

# Spotlight

Four Seasons A+ December 2024

## Calendar

- Tuesday, December 3 Picture Retake Day
- Tuesday, December 10 Coffee with the Principal, 7:30-8:30 am
- Tuesday, December 10 Ms. Vance's Class Performance at Coffee with the Principal
- Saturday, December 14 School Choice Fair, 9:30 am - 2:00 pm Saint Paul RiverCentre
- NO SCHOOL Winter Break December 23 - January 3
- Monday, January 6 school resumes
- Tuesday, January 14, Coffee with the Principal, 7:30-8:30 am
- NO SCHOOL Monday, January 20
- NO SCHOOL Monday, January 27

[Four Seasons A+ Family Handbook](#)

website: <https://fourseasons.spps.org>

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**DONATION PLEASE: We need tissues (drop off in the office)**

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### Hello Four Seasons Families,

It's hard to believe that Thanksgiving has passed and winter break is only three weeks away. Winter break is often seen as the mid-way point in a school year and is an excellent time for reflection on how the year is going for your child. I hope everyone who attended APTT has found the skills taught and activities sent home helpful. These activities are meant to help students with many academic skills and are also an excellent opportunity to connect with your child about how school is going.

At our next Coffee with the Principal on Tuesday, December 10th, at 7:30, we will discuss how you know as a parent that your child is ready for the next grade. I'm excited to hear from families about discussing academic progress with teachers and working with their students at home.

Additionally, after winter break, we will have our next benchmark assessments to track students' progress in reading and math through the first 4 months of the school year this year. These assessments help guide our instruction with students through the second half of the school year and are another piece of information teachers may share with you.

Thank you for your partnership. We look forward to continuing to partner with you and your students for the remainder of the year. If there is anything specific I can help you with, please do not hesitate to reach out.

In partnership,

Ryan Fell, Principal

## How do you know if your child will be ready for the next grade?

Click on the button to answer the question and help Four Seasons grow.

### Coffee with the Principal

Join Principal Fell for coffee and conversation in the Family Room Tuesday, December 10, 7:30-8:30 am.

- Listen to a performance by Ms. Vance's class
- Meet other people in the Four Seasons A+ community
- Talk with Principal Fell
- Enjoy coffee & a treat

Four Seasons A+ has a plan for success around school climate, literacy, and math. We will look at how we are implementing this School Continuous Improvement Plan (SCIP). We hope to see you there.



### Our Busy Classrooms

#### DHH Pre-K

Cold weather arrived just in time for us to make the switch from "Exploring Changes in our World" to "Adapting in our World"! This unit focuses on how animals, plants/trees, and humans, have to make changes when the world gets cold around us - hibernating, growing thicker fur, dropping

leaves, wearing different clothes, camouflaging and migrating! Ask your preschooler about the "caves" in our classrooms and exploring ice and snow!



Looking for winter resources?

- Non school day programming
  - [SPPS Discovery Club](#) Open to all families on a first come basis registration.
  - [YMCA Full Day School Release Days](#)
  - [St. Paul Parks and Recreation No School Day Programming](#)
- Community Winter Events
  - [St. Paul Parks and Recreation Winter Events](#)
  - [St. Paul Public Library](#)
- Resources for the whole family
  - [Wellstone Center](#) (179 Robie St. E St. Paul, MN 55107) for winter gear and basic needs such as food self

Thank you as always for sharing your preschoolers with us!

Pictures: Pumpkin Paint Rolling by half day.

Bare Trees in the snow by full day.



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## Kindergarten

Kindergarten families, please continue to practice the letter recognition and sound game from APTT, as well as reading 15 minutes every night.

**Literacy:** We continue our daily UFLI Lessons and will be learning about the letters g, b, e, s and k. Students are starting to recognize their heart words on slides, in stories and on signs. Encourage students to be looking for the heart words; I, the, and, a, is, as and said.

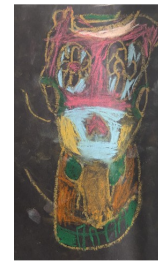
**Math:** Students are representing their work and solving addition and subtraction problems within 5. We will be working on recognizing and writing number 6-10 and comparing groups within 10.

**Social Studies, Art:** In Social Studies we will be learning about family traditions and in art we will be exploring contouring through the use of shapes.

In partnership,  
Ms. Teresa and Mrs. H

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**Kindergarten Artists Explore Culture Sugar Skulls**



## We Live Here - Kindergarten Artists



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### Grade 1

In 1st grade we are continuing to practice our STAR expectations daily and we are seeing some amazing work! As the weather gets cooler we will still be heading outside to play at recess. Please let us know if you need any cold weather clothing and we will do our best to find some for your child.

