



LADSBS News...



Dr. D'Aversa & Ms. Cucinello would like to share...

Important February Dates:

- 2 Groundhog Day
- 5 Rohan Murphy Assembly, all grades
- 9 Journey into Native American Territory Program, Grade 4
- 9-13 Kindness Spirit Week, LADSBS
- 12 Grade 4 Math Escape Room, 6:00 p.m. LADSBS
- 13 P.S. I Love You Day (Wear Purple)
- 16-20 Mid-Winter Recess Schools Closed
- 24 Anti-Bullying & Internet Safety Assemblies, all grades
- 25 Board of Ed Meeting, 8:00 p.m., MPHS
- 27 MPHS Athletes Helping Athletes Program, Grade 5

We've had a wonderful start to the new year and are entering February with a continued focus on supporting students' academic, social, and emotional growth. Academically, we anticipate meaningful progress between now and the end of the school year. Students have already been introduced to much of the grade-level curriculum, and instruction is now centered on strengthening and expanding upon previously taught concepts.

Socially and emotionally, our character education programs are well underway. Throughout February, we will highlight the character trait of Integrity, helping students understand the importance of honesty and strong moral principles. Our ongoing kindness theme reinforces how kindness and respect contribute to academic success. Classroom discussions emphasize valuing others' thoughts, opinions, and ideas, and our teachers have thoughtfully established systems that promote supportive, inclusive, and caring classroom environments.

As we started out the new year, we launched the Panther Page Challenge with an exciting presentation led by Dr. D'Aversa, Ms. Ely, and the infamous Miller Place Panther! The challenge will continue throughout February, with the winning grade earning a special prize that students will vote on.

In celebration of kindness, LADSBS will observe Kindness Spirit Week from February 9th–13th. Students are encouraged to dress according to the daily themes. We are looking forward to an exciting winter season filled with engaging and enjoyable activities for our students.

Please note that the second trimester will conclude shortly. If you have any concerns, we encourage you to reach out to your child's teacher. When we work together, our students benefit the most.

With winter weather upon us, please be sure we have your child's alternate afternoon dismissal plan on file in the event of an early school closure. If plans change on a particular day, kindly send a note with your child. Additionally, please remember that morning and aftercare services will be closed if school is closed, delayed, or dismissed early due to inclement weather.

Thank you for your continued partnership and support. Together, we can ensure a successful and enriching experience for every child.



Fifth Grade Flash . . .

Happy New Year! We were excited to welcome our fifth grade students back for the 2026 school year! We hope everyone enjoyed some extra time with family and loved ones. To begin the new year, the fifth grade classes talked about personal goals they could set for themselves and created resolutions to help them reach those goals. Some classes learned about how different cultures around the world celebrate the New Year through compare and contrast, constructive response, and even a New Years Around the World essay!



In Math, we continue to explore and build upon our love and knowledge of fractions using addition and subtraction. In Module 4 we will continue using our knowledge of fractions and learn how to multiply fractions and decimal fractions. We will also begin to work with fraction division. In ELA, we completed our novel study, *Esperanza Rising*, which the students really enjoyed. Up next, we will be reading *Hatchet*! In the meantime, classes have returned to practicing their reading skills with a variety of texts using *HMH Into Reading*. In Science, the fifth grade is investigating Earth's Systems by developing and using system models to explore interactions among Earth's atmosphere, biosphere, geosphere, and hydrosphere. In Social Studies, we are discovering the early explorers and the Columbian Exchange.



We would like to thank the Miller Place High School Jazz Group and Cello Ensemble for visiting our fifth grade students for an in-school performance last month. Our LADSBS musicians were so inspired and look forward to continuing their musical journeys into high school. Our fifth graders will have another visit with MPHS students later this month as we welcome back our second Athletes Helping Athletes visit on February 27th. Thank you for being such wonderful role models!

Third Grade Thoughts . . .



We're kicking off 2026 with a great start! Our third graders have been exploring Module 3 in Math. In this module, students extend their understanding of multiplication and division with units of 0, 1, 6, 7, 8, and 9 by applying conceptual understanding and using the commutative, distributive, and associative properties. Students will also multiply with two-digit multiples of 10 and solve one- and two-step word problems involving all four operations. As always, we encourage students to continue practicing their multiplication facts at home.

In ELA, students were introduced to Module 3, "Let Freedom Ring," which includes a variety of texts, focusing on important U.S. documents and symbols. Students are also developing key reading skills such as identifying central ideas, analyzing media techniques, summarizing, retelling, and sequencing.

