key ideas.

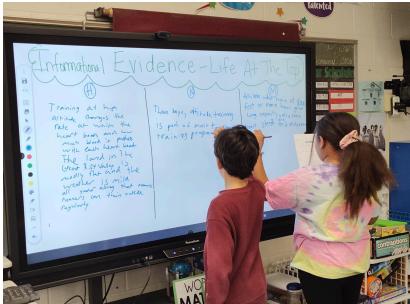
During Writing, students proudly published and shared their historical fiction pieces and will next explore opinion writing as a new genre.



In Social Studies, students learned about settling the land and the explorers and settlers of North America. They discussed how Native Americans established the earliest communities and how others arrived from different countries for a variety of reasons. Students also learned that people continue to immigrate to our country today.

Looking ahead, third grade is excited to begin a new Science unit on weather and climate next month. One highlight this month was a visit from Ms. Nina of Hunterdon GO, who supports our optional Walking Bus program. Students enjoyed learning important tips for staying safe while walking in our community.

We are proud of the strong start to the new year and look forward to another great month of learning in third grade!



Fourth Grade

New year, new goals, big words! Our fourth grade students analyzed the various components of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s, "I Have a Dream Speech." They learned what life was like during Dr. King's youth, as well as his important work as a Civil Rights leader. They developed thoughts and ideas for encouraging others to believe in themselves and make the world and our community a better place by developing and publishing important quotes of their own for the hallway display board. Our students have inspired me and our school community with their wonderful words.

In ELA we focused on Informational Text by analyzing many different informational text writing selections. We have begun gathering research materials for our informational report writing piece, and are organizing our research facts into structured paragraphs with topic sentences, supporting details, facts, reasons, and concluding sentences. We can properly identify adverbs and adjectives. And we have improved our R.A.C.E. responses and journal prompt response writing.

In math we are busy breaking big numbers into groups with various division strategies. We are interpreting remainders, and have mastered the Order of Operations.

Our Social Studies unit has us moving east to west from the coastal plains to the Rocky Mountains and the Continental Divide. The class has created their own maps of the Great Lakes, and are becoming much more familiar with the concepts of elevation, sea level, plateaus, and watersheds.

The fourth and fifth graders were able to collaborate with an antonyms and synonyms review together! We had lots of fun utilizing our "I Have, Who Has?" language arts cards games.

We will soon begin our new Novel Study, "Mr. Popper's Penguins," our Rocks and Volcanoes unit, and will practice the DMSBR strategy for the much anticipated, long division math work!

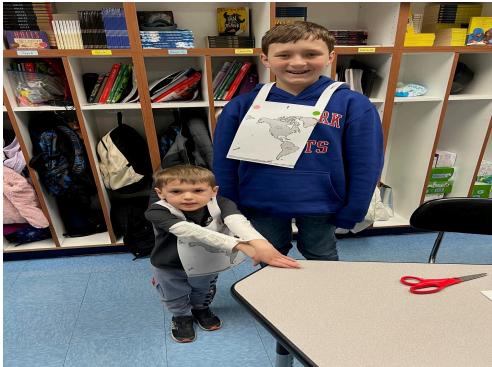


Fifth Grade

As the New Year began, the Earth started making its annual trip around the Sun: the perfect time to begin our Space Earth science unit! We kicked off our studies by inviting the Kindergarten class up to our room to help us make a model of the Earth and Sun. The Kindergarteners helped us draw the Sun, find Lebanon on a map, then create a Planet Earth vest that everyone could wear. We modeled how the rotation of the Earth causes the Sun to rise and fall and travel in a path across the sky. We even got to see what was happening for people on the other side of the

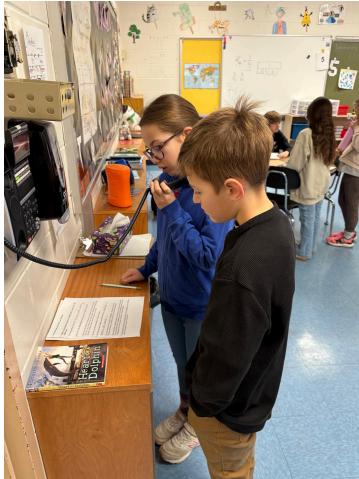
globe! Building on that base of knowledge, we've explored questions such as why the constellations vanish and reappear with the seasons, why our days are gloriously long in the summer and painfully short in winter, and how and why the shape of the moon changes each night. While these phenomena can be a little headscratching to ponder for those of us who are earthbound, 5th graders did an impressive job of finding evidence and piecing together observations to make it all make sense.





We are just beginning the Newbery Medal-winning novel *Number the Stars*, an inspiring and often harrowing work of historical fiction set in German-occupied Denmark during the Second World War. Through this story, students will have the opportunity to learn about the historical context of the era. Our class has come to appreciate the sobering reality of what life was like during the war and taken note

of the heroism shown by so many everyday people of the time. We'll explore sites like Tivoli and learn about master storyteller Hans Christian Anderson. *Number the Stars* always leads to some engaging class discussions on history, culture, friendship, and courage all while practicing important skills like analyzing characters, setting, and theme.



Our studies in math this January have been dominated by the key concept of fractions. We began the year by using physical fraction strips and digital tools to show the relationships between fractions and how, for example, three-fourths and fifteen-twentieths are actually the *exact same number!* Drawing from that understanding, we began by adding fractions with different denominators, then moving up to mixed numbers. By gradually building up our skills, students have done a terrific job applying what they have learned to arrive at the correct answers, and also in understanding what their answer means.

This January, the fifth grade class has enjoyed making the morning announcements to help LBS get ready for their day. So as we come to the end of the month, we would like to wish everybody in the Lebanon community a wonderful February, as we inch closer and closer to Spring!

Sixth Grade

Happy February! Where did January go?? In January Sixth Grade started our 4th novel, *Elijah of Buxton*, and now find ourselves about halfway through. This is a wonderful story that ties together the threads of the Underground Railroad, slavery, and freedom with the coming of age of the title character, Elijah. The story started slowly, but by now, everyone is invested in the story of Elijah, Cooter, Mr. Leroy and Old Flapjack! Ask your student about it! When we finish this, we will

begin prep work for our next novel, *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas*.



We have begun algebra! Well, pre-algebra, anyway. We spent most of January on Modules 9 and 10, learning about expressions and equations. This is a tough module at the best of times, so I was pleased that we managed to complete the module AND do well on the test this week. We are moving forward to finding solutions for our equations - which in pre-algebra means something different than it does in earlier grades!

In science we are working our way through a unit on interactions between species and biodiversity in ecosystems. Next month,

each student will be assigned a biome or ecosystem to research and write a report on, primarily at home, although we have had some research time in class. They will further extend this topic by creating a model of their biome to share with the class.

In history, we are learning about Greece and the Greek Empire, after finishing Mesoamerica. This should take us through most of February; we will then move on to Ancient Rome and the Roman Empire.

PTA Information

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

Visit our district website

www.lebanonschool.org