The students are still hard at work in literacy and practicing their new sounds and skills daily. We will continue to practice past letters and sounds, such as the short vowels and digraphs (ch, ck, sh, th, wh, and ph). They have been introduced to the graphemes /nk/ and /ng/ that they hear in words. Looking ahead we will start learning our long vowel sounds also such as a\_e, i\_e, o\_e, e\_e, and u\_e. As we continue to learn the new spelling patterns, we will continue to review other patterns and rules during small groups.

In writing we are continuing to work on the elements of writing such as how to write a complete sentence and making them into paragraphs. When we are writing our sentences, we ask the students to remember to capitalize, use finger spaces, and end with punctuation. We've been talking about the writing process such as prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and using checklists for our work. Our whole group reading lessons have focused on the genre of Nonfiction, and what elements make a book a nonfiction one.

In math we are continuing to practice adding and subtracting in review and small groups. We have also been working on finding the unknown number in an equation. Looking ahead we will focus on understanding put together, and taking apart problems and also using objects and drawings to help us solve them. In small groups the students also get math support with the Waggle program, and Seesaw activities. If you are able at home to extend their learning, keep practicing the APTT skills with their supplies to help reinforce their addition and subtraction skills!

In our Content Area focus we have discussed mental health such as decision making and feeling comfortable asking for help. We have also learned about Nutrition and where our food comes from. We've reviewed over fruits and vegetables and what kinds are our favorites! Up next we will be looking at activities such as creating a timeline that identifies at least three events from one's own life. We will also be comparing and contrasting family life from earlier times and today, as well as comparing and contrasting technology and buildings. We will also begin our next art unit in December as well.

Thank you for all of the continued support and involvement in your child's education. We are grateful for your partnership!

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## Grade 2

In math, we have been learning about place value, and different ways to represent numbers. We have practiced showing numbers using drawings, concrete models, expanded form, and word form. Our students have loved using their base ten blocks to represent numbers up to 1,000 using a model. Over the next month, we will be learning about how to collect and represent data.

In phonics, we have focused on compound words, especially focusing on the spelling differences between open and closed syllables. Students have worked hard to look at a text and identify the spelling differences we have learned about in class. We have enjoyed listening to books on our iPads, and working on targeted skills in our small groups.

In writing, we have begun a unit on opinion writing. We will be writing an opinion paragraph on our favorite landform, connecting our writing to the landform unit students had in science class. Students have identified their favorite landform, and are working to construct a paragraph to support their opinion.

In visual arts and social studies, we read the book "Sky Color" by Peter H. Reynolds. This is a book about a girl that is participating in a school project and has to paint a sky with no blue paint. She discovers that the sky can be many colors and it isn't always blue. After reading this book, we went to work creating a very colorful sky using many colors on the color wheel. The painting was made with masking tape that blocked out the paint leaving white trees. This technique is called tape resist. Before creating the details of the birch tree we listened to the legend of the birch tree told



by the Ojibwa Nation. The trees were then made to look like birch trees by scraping black paint with a cardboard pieces on the tree trunks. It is amazing how real these trees look!

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### Grade 3

Third graders continue to learn strategies to multiply using factors 0-10. We have started to integrate an understanding of division strategies and how division and multiplication are related to each other.

For phonics, we are continuing our learning of prefixes and suffixes and how to read digraphs ch, th, wh, ph. Students also read words with r-controlled vowels (ar, er, ir, ur, or).

In reading and writing, we have been transitioning back to fiction and understanding narrative elements such as characters, problems, and resolutions. We have been working on summarizing fiction texts we have read in class; with a focus on Janelle Cannon books like Stellaluna and Pinduli.

In Health we have been focusing on understanding and regulating our emotions as well as relating them to the zones or regulation. We have also been talking about making healthy nutritional choices. We will be moving back to Social Studies and learning about Ancient civilizations starting with Ancient Egypt. We will be connecting Art with this social studies unit where students will write their own names using hieroglyphics.

### Third Grade Artists Explore Amate Bark Paintings



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### Grades 4-5

This past month we have had the opportunity to visit the Merriam Park Library, we visited the Walker Art Museum, and we watched a play called The One Act Play Where Everything Goes Wrong at Creative Arts Secondary School. We are creating hybrid bird paintings, and writing about birds during writing. It has been a busy month filled with creativity!

As the weather gets colder, please remember to send jackets, hats, scarves, and gloves or mittens if you have them.

