



# Cherry Avenue Buzz

## Principal's Message

Dear Cherry Avenue Families:

Welcome back and happy 2026! May 2026 be filled with joy, peace, good health, and lots of fun! We hope you had a wonderful Hanukkah and Christmas and enjoyed winter recess.

December was a busy month. We enjoyed SHS Tour de Jazz and spirit week. We also thank all of our generous families for supporting the Giving Tree and making the holidays brighter for those in need.

The RtI Winter Screener for students in K-5 will take place from January 12 through January 30.

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 5<sup>th</sup> precinct. We are grateful for all they do for us and for our strong partnership.

On January 23, 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 hold the Spelling Bee for a second year in a row for the students of Cherry Avenue and wish all the participants good luck!

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 28, 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. Practice 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 one article from the January 2026 edition of *Parents Make the Difference* pertaining to family meeting time.

January 2026

### Dates to Remember in January

- School reopens 5
- Family Connect Night And PTA fundraiser Taco Tuesday @ Gringos 13
- iReady screener 1/12-1/30
- BoE meeting @ 7:30 p.m.—SMS 15
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day—school closed 19
- Back-to Basics "homework" 20
- PTA meeting @ 7:00 p.m. 22
- PTA Pizza Kit sale 1/26-1/30
- All District Strings Night @ 7:30 p.m.—SMS 28
- An Evening @ Cherry & Family Connect Night 29



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## Regular Family Meetings Build Skills and Make Life a Bit Easier

Weekly family meetings home and school? are a wonderful way to help elementary schoolers learn essential skills like cooperation, problem-solving and leadership. They also make life at home run more smoothly.

Try these strategies for productive family meetings:

- Establish a schedule. Meet at the same time every week. Keep meetings short—about fifteen minutes.
- Set ground rules. No devices or other distractions.
- Plan an agenda. During the week, let family members jot down issues they'd like to address.
- Encourage participation. Give each family member a chance to talk uninterrupted.
- Brainstorm solutions for concerns raised during the meeting.
- Discuss expectations for the upcoming week and review goals.
- Coordinate schedules. Review your family calendar and discuss who is doing what this week.
- End with a team-building activity. Play a quick game, or make up a story or sing a song.

After a few meetings, let your child take a turn leading.

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### CA Shout-Outs

Ms. Jessica O'Rourke grew up in Sayville and has two sons. She has been teaching at Sayville since 1997, where she has returned to Cherry Avenue this past year teaching UPK. She loves golfing, the beach, gardening, and enjoys a close friendship with Ms. Nancy, our security guard. Welcome back, Ms. O'Rourke!



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

Sincerely,

Lisa Ihne, Ed.D.  
Principal