

Witty Wildcat

NEWSLETTER

November 2021



A joint PreK-5 elementary newsletter from A. Ward Spaulding School and McAlister Intermediate School.

<u>A. Ward Spaulding School</u>	<u>McAlister Intermediate School</u>
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Principal: Mrs. Gina Olearczyk Assistant Principal: Mr. Jack Ferraro	Principal: Mrs. Kris Pryce Assistant Principal: Mrs. Melissa Todd
<u>Spaulding School Website</u>	<u>McAlister School Website</u>

The Season of Thanks

November surely reminds us of the beauty of New England with the changing of the leaves and the picturesque landscape it provides. The nights and mornings are colder and the chill reminds us that the summer is now gone for good. It is also a time where we have an opportunity to gather with family and friends and reflect for a moment. We are thankful to lead schools filled with such amazing students and staff and to partner with all of you as a school community. May you enjoy the extra time this month with family and friends and take time to reflect and share what you are thankful for this month.



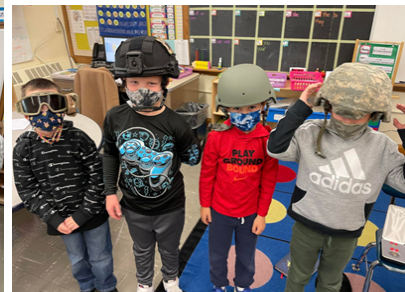
Veterans Day

Spaulding and McAlister students and staff celebrated and highlighted their veterans in a variety of ways on November 11th. At Spaulding students learned about Veterans Day along with the sacrifices our men and women have and continue to make for our continued freedom. A flag was made with each grade level making hearts, stars or poppies with names of veterans that they wanted to acknowledge and appreciate. Classrooms were honored to have family members or friends dressed in their uniforms serve as mystery readers in their classrooms. At 11:00 to mark the 11th hour on the 11th day of the 11th month when our country chose peace, a virtual school wide assembly was held in which all of Spaulding School held a moment of silence. Our second grade students then sang Thank You Soldiers accompanied by Mrs. Jespersen.

At McAlister, our students started the morning with our annual walk to school that included a walk through the Field of Flags on the town green. A whole school assembly was held on the basketball courts to honor veterans.

Below are a few pictures of our students honoring our veterans.





Parent Conferences:

We want to thank all of our families for very productive and successful Parent Teacher Conferences. It was great having you join us in the building and in person again.

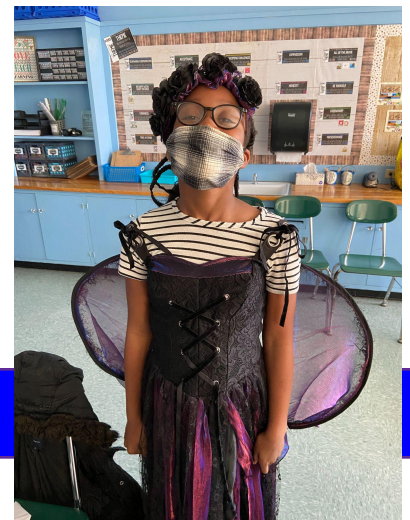
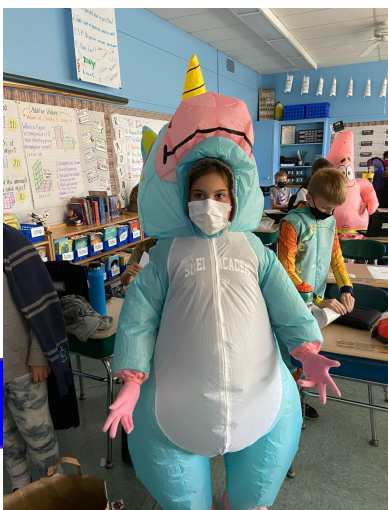


Report Cards:

Trimester 1 closes on December 3rd. Report cards will be sent electronically to families December 16th at 4 pm. Please be sure that you have your child's student ID number as it will be needed to access the document via school messenger.