On Tuesday, December 3rd we hope to see you here at Four Seasons at 8 AM for our Art and Writing Showcase! We will have a gallery of the bird paintings students have been working on. Students will have a chance to read and share their bird writing with family members who can attend. We hope to see you here!

On Monday, December 9th, the 4th graders will have a visit from The Works Museum to learn about electro-magnetism. The 5th graders will have a field trip to Biz-Town!

Skills we are working on:

- Math: long division with one-digit divisors
- Reading: summarizing, fluency, comprehension
- Writing: writing informational paragraphs about birds
- Health: nutrition
- Art: Flying with Creativity: making hybrid bird paintings

Please reach out to your child's homeroom teacher if you ever have any questions or concerns. Family connections are so important, and we value your feedback and contributions to your child's learning.

Sincerely,

Ms. Erin Johnson  
Ms. Mariah Nosich  
Ms. Sarah Kopp-Reddy  
Ms. Jennifer Trooien  
Ms. Patricia Teefy



### **From our Counselor - Ms. Hardman**

Enrollment for the 2025-2026 school year begins this month. Our 5th graders are slated to go to either Creative Arts Secondary School or to Global Arts Upper Campus.

If you would like to pursue other middle school opportunities in the district, or have any questions please feel free to contact Brooke Hardman at 651-744-2018 or by email at

[brooke.hardman@spps.org](mailto:brooke.hardman@spps.org).



## Event Information

### School Choice Fair

5th Grade families, explore middle school options for next year at the School Choice Fair Saturday, December 14, 9:30 am - 2:00 pm at the Saint Paul River Centre.

### Getting to the School Choice Fair:

#### Free Park-and-Ride

Shuttles starting at 9:00 a.m.

- Harding High School - 1540 E. 6th Street
- Humboldt Secondary - 30 E. Baker Street
- Johnson High School - 1349 Arcade Street
- Washington Technology Magnet - 1495 Rice Street

#### Science Museum Parking Ramp

Limited free parking is available for families attending the School Choice Fair. Parking vouchers will be redeemed inside the fair.

#### Metro Transit

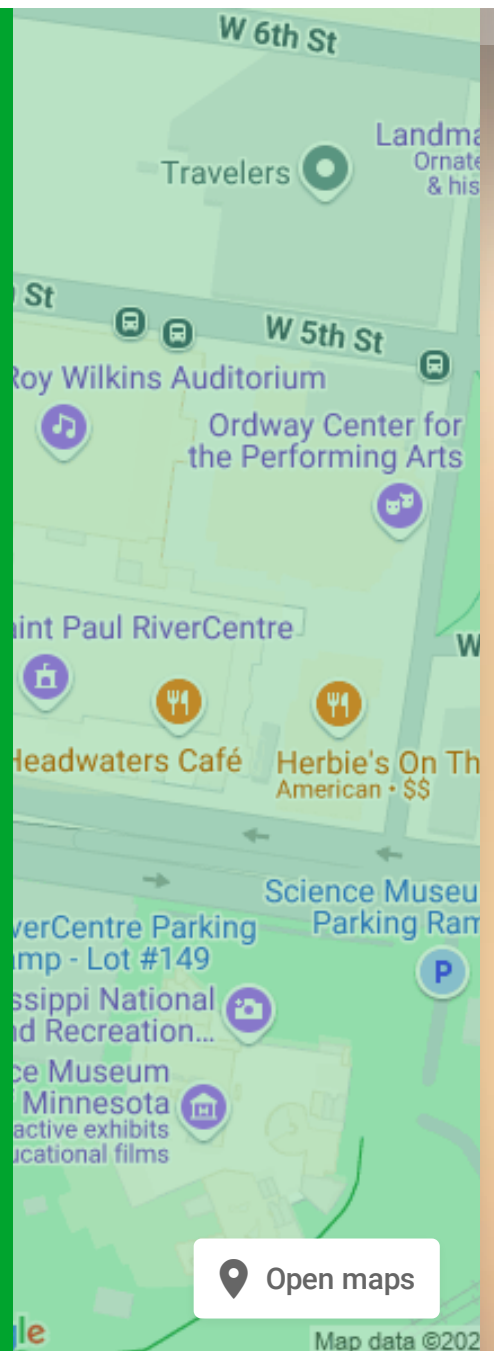
[Download](#) a FREE Metro Transit 1-Day Ride Pass.

When?

**Saturday, Dec 14, 2024, 09:30 AM**

Where?

