



THE WILDCAT'S ROAR

Lebanon Borough School Family Newsletter

January, 2026

Dr. Arcurio's Corner

As we begin a new year, January offers a quieter, more reflective rhythm. The excitement of the holidays has passed, routines return, and we have a valuable opportunity to help children reset, refocus, and reconnect. This month, our ongoing newsletter series continues to highlight two interconnected areas that support student well-being and success:

- Conflict-resolution skills
- Outdoor, screen-less habits that support healthy brains

January is an ideal time to strengthen both.

This Month's Focus: "Pause First, Then Choose"

One of the most important mediation skills we teach students is learning to pause before reacting. When emotions run high, that brief pause gives the brain time to shift from reaction to reflection.

A simple phrase that supports this at home is:

"Let's take a moment and think about what we want to do next."

This small habit helps children practice self-regulation, emotional awareness, and thoughtful decision-making. Over time, it builds confidence and reduces unnecessary conflict. Pausing does not mean avoiding feelings. It means creating space to choose a response that aligns with values and goals.

January is a perfect month to practice this skill, as students transition back to routines and expectations after winter break.

Resetting Brains Through Movement and Outdoor Time

Research consistently shows that movement and time outdoors help regulate mood, improve attention, and reduce stress. After weeks of holiday stimulation and screen exposure, children benefit from simple, consistent opportunities to move and reset.

Here are realistic, winter-friendly ideas that fit easily into busy schedules.

Simple Daily Ideas (5 to 10 minutes)

- A short walk before or after homework
- Stretching or light movement breaks between tasks
- Standing or pacing during conversations or reading
- Fresh-air breaks on the porch or in the yard

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

Important Dates

Dec 24-Jan 2	School Closed - Winter Break
Jan 5	School Reopens - Full Day
Jan 6	12th Night/Hot Chocolate Social -6pm
Jan 6	BOE Mtg. 6:30pm
Jan 12	PTA Mtg 6:30pm
Jan 15	Walking School Bus 8am
Jan 19	School Closed - MLK Jr. Day
Jan 26	12:45pm Early Dismissal - Teacher InService

Weekend or Extended Time Ideas

- A brief nature walk or local trail visit
- Snow play, even without formal games or goals
- Outdoor chores done together, such as clearing paths or organizing outdoor spaces
- Quiet outdoor observation, noticing sounds, clouds, or animal tracks

Indoor, Screen-Free Alternatives

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

These activities support the same skills we emphasize through patience, flexibility, communication, and cooperation.

A Strong Start to the Year

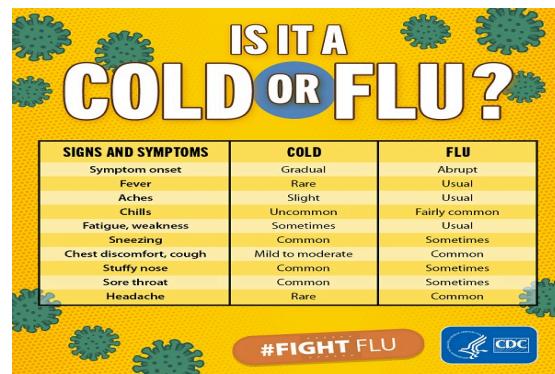
By pairing conflict-resolution strategies with healthy movement and reduced screen time, we are helping children build skills that extend far beyond the classroom. These habits support learning, relationships, and emotional well-being throughout the year.

Thank you for partnering with us as we continue this focus on the whole child. Small, consistent practices at home and school truly make a difference.

Better Together,
Bruce Arcurio, Ed.D.
Superintendent

Health Office...

Bully-Free Zone: During the month of December, our character trait was Caring. Our focus as a school community was on kindness, compassion, gratitude, forgiveness, and helping people in need. The students were able to demonstrate these traits by taking part in the Student Council Food Drive supporting the Hunterdon County Food Bank. On Dec. 18th, the students enjoyed their Wingman Activity Day. For the months of January and February, our character trait will be FAIRNESS. The students will focus on treating individuals equally regardless of their ideas, opinions, or moral standards.



Nurse's News:

During the winter season, let's stop the spread of germs and illness. We can all stay healthy by following these tips:

- Frequent handwashing
- Don't touch your eyes, nose, or mouth
- Cough or sneeze into your elbow or use a tissue. Wash your hands after use.
- Wipe down surfaces often
- Stay up to date on vaccines
- Stay home when you are sick

Safety Patrol

The Safety Patrollers would like to wish you and your family a happy and healthy holiday season. We hope you enjoy the break, take time to relax, and make special memories with family and friends. Please remember to stay warm and take care during the holiday season. We look forward to seeing everyone back safe and healthy after the break.