School Spirit Days

We've enjoyed some amazing school spirit days in the month of October. Some photos are included below. We look forward to celebrating the Fridays between Thanksgiving and the Holiday Vacation with school spirit days as well. The flyer of dates is included below:





PTO

If you ordered merchandise through our fall fundraiser you should be receiving a shipping notification within the next week. If you have any questions regarding shipping please contact the vendor directly.

Mark your calendars: PTO will be holding an in person meeting on December 13th at 7:00 PM. Location will be determined shortly and communicated with all families.

Upcoming December Spirit Days



Upcoming Elementary Events:

November 24:	Early Dismissal (11:50 a.m. Thanksgiving Break)
November 25-26:	No School-Thanksgiving Break
November 15-December 3:	Kindergarten Benchmark Assessments
December 3:	End of Trimester 1
December 16:	Report Cards Electronically Sent Home

McAlister News:

Breakfast

As a reminder, Free breakfast and lunch continues this year. On average we have 200 students receiving breakfast each morning. We are thrilled to have so many students taking part in this program.

STEM

Ms. Schomburg has been working hard to update the STEM Website. Please feel free to visit the [STEM Website](#) included. Many important updates are included for you to review.

McAlister News Show

The McAlister News Show is back thanks to Mrs. Tierney! The featured segments can be found on our McAlister homepage of the district website. There is a slider titled “featured”. This will also be included in the Library Media Center page of our website as well. If you subscribe to the McAlister news then you will receive alerts when we post these segments. Ask your children about them. The entire school community is involved and watches these segments each Friday morning in place of our morning announcements.

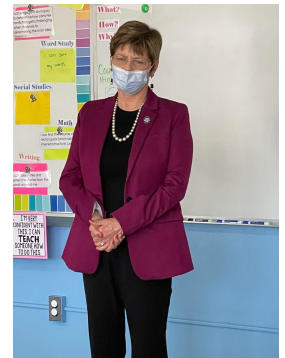
An [informational page a](#)bout how to subscribe to news updates is included for you if you are not currently signed up.

You can also click the yellow bell on any news page to subscribe to that page’s news feed. The link above shows every feed we have subscriptions for. This is helpful for people who have kids at multiple schools and also provides access to the district news feeds.

State Representative Tami Zawistowski Visits 5th Grade Students at McAlister Intermediate School

On Friday, October 16th, Fifth Graders at McAlister Intermediate School had the opportunity to talk to our State Representative, Tami Zawistowski. This presentation was prompted by Suffield's participation in the Connecticut's Kid Governor program. Here, 5th grade students write up and present a platform to their classmates. Students then vote for the candidate that they think should move onto the state finalist.

During her presentation, Representative Zawistowski shared her experiences serving in the state legislature and the basic procedures of how a bill becomes a law. She used an imaginary example of how to make chocolate-peanut butter ice cream the state ice cream flavor.



After her explanation, Tami allowed the students to ask her questions about her job. Here are some of our favorites:

- **Student:** Do you like your job?
Representative Zawistowski: I love what I do. The best thing about my job is I get to fix problems and help people.
- **Student:** Why does it have to go through so many people to become a law?
Representative Zawistowski: All of the people in the legislature represent different groups of people. We have to make sure everyone is heard.
- **Student:** How long does a law stay in place?
Representative Zawistowski: Most laws pretty much last forever so that's why we have to be very careful about what we pass.
- **Student:** Is your job hard?
Representative Zawistowski: It can be. You have to get along with people even if you don't agree with them. I really enjoy that part of it though.
- **Student:** What's the favorite part of your job?
Representative Zawistowski: Helping constituents that ask for assistance when they have a problem.
- **Student:** How old do you have to be to have a job like yours?
Representative Zawistowski: You have to be 18 which is the voting age

- **Student:** Are there any bills for schools?
Representative Zawistowski: There are always education bills. One bill I introduced a few years ago was guaranteeing that kids can have recess.
- **Student:** Do you have any advice for someone that is running for an election?
Representative Zawistowski: One piece of advice I have is you need to have a platform; What will you do as kid governor? You also need to have a reputation for getting along with other people. Meet as many people as you can. If they aren't in your class, talk to them in the hall. Next, bring your purpose to fruition. Finally, don't be afraid to ask for votes.

