March 2025

LONDONDERRY LINK

Serving the Londonderry Community for 70 Years

Issue #4

Read Across America

Celebrating a love of reading

Each year during the first week of March, schools across the United States celebrate Read Across America Week. Why March? Theodor Geisel, better known as Dr. Seuss, was born on March 2, 1904. To celebrate this important author in children's literature, Read Across America Day is celebrated on March 2nd each year.

At Londonderry, we celebrate reading all year long. However, we set aside Read Across America Week to celebrate and engage in reading and the power it provides to each of us. The week includes a spirit day each day to celebrate reading. Spirit days for this year include:

March 3rd – Hats Off to Reading
March 4th – Read My Shirt
March 5th – Reading is Better with a Buddy
March 6th – Reading is an Inspiration
March 7th – Reading Brings Color to Our Lives

This year, the Read Across America team added a new celebration for the week – the Masked Reader. Each day, students will get to hear a masked staff member read an excerpt on the announcements. At the end of the week, we will unveil all the staff members and see how well we did!

We hope you consider joining us in the celebration at home. Take time to read or share your favorite children's book with your child(ren).



Read Across America Week 2025 is celebrated March 3rd through March 7th.



Our First Grade students aged overnight! Mrs. Eberhard's students stepped into the future and found themselves at one hundred years old!

Principal's Corner

Updates from Around Londonderry

Spring is in the air! As we turn the calendar to March, we also start to see the turn to warmer weather, greener grass, and brighter skies. At Londonderry Elementary, we also begin to see the calendar fill up with school activities!

In February, Londonderry celebrated the 100th day of school. It is a magical day at school where our youngest learners transform into their "older" selves and classrooms find creative ways to count to 100. As usual, our students did a fabulous job, showing their "age" for the day. Kudos to everyone who celebrating and to all the students on 100 days of growth as a learner!

On February 19th, the school district hosted its annual Preschool Tea. This event brings childcare centers and early education providers from the Lower Dauphin community together to collaborate and support our youngest learners. Participants heard from government partners, learned about district programs, and discussed ways to further our partnerships to support our young Falcons.

In March, we launch into Spring with a number of events, including:

- Read Across America Week (3/3 - 3/7)
- Kindergarten Registration (3/3 – 3/4)
- Trimester 2 Recognition (3/14)
- PTO Bingo (3/14)
- Parent Conferences (3/18 – 3/28)
- PSSA Practice Day (3/31)

We are excited to see what the rest of the year brings at Londonderry. I hope you all are able to join us for our celebrations to come as we enter the last third of the school year!

Dr. Wastler

Grade Level Updates

What's going on in our classrooms?

Londonderry teachers provide a window into the classroom, sharing highlights from the month, as well as upcoming events.

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New Staff Members

Who's new at Londonderry?

We have some new faces at Londonderry! Get to know them in this section of our newsletter.

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PSSA Practice Day

Getting ready for May

PSSAs are changing beginning in 2026, and Lower Dauphin is getting a head start. Learn how we are planning to support this transition at Londonderry.

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Mrs. Bastian & Mrs. Schmidt

Second Grade

Learning all about Mexico and welcoming new friends

Second grade has been learning about the country of Mexico. We have taken a virtual field trip to compare the similarities and differences in Mexico City to our communities. We observed the architecture, pyramids, and landscape that was unique to Mexico. We also have had opportunities to learn some Spanish words and hear about customs celebrated in Mexico through literature. Rey Azteca, a restaurant that serves Mexican cuisine in Palmyra, donated homemade corn chips and two different types of salsa for all the children to enjoy. We wrote thank you letters to Rey Azteca sharing our thoughts and opinions about their salsa and chips. This was a perfect opportunity to practice authentic opinion writing which we have been working hard on in our classrooms. It may come as a surprise to you, but many second graders enjoyed the spicy salsa.