In Social Studies, we are starting our new unit, "Columbia," where students will learn more about the country's history, culture, art, music, and much more. We are wrapping up our science unit, "Investigating Weather and Climate," where students enjoyed learning about different forms of weather, patterns, and even severe weather that impacts parts of the country. Maybe students will even see a blizzard to help make a real-world connection to our unit!

As the school year continues, our third graders are working hard, and we couldn't be more proud of them. We are looking forward to our field trip next month to Port Jeff Bowl, so if you have not yet registered please sign up by February 23rd on MySchool Bucks—[Grade 3 Field Trip Port Jeff Bowl](#). Keep up the great work!

Fourth Grade Focus. . .



Happy February! This short and sweet month is bursting with fun, learning, and exciting events for our fourth graders. All month long, our teachers will be spreading the message of kindness. We will talk about what kindness looks like, why it matters, and how students can show it every day. Fourth graders will be challenged to complete acts of kindness, and we cannot wait to hear their heartwarming stories. We are also excited to welcome motivational speaker, Rohan Murphy, for an assembly early in the month. Get ready for Kindness Spirit Week, our thrilling Fourth Grade Escape Room, and the ongoing Panther Page Challenge. Which grade will read the most pages? The winner will be revealed in March!

In math, students will explore the world of geometry. In ELA, we will continue sharpening reading strategies while enjoying new stories. In writing, we will be crafting strong persuasive essays and starting research for biographies. Science will take us on a fun filled adventure with *Powering Thru the Fair* as we explore energy in exciting ways. This month, students will enjoy an in school Social Studies field trip where they will learn about Native American culture, explore artifacts, play traditional games, and even create pottery!

Escape Night

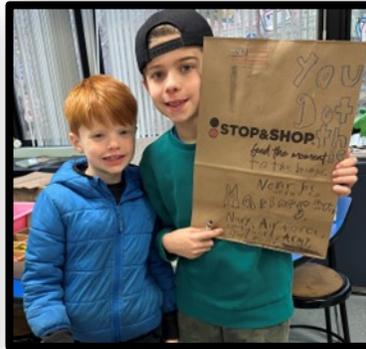
On Thursday, February 12th, from 6:00-7:30 p.m, the LADSBS School Improvement Team will be hosting an Escape Room for our *fourth grade students only*. This evening will begin with a building-wide scavenger hunt before students are given the opportunity to “escape” from the classroom they are assigned. If you have not already done so, it’s not too late to sign up below or reach out to your child’s classroom teacher:

[Grade 4 Math Escape Room Family Event Registration.](#)

You won’t be able to “escape” the fun during this event, we hope to see you there!

Club Corner . . .

Our morning clubs are well underway! We have so many exciting club offerings this year, and students are having a wonderful time discovering new interests and hobbies. Check out some of the fun morning activities taking place here at LADSBS!



Our Service Club’s first project was decorating paper shopping bags from Stop & Shop in Miller Place with positive and kind messages. Students decorated over 60 bags to be used by customers! Our club members really enjoyed giving back to our community and look forward to continuing acts of service.



Kindness Corner . . .

On January 16th, our school celebrated “Peace and Kindness Day” with a heartwarming “Blizzard of Kindness.” Students showed unity by wearing the color **blue**, and compassion by writing kind acts and good deeds on snowflakes, which were displayed on classroom doors for a school-wide decorating contest. Judges evaluated each door in a variety of categories, and winning teams proudly received certificates for their classrooms. The event was a wonderful reminder of the power of kindness and community!



Congratulations to our January Kindness Coupon winners:

*Gabriella Buccieri, Brayden Berner, Lincoln Baez
Conor Riddle, Kyleigh Peterson, Scarlett Dancause*

Thank you all for keeping up the kindness!



Our Kindness initiatives will be continuing through the month of February! We will be celebrating with a **Kindness Spirit Week** beginning on Monday, February 9th, ending with our district-wide participation in P.S. I Love You Day on Friday, February 13th. In recognition of P.S. I Love You, students and faculty are encouraged to wear the color **Purple**, showing support and encouragement to spread love to the world, others, and most importantly yourself.

Kindness Week

Monday, February 9th

“Kindness Hero Day” Dress up as your favorite superhero

Tuesday, February 10th

“Team Up Tuesday” Wear your favorite team jersey

Wednesday, February 11th

“Unity Color Day” Wear your grade level’s color:
Grade 3: **Red** Grade 4: **Blue** Grade 5: **White**

Thursday, February 12th

“Rest and Be Kind” Wear your pajamas or comfy clothes

Friday, February 13th

“P.S. I Love You Day” Wear purple to show we are united as one



Marvelous Math . . .

Things have been busy in the math classrooms this winter! Our focus for all grades has been to really nail down our multiplication facts. Being fluent with multiplication is critical for success in the classroom. As the units become more challenging, we want our students to feel confident in their facts to help them with problem solving.

