



Cherry Avenue Buzz

Principal's Message

January 2025

Dear Cherry Avenue Families:

Welcome back and happy 2025! May 2025 be filled with joy, peace, good health, and lots of fun! We hope you had a wonderful Christmas and Hanukkah and enjoyed 16 days of vacation!

The RtI Winter Screener for students in K-5 will take place from January 13 through January 31.

National Law Enforcement Appreciation Day takes place on January 9. Our students are preparing thank-you notes and accolades for our amazing security team, SROs, and police officers from the 5th precinct. We are grateful for all they do for us and for our strong partnership.

On January 24, qualifying students in grades 4 and 5, will be competing in the building-level Scripps National Spelling Bee, cheered on by students and staff in grades 3-5. The winner will move on to the regional qualifier held in February. We are excited to bring back the Spelling Bee to the students of Cherry Avenue and wish all the participants good luck!

On January 31, we look forward to our math carnival for kindergarten through fifth grade taking place during the school day and our SHS Peer Leaders who will be visiting during lunch and recess periods to meet with students in grades 2-5 to discuss goal setting ('New Year, New You').

For students in grades 3-5, our instructional technology staff developers may be pushing into classrooms to expose our students to the online features of computerized testing. Since this online testing format is where we are headed, not only for NYS 3-8 testing, but also for AP exams, ACTs, SATs, Regents, etc., it is our goal for students to become comfortable navigating these technological tools. On Wednesday, January 17, 3-5 students will take part in the NYS Simulation Assessment. The goal of the simulation is for students to gain experience with launching the software, logging into a computer-based test, practicing the testing format, and submitting. The assessment should take approximately 40 minutes and will be completed in classrooms via student Chromebooks. Please note, for this simulation, no identifiable student information will be used or shared.

I have included three articles from the January 2025 edition of *Parents Make the Difference* pertaining to mid-year recommitment, resiliency, and limiting screen time.

A Mid-Year Tune-Up Helps Your Child Recommit to Learning

It's the beginning of a new calendar year—and nearly the halfway point in the school year. Take this opportunity to consider your child's habits and make needed adjustments.

Ask how your child thinks the school year is going. If you set learning goals together at the start of the year, review them now. Is your child making progress? How can your child make the rest of the school year even better?
(OVER)

Dates to Remember in January

Week of January 6:
PTA Read-A-Thon
Virtual Fundraiser

Family Connect Night 13

Parent Workshop - Technology—@ 6:00 p.m.—CA Library 13

RtI Winter Screener 1/13—1/31

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day—school closed 20

PTA Board and Event Chairs Meeting @ 6:30 p.m. 22

Lunar New Year—school closed 29

All District Strings Night @ 7:30 p.m.—SMS 30



Then, help your child make some resolutions. Here are four to consider:

1. Recommit to routines. Has your elementary schooler's bedtime begun to slip? Are mornings more rushed? Is your child's regular study time now not quite so regular? Sleep and study routines make life easier—and help students perform better in school.
2. Spend more time reading. There is no skill that will help your child more in school. And reading ability, like other skills, gets better with practice. Encourage daily reading and let your child read about anything, from sports to favorite movie characters.
3. Take more responsibility for learning. Remind your child that to be successful in school, students need to complete assignments on time, participate in classroom discussions and ask for help when they need it.
4. Have an optimistic mindset. Positive thinking makes it easier to tackle challenges. To foster positivity, help your child manage stress, visualize a successful outcome and learn from mistakes.

Resilience Is Essential For Your Child's Academic Success

It's wonderful for students to be talented and smart, but educators know it's just as important for them to be resilient.

At one time or another, everyone faces a challenging task or a disappointing setback. The key is to remind your child to keep trying. Pushing forward—even when things are tough—is a key to success in school and in life.

To help your child bounce back and keep trying:

- Talk about how persistence has already helped your child. Maybe your child kept trying and finally learned to ride a bike or play chess. What new challenge can your child tackle now?
- Break big goals into small parts. If your child wants to raise a grade, for example, offer support by developing a plan together.
- Offer encouragement. When your child is working on something challenging, say things like: » I know you can do this. » I bet you'll figure it out. » You're making great progress. » You'll get the hang of it. » If it doesn't work that way, try another way.
- Focus on the process. It feels great to go into a test with confidence, knowing you've studied hard. Even better, it feels great to learn! Talk about your child's accomplishments and what makes each so worthwhile.

Reduce Recreational Screen Time by Tracking It and Setting Limits

Researchers have looked at the difference in children's brain activity when reading a book versus consuming screen-based media. The researchers found that brain activity increased while children were reading and decreased while they were viewing screen-based media. Their findings highlight the importance of limiting recreational screen time for healthy brain development.

The first step is to help your child become aware of how much time is spent staring at a screen for fun. Have your child track the time spent watching TV, playing computer games, and scrolling through online content. You and your child may be surprised how quickly those minutes add up.

Does your child spend fewer than two hours a day in front of a screen on non-school activities? Your student is on the right track. More? It's time to set limits.

Studies show that when families set any media rules, children's screen time drops by an average of more than three hours a day. Source: T. Horowitz-Kraus and J.S. Hutton, "Brain connectivity in children is increased by the time they spend reading books and decreased by the length of exposure to screen-based media," *Acta Paediatrica*.

CA Shout-Outs



Welcome to CA's new attendance aide, Ms. Stephanie Dowd, who enjoys the beach, flipping homes, paddle boarding, and taking long walks with her three beautiful daughters. A longtime fan of Sayville town and community, Ms. Dowd is thrilled to be part of the CA family!

As always, feel free to reach out with any questions/concerns.

Sincerely,

Lisa Ihne, Ed.D.
Principal