We look forward to seeing what our newly elected Kid Governor, **Nathan Deenihan**, will do for our school and community! Stay tuned for more details about his platform.

Trick or Treat Safety in Grade 3

Lt. Burrell taught some of our third graders about how to stay safe on the holiday of Halloween by teaching them Trick or Treating Safety. The Suffield Police Department donated bags and glow sticks to the students who participated in the training. Some photos are included below:



Physical Education Boot Camp

Physical education classes have been focusing on Fitness while celebrating Veterans Day through a Boot Camp experience. Students were paired up with partners where one was the “Cadet” and the other was the “Drill Sergeant.” Some photos highlighting the event are included below.



Walk to School Day & Veterans Day Recognition

Our Walk to School Day and Veterans Day recognition were a HUGE success. Thank you to our amazing Physical Education teachers for all they did to organize this day. Thank you to the Suffield Police Department for their assistance with keeping our students, staff and families safe. Thank you to all of our Veterans for everything you do and have done to keep our country safe. Some highlights of the day are included below.



We strive to be our very best, each and every day. We are kind, respectful, responsible, safe, that's the McAlister way!

A. Ward Spaulding News:

Preschool:

Our preschoolers are beginning the unit: Family & Community. We have been reading lots of family and friendship books and look forward to talking about our great community of Suffield & some of its community helpers. Our Math curriculum is focused all about shapes and how to identify them. We are looking at the different characteristics of simple shapes, comparing shapes, sorting shapes, and finding shapes in our world. Students will even combine shapes to create new ones. For Halloween, students created cards for a local nursing home to spread some spooky cheer for the holiday. Also, Fall Fun Day was a blast! Students “picked” pumpkins from a patch, decorated them, practiced trick-or-treating, and made real scarecrows. For Veteran's Day, we participated in a school-wide assembly, examined our American Flag (then each created one of our own!), and Ms. S invited a Naval Nuclear Electrician who read *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* to her class while the other classes virtually joined. It has been a busy fall full of fun and learning!


Phonemic Awareness:

What is Phonemic Awareness?

Phonemic awareness is the ability to understand that spoken words are made up of individual sounds (these sounds are called phonemes). Phonemic awareness is one of the best early predictors of reading success.

Why is Phonemic Awareness Important?

Phonemic awareness is one of the first skills your child will need in their toolbelt for reading, which, of course, is an important part of learning. It's also one of the first steps to building their confidence with sounds (and, later, words!).



Phonemic awareness is an effective tool for helping your child become an engaged, self-motivated reader in the future. A child with a healthy foundation of phonemic awareness stands the best chance to read with fluency and for fun!

Here are some activities to support phonemic awareness development outside of school:

★ Rhyming:

- look around the house or on a car ride for objects that rhyme (cat, mat, etc.)
- read books that contain rhyming words (such as Dr. Seuss) and ask your child to notice illustrations that rhyme (Ex: I see a bat and a cat- those words rhyme)
- sing songs that contain rhymes
- Rhyming Memory Game from FCRR
- "Rhyme Time" Game from FCRR

★ Creating and Associating Sounds:

- Play I Spy with sounds (i.e. "I spy with my little eye something that starts with an /r/ sound.")
- Go on a scavenger hunt for words that have the same beginning, middle, or ending sound of a given word (Ex: find objects that have the same ending sound as cat /t/ so they may find a mat or pot)

★ Blending & Segmenting Sounds: Blending sounds is putting individual sounds together to make a word (Ex: the sounds /c/ /a/ /t/ are blended, or put together, to make the word cat) & Segmenting sounds is when you provide the word and ask the student to separate the word into its individual sounds (Ex: say "cat" and the student repeats the word, then breaks it into the individual sounds /c/ /a/ /t/).