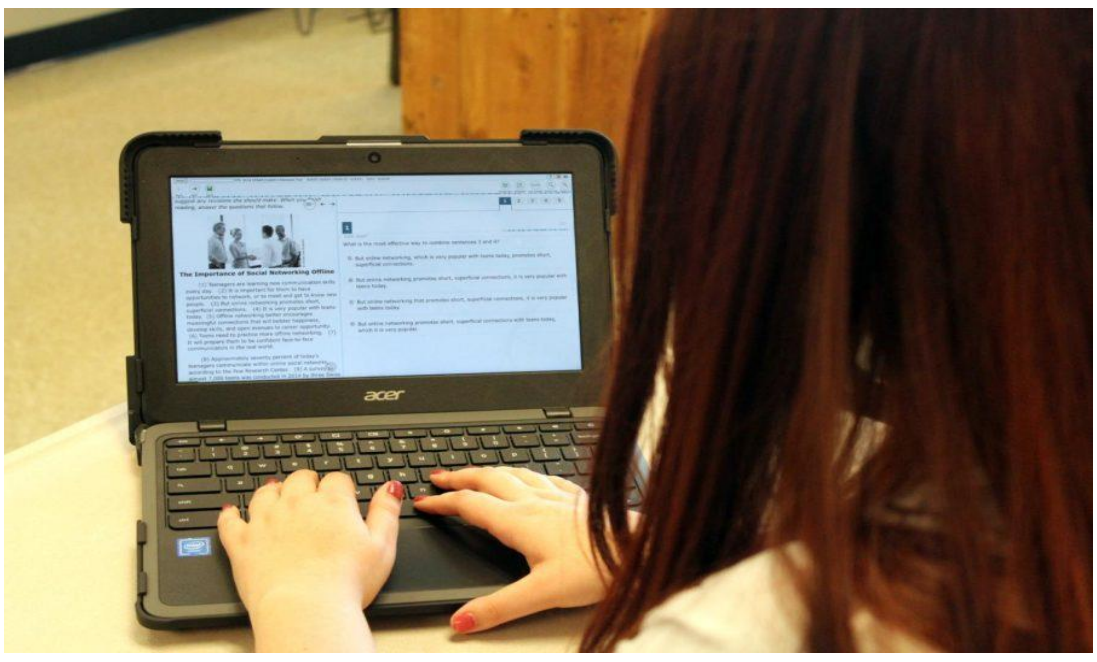
We also listened to mariachi music which comes from traditional Mexican folk songs that were written hundreds of years ago. We learned that violins, guitars and trumpets are common instruments used in mariachi music. We concluded our study of Mexico by enjoying a pinata filled with a variety of sweet treats.

We also welcomed two college students studying to be teachers into our classrooms in February. Miss Good joins us from Penn State Harrisburg two days a week and Miss Dowell joins one morning a week from Elizabethtown College. They are both excited to learn and eager to participate in the busyness of 2nd grade.

Second Grade enjoys a salsa snack!







Students complete online testing using a digital platform on their devices. (Copyright: Brooke Miller)

Dr. Wastler

PSSA Practice Day

Preparing for a Digital Transition

Beginning in the 2025-26 school year, Pennsylvania is moving all state assessments from paper-pencil to online testing. This format includes the use of a larger variety of question types to provide a more robust assessment of student learning.

To prepare for the statewide transition next year, all Lower Dauphin schools are moving to online testing during the current school year. On March 31st, all Lower Dauphin elementary schools will participate in a practice test day. This allows us to ensure all technology is ready for PSSAs and that all necessary supports are in place. Additionally, this provides students an opportunity to see what online testing looks like for the PSSAs. The practice test does not record any data; it just offers students the chance to navigate the online testing program.

Mrs. Kratz & Mrs. Weary

Third Grade

New learning and getting concert ready

3rd grade has begun learning about geometry in math, focusing on perimeter, area, and measurement and data. Students have also been practicing their multiplication and division facts and home and completing timings each morning at school. Students sign their name on our "Mastery Posters" in the hallway to celebrate when they have mastered a fact!

We are also preparing for the Spring concert by practicing our recorders at home and in music class with Mr. Dobson.

In writing, we are working together on a practice prompt for narrative writing, then independently completing the district narrative writing prompt the 2nd week of March.

As we prepare for spring parent-teacher conferences, we will have students reflect on their "glows" and "grows" from the beginning of the school year to now and evaluate/celebrate how we have made progress toward our goals.

Lastly, we were excited to welcome a new student in Mrs. Weary's class in February!

Mrs. Haver & Mrs. Wise

Kindergarten

Celebrating our growth



Picture Caption: To make your document look professionally produced, Word provides header, footer, cover page, and text box designs that complement each other.

Kindergarten was busy in the month of February! We had so many things to celebrate! We learned about the tradition of Groundhog's Day from Mrs. Kolaric, who shared pictures and stories from the time she visited Punxsutawney, PA. We practiced making predictions for Super Bowl Sunday (our predictions were correct!).

We celebrated the 100th day of school by counting to 100, doing 100 exercises, rolling to 100, building the number 100 and trying to write our name as many times as we could in 100 seconds! We were so excited to get to day 100 that we kept the fun going and celebrated the 101st day of school by searching for 101 hidden dalmatians around the school.

We celebrated Valentine's day by talking and writing about love and kindness we show others.

We ended February by participating in our very first Kid's Heart Challenge and wrapping up our Farm Unit in CKLA.

In March, we will be learning about consonant clusters, continuing adding and subtracting in math, and learning all about the culture of Germany.

Learning Support Team

World Down Syndrome Day

March 21st

On March 21, World Down Syndrome Day is observed. Down syndrome affects 1 in 1,100 births worldwide. This means that each year approximately 3,000-5,000 children are born with this chromosome disorder.

Learn more about World Down Syndrome Day using the following link: https://www.un.org/en/observances/down-syndrome-day





Dr. Wastler

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Sharing your child's growth during the school year

The second trimester comes to a close on March 5th. With the end of the trimester, report cards are scheduled to be sent home on Friday, March 14th.

Londonderry begins hosting our second parent-teacher conferences of the 2024-25 school year on Tuesday, March 18th. Our goal is to hold a parent conference for every student in our building. Since the last conference, teachers have learned a great deal about your child and these conferences provide a great opportunity to discuss your child's growth as a learner.