**175 West Kellogg Boulevard, Saint Paul, MN, USA**



## Music

The students of Four Seasons have been continuing to make amazing music through singing and playing instruments! All classes at Four Seasons have begun learning at least one song, and practicing good technique on a variety of musical instruments.

Recently, four 5th graders from Ms. Kopp-Reddy's and Ms. Nosich's class were selected to attend the MMEA (Minnesota Music Educators Association) All-Star Choir! This is a prestigious opportunity for 4-6th grade elementary students to come together and spend a day making music. This will take place on Saturday, February 15, 2025 at the Minneapolis Convention Center! Go Stars!

On December 19th, students from Ms. Kopp-Reddy's and Ms. Nosich's class will be attending the SPSS Kids Sing! Arts Pathway Choir Festival that will take place at Creative Arts Secondary School. The purpose of this trip is to encourage students to continue their education at an arts school. Having art classes embedded education have shown to support reading, writing, and math. There will be a performance open to the public on this day.

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## Science with Mrs. B

Here is what we have been learning in November:

In Pre-K, we are learning about movement and forces (pushes, pulls, and gravity) through our Ultimate Games Day unit.

In Kindergarten, we are learning about what plants, animals, and people need to stay alive and how they depend on their homes, or habitats, for these needs. We are learning how different habitats, like forests and deserts, provide for different animals and plants, and how food chains show who eats whom in nature.

In First Grade, we are finishing our unit on plants. We investigated different plant parts and used them as inspiration to design and build our own inventions to solve problems in our school and at home. We are reviewing for and taking our end of unit assessment.

In Second Grade, we are continuing to learn about different types of landforms using models and maps. We are also studying how water moves and flows and experimenting with melting and freezing to see how water and ice work.

In Third Grade, we are learning about gravity and magnetism through hands-on investigations. We are using our knowledge of magnetism to complete a design challenge which requires students to create their own magnetic tabletop game for our Ultimate Playground.

In Fourth Grade, we are investigating the energy needs of the United States and beyond through our Sparks Energy, Inc. unit. Students are learning about different energy sources, how energy is transferred, how people use energy, and how energy use impacts the environment.

In Fifth Grade, we are learning about the properties of materials, how substances change during chemical reactions, and solving design problems with different materials. Students combined substances and observed changes. We will also be investigating solids, liquids, and gases at the particle level.

If you have any questions, feel free to reach out by email: [clare.byakweli@spps.org](mailto:clare.byakweli@spps.org).

In partnership,

Clare Byakweli

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## Picture Retake Day - Tuesday, December 3rd

Lifetouch will be at Four Seasons A+ Tuesday, December 3rd to take school pictures of students who:

- were absent Picture Day, Monday, November 4th
- request a retake of their original picture



Please check student backpacks for order forms for students who were absent/not enrolled Monday, November 4th or order online at [mylifetouch.com](http://mylifetouch.com) and enter Picture Day ID: **EVTCWPBCJ**

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### 3rd - 5th Grade Mock Election

On November 5th our 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade students participated in a mock election! They learned about what it means to vote, the voting process in the United States, and they voted in a mock election here at school. This was part of a state wide initiative through the Minnesota Office of the Secretary of the State and Students Voting Minnesota to educate K-12 students about the importance of voting. You can see the statewide results from the mock election [here!](#)



**Placing the ballot in the ballot box**



**Proud Voter**



**Voting Booth**

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### Speech/Language Tip of the Month: Use Closed Captions!

Will you watch a movie at home as a family over winter break?? If so, remember to use Closed Captions! Closed Captioning **can help boost language and foundational reading skills**. Click the "CC" symbol to turn on captions **every time** your child is watching TV or using a device to watch a video. (If you don't have a "CC" button on your remote, you might need to check your TV settings to find the closed caption option.) Enjoy your family time!



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### Four Seasons A+ Elementary Shared Leadership Team

*What is the Shared Leadership Team?* The Shared Leadership Team is a group of staff members who meet twice a month to discuss the needs of the school and work towards making improvements for the benefit of our students. Any staff member can join these meetings and our work is guided by the School Continuous Improvement Plan.

*The mission of our leadership team:* Our mission is to create a positive school culture. Our goal is to make sure each student gets the support they need to be successful. We use data and reflect on our growth as a school community.

*So far this school year we have:*

- Reviewed and discussed our fall assessments and the School Climate Survey
- Made a plan to begin a social-emotional curriculum in all classrooms after Winter Break
- Reflected on our school systems and made changes as needed
- Celebrated our successes and strengths as a school

If you have questions about the Four Seasons Shared Leadership Team please reach out to Principal Fell.