- Use "robot talk" to segment sounds of words
- Sound Segmenting & Blending Activity from FCRR

★ Syllables: Identifying the number of syllables in a word

- Have your child locate items around the room that contain the same number of syllables as a given word (Ex: find objects that have the same number of syllables as the word friendship, which is 2 syllables. The child might locate a bucket or table, which are both 2 syllables)
- Have your child clap the number of syllables in a few favorite words (Ex: Sponge-bob, tur-tle, can-dy, fan-tas-tic)
- "Feed the Animals" Syllable Counting Game from FCRR

SEL Newsletter:

Please follow the link for the November SEL Newsletter [November Newsletter](#)

Second Grade Shoutout:

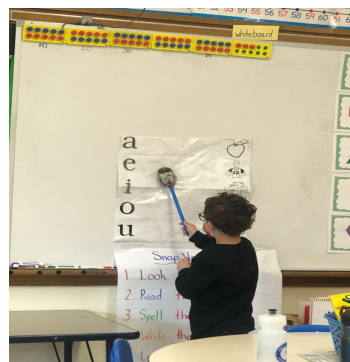
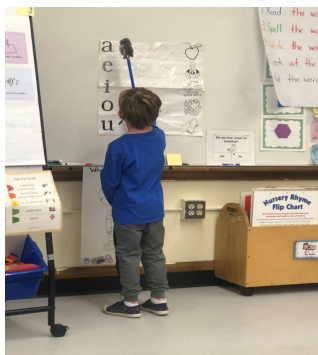
Second grade is working hard to build math fact fluency through number talks and games. They are given weekly assessments to monitor their progress as they build their fluency. In addition to building fact fluency, 3 Act Math tasks will be used to help students make sense of story problems. 3 Act Math tasks are real world problems that help students see math in everyday life. They build critical thinking skills by naming what they notice, asking questions and deciding on a strategy to use as they solve the problem.

Parent Drop Off and Pick Up:

This is a friendly reminder for parents/guardians to remain in their car and keep moving through the line in order to keep the process going in a timely manner. If you need additional time to unload or load your child(ren) please feel free to pull to the inner loop of the circle and take as much time as needed. Your cooperation with this is greatly appreciated.

Kindergarten Leaders:

Students in Mrs. Blais's kindergarten class led the class during Fundation lessons. We love our student leaders!



Breaking News:

We believe in the goodness of all our students, and their inherent desire to want to be Spaulding Stars by showing kindness, respect, and responsibility. And, when we catch students randomly showing kindness and caring, or being respectful and responsible, we periodically “break the news” with a special announcement over the intercom celebrating their Spaulding Star behavior! Recognizing our students’ acts of kindness, respect, and responsibility has created a positive school climate in which students take pride in their kind behavior and appreciation for the many kindnesses shown by their peers.

At the end of each semester, we will recognize two students from every class who have distinguished themselves for their Spaulding Star behavior. These students will receive a special Spaulding Star that we will display on our Spaulding Star Wall of Fame, and will be invited to have a special lunch with Mrs. Olearczyk and Mr. Ferraro.

Be sure to ask your child if they heard any “Breaking News” at school today!

Kindergarten Benchmarking:

The benchmarking window for Kindergarten opens, November 15-December 3, for our Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessments . Each kindergarten student will be assessed to identify individual reading levels to further assist teachers in supporting students at their instructional levels.

Nothing but Obstacles in PE:





Spaulding Stars care through respect, responsibility, and kindness.