Art

Winter has brought so much creativity into the art room, and I continue to feel incredibly grateful to be part of this special school community. Each Tuesday, our K–6 artists arrive ready to create, experiment, and surprise me with their imagination, and I truly look forward to every class.

Our kindergarten and first-grade artists are currently working on beautiful winter landscape mixed-media projects. Students are painting watercolor trees, cutting and layering paper, and using pastels to create snowy backgrounds. Along the way, they are learning about the element of space and experimenting with monochromatic color schemes for their trees. The results are peaceful, wintry scenes full of thoughtful detail and careful craftsmanship.

Students in second through sixth grade have been busy creating their cozy woodland animal artworks, and they are turning out amazing. Artists are learning techniques we have introduced, such as hatching and stippling to create value and texture, and using pattern to bring unity and interest to their backgrounds. The focus, effort, and pride I see in this work have been truly wonderful and I can't wait for these pieces to head home soon.

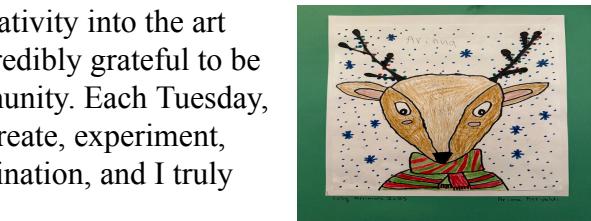
I am so proud of how hard the students have been working. They are a joy to teach, and their creativity makes this school feel like a truly magical place. Thank you for sharing your incredible artists with me, I feel very lucky to be here!



Enrichment/Media/Technology

TREP\$ was a **HUGE** success! I am so proud of the students who participated. I hope everyone enjoyed the event and looks forward to new entrepreneurs joining us next year! It was great to see the support of so many Lebanon Borough Community members stop by as well to support

TREP\$. Thank you to everyone who supported TREP\$! The K–6 students all participated in December's Hour of Code! Students all have logins to Kodable.com. This is a great website for learning and using all things code. The older students also use Code.org, and were even able to help the Grinch with a coding activity. Ask them about sequences, conditions, loops, and even functions!



Fifth and sixth graders went on a trip around the world to solve the crime of “The Grinch Who Stole A Christmas Star.” They used Google Earth to solve riddles to open a safe.

Lastly, K-4th graders worked on their trackpad skills and copy/paste shortcuts by building a digital snowman. The students were given accessories to create their snowman, and they needed to resize, copy, and paste items onto their snowman. All the snowmen were very creative! The children are ready to create their own outside if we get the chance to!

Music

The students at LBS put on a wonderful show last week. From preschool to sixth grade, the students put their best foot forward!

At some time in January, the Spring musical will be announced. I know the students are very excited to find out what it is!

I hope everyone enjoyed the winter concert! Have a happy holiday season!



Physical Education/Health

As 2024 comes to an end and the holidays roll in, I would like to extend a very happy and healthy holiday to you all. In PE this month, we participated in games and activities that were holiday and winter themed. Below are some pics of the kids playing Santa and his Reindeer. We played a number of fun, festive games that kept them moving and engaged. In January, we will practice hand striking games and activities to strengthen our hand-eye coordination. The health unit will focus on the grade-appropriate topics covered in our Great Body Shop workbooks as well as our Fairness character trait of the month.



Spanish

¡Delightful diciembre! Grades K-1 have been talking about the ways people from Spanish-speaking countries celebrate the holidays. We are still working on understanding questions about the calendar and answering in Spanish. Grades 2-4 are continuing to practice listening skills with our Word of the Day, where they hear letters in Spanish and try to figure out what the word is. Grades 3-6 have been learning about the countries that speak Spanish and where they are located on a map. Soon, we will start learning country capitals and researching a little bit about each country!



Preschool

In December, Preschool finished our unit on trees, and learned about holidays that happen this time of year. We made gingerbread men and decorated them. We continued to learn letters, numbers, shapes, and worked on sorting and patterning. We have been enjoying show and tell days, and got to perform in the school concert! In January, we will learn about winter, snowmen, and start our clothing unit! We will also get to make fake snow and hope for more real snow!



Kindergarten

This month in kindergarten, the class learned about winter holidays and how they are celebrated. We discussed the traditions that take place during the holidays of Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, Christmas, and Diwali. They also learned how Christmas is celebrated in other countries. For example, in Sweden, they celebrate St. Lucia Day on December 12, before Christmas. We also discussed how New Year's is celebrated. We read a variety of holiday stories and made many projects.