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## How to Help Your Child Succeed

Four Seasons A+ Elementary believes in the power of partnering with families. APTT is our partnership focus this year. Most Four Seasons families either attended APTT on October 24, or met with their child's teacher (virtually, phone call, or in-person) to review APTT materials. During APTT, families:

- explore a foundational skill
- look at student progress
- learn an activity to help their student, and
- set academic goals

Winter Break is a good time to practice the activities provided during APTT. **Contact your child's teacher if you still need fall APTT materials.** Our next APTT conference is Thursday, February 27, 5:30-6:45 pm. Interpreters and childcare are provided. A light dinner will be served after the classroom meeting. Transportation is available upon request.

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## Greetings from the Health Office

We are in the season of respiratory illness: asthma exacerbations, colds, COVID, influenza, even whooping cough. Remember to keep your and your children's vaccinations up to date and help them practice good health habits:

- Drinking plenty of water
- Getting enough rest
- Washing hands
- Masking when at risk or sick
- Following asthma action plans

Remember, please keep your student home if they have a fever, vomiting, diarrhea, or an unexplained rash. Call the Attendance Line (651) 744-7903 to let us know.



If the cold weather has you dreaming of a safe summer in the pool or lake, the City of Saint Paul is providing swimming lessons! They are offered for free on a first-come, first-served basis for youth who live in Saint Paul. Visit [stpaul.gov/swimminglessons](http://stpaul.gov/swimminglessons) to see available lessons.

Outside though, please [dress for the weather!](#)

Let us know if you have any school health questions or concerns! Call 651-888-7623 to speak with Nurse River or Natalie.

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## ENGLISH

Prefer a language other than English? You can open the newsletter link and click a button on the right (on a computer) or at the bottom (on a mobile device) to have it translated into many different languages. Please know that the translation function may be inaccurate or incomplete. If you have any questions, please call us at 651-290-7595.

## KAREN

၂၀၂၃ ခု ဝါဆိုလ်လွှာ အခမဲ့ အားပေးပေးပါမည်။ နှစ်စဉ် ကိုယ်စားပြု ဝါဆိုလ်လွှာ အခမဲ့ အားပေးပေးပါမည်။ (လူနာ အားပေးပေးပါမည်) မှတ်တမ်း ထိန်းသိမ်းပေးပါမည် (လူနာ အားပေးပေးပါမည်) ဒ်ဆိုင် ကိုယ်စားပြု အခမဲ့ အားပေးပေးပါမည်။ ဝန်ဆောင်မှုပေးရန် အတွက် အခမဲ့ အားပေးပေးပါမည် မှတ်တမ်း ထိန်းသိမ်းပေးပါမည်။ ဝန်ဆောင်မှုပေးရန် အတွက် ၆၅၁-၂၉၀-၇၅၉၅ နှင့် ဖုန်းဆက်သွယ်ပါ။

## SOMALI

Ma waxaad doorbideysaa luuqad aan aheyn af-Ingiriis? Waxaad furi kartaa lifaaqa wargeysyada oo guji batoonka midigta (ee kumbiyuutarkaaga) ama xagga hoose (ee taleefankaaga gacanta) si aad wargeyska ugu tarjuntid luuqado badan oo kala duwan. Fadlan ogow in natiijada turjumaaddu ay noqon karto mid aan sax ahayn ama aan dhammaystirnayn. Haddii aad wax su'aalo ah qabtid, fadlan naga soo wac 651-290-7595.

## HMONG

Puas xav tau ua lwm hom lus? Nej qhib txoj kab mus rau hauv daim ntawv xov xwm thiab nias lub pob ntawm sab xis hauv lub koos pis tawj, los sis yog lwm hom twj no ces nyob hauv qab, ces yuav muaj txhais ua ntau hom lus. Nco ntsoov tias cov lus txhais no yuav tsis raug txhua lo los sis txhais tiav tiav. Yog nej muaj lus nug, thov hu rau peb ntawm 651-290-7595.

## SPANISH

¿Prefiere un idioma que no sea inglés? Puede abrir el enlace del boletín y hacer clic en el botón a la derecha (en una computadora) o en la parte inferior (en un dispositivo móvil) para traducirlo a muchos idiomas diferentes. Tenga en cuenta que la función de traducción puede ser inexacta o incompleta. Si tiene alguna pregunta, llámenos al 651-290-7595.



**Four Seasons A+ Elementary**

[spps.org/fourseasons](https://spps.org/fourseasons)