To sign up for a conference, please visit the link below:

https://www.ptcfast.com/schools/LondonderrySP25

If you are unable to locate a time for your child's teacher that works for you, please contact them directly to discuss additional options. Again, our goal is a conference with every parent so we can update you on the progress your child is making in school!

Mrs. Eberhard & Mrs. Gallick

First Grade

Celebrating our growth

First Grade is so excited to begin designing their own Leprechaun Traps to catch the sneaky Leprechaun. Students will be writing a "How-To" piece to explain how they made their own trap. We will begin to introduce measuring and telling time to the hour and half hour in Math. We will practice finding proof in texts to answer related comprehension questions.

Mrs. Gearhart

School Counseling

Kindergarten Registration

Kindergarten Registration for 2025-26 is being held on March 3 & 4. Please call the school office if you have an eligible child and have not received any information about registration.

Mrs. Brown

Art

Londonderry Art Show

In art, we have been working hard to finish up projects for the art show. This year, the Londonderry Art Show will be held on Wednesday, April 9th from 6-7:30pm, which is a date change from what is on the district calendar.

Dr. Wastler

New Staff

Welcome to Londonderry

This month we welcomed two new staff members. **Mary Place** is the new nurse for our school. You can reach her at mplace@ldsd.org. **Emily Parrish** is the new teacher in our Primary Autism Support Classroom.

PTO Corner

Supporting each and every student

A reminder that the Marianna's fundraiser pick up is scheduled for Monday, March 10th, from 4:00PM to 5:30PM. Thank you to everyone who participated in the fundraiser!

The PTO meeting for March is scheduled for **Monday, March 3rd, at 6:00PM**. The meeting will be held in Room 500 at the school. This month we are discussing May Fair preparations, as well as other business items on the agenda.

Upcoming events for the PTO include:

- PTO Bingo (March 14th)
- Muffins with Mom (May 2nd)
- May Fair (May 3rd)

Our meeting for April is scheduled for Monday, April 7th. We hope you consider joining us as we continue planning and supporting spring events for the students!

Leader in Me Minute

Helping our students to grow as leaders

Starting in the Fall of 2025, Lower Dauphin is implementing *Leader in Me* at all schools within the district. *Leader in Me* is based on Dr. Stephen Covey's famous book, The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People. As we work this year to prepare for implementation, we are spending time reflecting on the principles that guide *Leader in Me*. A core principle is *Leader in Me* is not a program, it is a culture within the school.

For this month, I want to share a little bit about habits. Dr. Covey defines habits as "the intersection of knowledge, skill, and desire" (2020, p. 47). In other words, it is the *what to and why to do* (knowledge), the *how to do* (skill), and the *want to do* (desire). The key to making these principles effective is to internalize them so they become consistent patterns in our behavior – habits. For our students, this means helping them to develop healthy and effective habits to assist them in becoming effective leaders in their school, on their athletic teams, within their artistic ensembles, and in their community. *Leader in Me* helps us to make that happen by using a common language, creating a positive environment, and empowering our students to share leadership in the building.

To help keep you informed, I will be sharing some aspects of *Leader in Me* in future newsletters. My hope is that as we grow together, we continue to support leadership in each of the students at Londonderry Elementary School. Over the next few months, I plan on sharing more information on the seven habits.

School Calendar

March 2025

Date	Cycle Day	Activities
3/3	4	Read Across America PTO Meeting (6PM)
3/4	5	Read Across America Good News Club
3/5	6	Read Across America
3/6	1	Read Across America
3/7	2	Read Across America **2 Hr. Early Dismissal**
3/10	3	LDSD Board Meeting (7PM – DAC)
3/11	4	---
3/12	5	---
3/13	6	---
3/14	1	Trimester 2 Ceremony Report Cards Home PTO Bingo
3/17	---	SCHOOL CLOSED
3/18	2	Parent Conferences Girls on the Run Good News Club
3/19	3	Parent Conferences
3/20	4	Parent Conferences
3/21	5	Parent Conferences
3/24	6	Parent Conferences
3/25	1	Parent Conferences Falcon Families Girls on the Run Good News Club
3/26	2	Parent Conferences
3/27	3	Parent Conferences
3/28	4	Parent Conferences
3/31	5	PSSA Practice Day

Future Dates

April 2nd	Autism Acceptance Day
April 7th – 11th	PTO Book Fair
April 9th	Book Fair Night
	Londonderry Art Show
April 10th	Falcon Families
April 16th – 21st	SCHOOL CLOSED
April 22nd – 24th	PSSA: ELA
April 28th – 29th	PSSA: Math
April 30th/May 1st	PSSA: Science (Gr. 5)
May 2nd	Muffins with Mom
	2 Hr. Early Dismissal
May 3rd	May Fair
May 5th – 10th	Camp Hebron (Gr. 5)
May 14th	Spring Concert (1:30)
	Spring Concert (6:30)
May 20th	SCHOOL CLOSED (In-Service Day)