In reading, we have been learning about how living things get what they need. We read informational texts about migration and

hibernation. We are working on rhyming and reading, and writing words in word families. The class is learning to recognize the main idea and details in a text. 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. We have also been reading and writing about snowmen.

Next month, we will be learning about the seasons. We will learn how animals survive in the cold winter weather. We will learn about polar animals and their adaptations and behaviors for survival.

In math, we completed our module on addition and subtraction within 5 using objects and drawings. We are currently working on representing numbers 6 to 10 with objects and with a written numeral. In the coming weeks we will be working on writing and counting numbers to 100. I hope you all enjoy the holidays with your families.



First Grade

The First Grade **rocked** the Holiday Winter Concert! Speaking of Christmas, we've been very busy during the holiday season! We just wrapped up our Holidays Around the World Unit.

We've learned about Hanukkah, Ramadan, and Christmas. In January, we will move on to our Maps & Globes unit. In Science, we will begin our Animal Superpowers unit, where the students will explore how the external characteristics of animals are essential to their survival.

In math, we just wrapped up our unit on Applying Addition and Subtraction Relationships. In January, we will move on to module 5, Understand Add to and Take From Problems. The students will learn how to represent result unknown, change unknown, and start unknown problems with objects and drawings.

In reading, we've enjoyed some great holiday read-alouds such as Santa's Stuck, Snowmen at Night, Turkey Claus, and Hanukkah Oh Hannukah. As always, the students have been working hard in reading groups with Mrs. Dulovich and me. When we come to words we don't know, we focus on sounding words out, finding chunks of words we know, and using context clues. We are learning about the main idea in nonfiction books and identifying story elements in fiction texts. We continue to learn new spelling patterns every week to add to our reading toolbox!

Thank you for stopping by! Check us out in our festive outfits during the Winter Holiday concert and our winter holiday crafts!

Second Grade

This month has been vibrant and full of joy in our Second Grade class! We celebrated the season with the "Winter Pokey" as part of our fun-filled December poetry collection. Our students also enjoyed participating in the Corradi Class annual Snowperson Craft. In math, we focused on mastering the value of coins and progressed to learning how to tell time. As we look forward to the New Year, we are excited to learn more advanced counting strategies with eventual regrouping

skills. In science, we explored how water from high elevations creates rivers and lakes.

Additionally, we learned how erosion affects the beach by moving sand, and how the journey of colorful sand from boulders in high mountains to the shore affects the beach and its color! We completed our second Reading Unit, which emphasized informational texts. We read and learned about migrating animals and the prairie as home to many interesting plants and animals. Our writing activities included crafting a beautiful poem about

enjoying winter hot cocoa and creating a silly-character narrative set in a winter scene. We also wrote informative pieces about dinosaurs and a park we have been to. In social studies, we expanded our knowledge of North America and its neighboring countries, and mastered intermediate directions. Our class also collected food items and even won a special challenge *two days in a row!* As we eagerly anticipate the holiday break, we wish everyone a happy and healthy New Year in 2026!



Third Grade

Happy New Year! Our third graders have had a wonderful month full of learning, creativity, and hands-on exploration, topped off by a joyful performance in our winter concert.

In Reading, students dove into historical fiction, enjoying stories about the *Titanic* and discovering how authors turn real events into captivating tales. They practiced important comprehension skills such as analyzing plot, setting, and characters. When we return in January, we'll explore biographies and poetry—more exciting

stories await!

In Writing, students crafted their own historical fiction stories by creating characters, settings, and plots inspired by history. After winter break, they'll continue revising, editing, and publishing their work so their stories will soon be ready to share with the class.

In Math, our focus this month was on multiplication and division as students explored strategies to understand how these operations connect. In January, we will turn our attention to addition and subtraction strategies to continue building strong number sense.

In Science, students investigated Forces and Motion through hands-on experiments, including building bridges and flying trapezes to observe how objects move. In January, we'll explore the fascinating world of magnets to see how magnetic forces make objects move. Once we finish the forces unit, students will begin their Social Studies unit on Settling the Land.



Thank you for your support and encouragement this month! We are proud of our students' hard work and wish all families a joyful holiday season. We can't wait to kick off the New Year with more learning and fun!

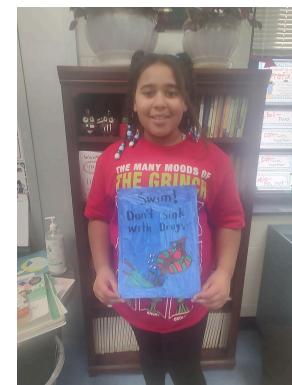


Fourth Grade

That's a wrap on 2025! Our fourth-grade students have progressed in all areas of learning this month. We can't wait to see how much we grow in 2026!

The *Great Mail Race* has started to return surveys from fourth-grade classes around the country, and we have learned about life in fourth grade in Perkins, Oklahoma, and Norwood, New Jersey!

Our Science unit on Animals and Adaptations allowed the students to explore different types of trees and root systems, and why certain trees are able to grow in specific environments.



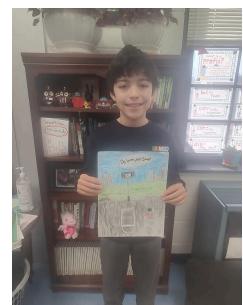
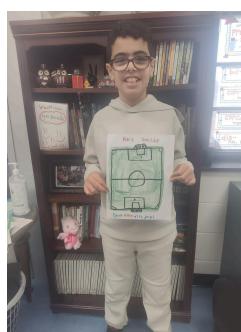
The fourth-grade class participated in

"A Partnership for Drug-Free New Jersey" art contest. Each student developed

a design, a slogan, and created a submission to the contest. The winning pieces will be featured on bookmarks to be distributed to New Jersey schools next year during our week of respect. Their creations are outstanding, and all deserve recognition! Our Math module 5 has us using arrays and area models to calculate multi-digit multiplication equations. We will continue to explore the distributive property, as well as use partial products to solve multiplication equations.

The class was very busy with creative writing projects, our new novel study-*The Best Christmas Pageant Ever*, and many

S.T.E.A.M. activity lessons. A highlight was creating a stocking using only scissors, three pieces of construction paper, and 48 inches of tape. Their stockings needed to hold the most candy. We added an estimation element to the challenge, whereby the students had to estimate how many pieces of candy their stockings could hold. We had many more accurate estimates with this activity, with estimates being exact and within one piece! We wish everyone a wonderful winter recess, happy holidays, and a very healthy 2026!



Fifth Grade



From creating their own businesses at the TREPS Marketplace to performing at the Winter Concert, December has been a fast-moving, jam-packed month for fifth grade here at LBS!

We recently completed our third novel study of the year, *The Whipping Boy*. A cross between medieval adventure and a cover-to-cover comedy of errors, the students reveled in the story of two unlikely friends, cloaked in amusingly dense language and larger-than-life characters. The class

especially enjoyed watching the film version, spotting differences between the two, and considering why the changes were made to make the story work across both forms of media. As Jemmy would say, *Gaw!* In math class, we have been tackling the critical topic of volume, or the amount of space an object takes up. Our particular focus has been on right rectangular prisms. To think about the way that their length, width, and height impact the volume, we have been playing our take of *The Price is Right*.... the Volume is Right! Student contestants get to play fun 'volumizing' games to try to compare the volume of different items in the classroom. It sounds easy, but comparing the volume of a very large (but very thin) rug to a storage container, without being able to measure, isn't easy!



In social studies, we have been diving into the Age of Exploration, considering what motivated powerful nations and intrepid seafarers to risk everything by sailing to the New World.



To summarize their learning and look for common themes, students selected two explorers, researched their lives and expeditions and created a Venn diagram that shows key differences and salient commonalities.

We'll soon pivot back to science instruction with the 'Spaceship Earth!' unit by contemplating the patterns we see in the skies above, why they happen, and the way they impact our world and our lives. We look forward to seeing what the night skies have in store for us in 2026. The fifth grade class wishes everyone in the Lebanon community a very happy and exciting New Year!

Sixth Grade

December was a month of finishing: we finished our fantasy reading unit by completing *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* just before winter break; in social studies, we finished up our studies on Ancient River Civilizations; in science, we have finished the water cycle and tectonic plates; and finally, in math we finished our unit on ratios and percentages.



That means that in January, we will start all things new! In reading, we will start the novel, *Elijah of Buxton*, by Christopher Paul Curtis; in social studies, we will be learning about Ancient MesoAmerica; in science, we will do some work on biodiversity and ecosystems; and in math, we will begin pre-algebra!

In addition to all that learning, we also had our Winter Concert to practice for (which went really well, of course), TREPS, and a joint field trip with Clinton Public to the Nutcracker Suite. Happy New Year!



PTA Information

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

Visit our district website

www.lebanonschool.org