Our third graders have mastered telling time and have moved on to explore how division and multiplication are related. Building on that foundation, our fourth graders have taken multiplication to the next level by using various strategies to multiply multi-digit numbers. They are also leaning on their multiplication facts to help them as they learn long division. Our fifth graders are well into their unit on fractions. We have used models to create equivalent fractions, and learned how to rename fractions with common denominators so that we can add and subtract. Our next unit will focus on multiplying and dividing fractions. As always, building number sense and confidence is our number one priority.

We are continuing to help our students build strong math foundational skills so that they are ready to take on their classroom curriculum. Please keep encouraging the kids to practice multiplication facts at home using Reflex math, flashcards, or any other game that will encourage learning. Thank you for being a partner in your child's success!

School Spirit . . .

We are excited to begin our reading initiative, the Panther Page Challenge, to gear us up for March Book Madness! This year, students will work as a grade level to try to read the most pages. During our kick-off assembly, students had a surprise visit from the infamous Miller Place Panther who cheered on our students to begin their reading journey. Throughout the challenge, students will track their reading progress, encourage one another, and build a strong sense of teamwork as they develop a love of reading.



Thank you to the School Improvement Team for continuing our “ROAR” initiative where students from each grade were selected for the “Optimism Award”. We can’t wait to see their enthusiasm grow as they turn pages, reach new milestones, and celebrate their success together.



Last month, during all lunch periods, students had the pleasure of watching Guest Chef Tony in action! His exciting appearance brought new meals to life as students enjoyed seeing him prepare chicken wings, pasta salad, and everyone’s favorite—tater tots!



STEAM Night...

Laddie A. Decker Sound Beach School's STEAM Night was held on January 7th and welcomed over 200 students for an engaging evening of exploration and learning. Students participated in a wide range of hands-on STEAM activities, including Egg Drops, Crocheting, Indi Cars, Doodlebots, Zip Lines, Ozobots, and more, all facilitated by our dedicated LADSBS faculty.

The Expo Center showcased outstanding contributions from One River Art School, Mt. Sinai Nature Center, New York Marine Rescue, The Long Island Explorium, and our local public libraries. Miller Place organizations, including Robotics, Friends of the Arts, and the PTA, were also well represented throughout the evening. The event created an inspiring environment where students could experience the excitement and creativity of STEAM learning firsthand.



Also, special thanks to Mr. Evan Curran, Curriculum Specialist for Elementary Education, for organizing the event as well as all of the students and their families for joining us in sharing the magic and wonder of how Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics impact our everyday lives!

Music Musings . . .

We would like to once again extend our sincere appreciation to the Miller Place High School students who visited our fifth graders for an in-person concert last month. These talented ensembles served as inspiring role models for our aspiring LADSBS musicians, and we hope all of our students continue to share their love of music with those around them.



General Music

In both fourth and fifth grade, we will be continuing our unit on singing and solfege (do-re-mi-..) reading as well as continuing to strengthen our abilities to read rhythms and understand musical expression. The students have become stronger sight readers in the few weeks we have been working on these skills, and it is benefitting their performance abilities! Over the course of this month, we will integrate our solfege and sight reading skills into culminating projects to demonstrate our musicianship.



Fifth Grade Chorus & Orchestra

Both ensembles are starting to make great progress in their new songs for the Spring Concert! We have been strengthening our rhythmic and note reading abilities since the new year and it is wonderful to already see the growth in their playing and singing. Last month, we had two students participate in the LISFA Festival and they performed in a beautiful concert. Congratulations to Korben Manfre (violin) and Patrick O'Callaghan (viola) on a wonderful performance!

Fourth Grade Beginner Strings

Fourth Grade Strings are bowing and putting it all together! We have been working on a new song across fourth grade that uses all of the notes they have learned so far and have been adding bowing too. This month, we will begin working on songs for their Beginner Orchestra Recital on April 14th. More information regarding the recital will be coming shortly. With the cold weather, please make sure to keep instruments in a room temperature location away from direct heat and out of cold cars.



Fourth & Fifth Grade Band

The Fourth Grade Band students are learning how to play together as a group, focusing on listening to one another and blending as a group. We are in the process of choosing recital songs and having a blast looking at all the different options. Fifth Grade Band students are building on their skills by working on more complex music and learning advanced concepts like dynamics, articulation, and intonation. Also, we would like to congratulate Charlotte Ferrara and Korben Manfre on their acceptance into SCMEA. Everyone's hard work is paying off!



Art-I-Facts. . .

Our third graders are diving into realism with "donut drawings" so detailed they might make you hungry! They're learning how shading, highlights, and texture can turn a simple circle into a sweet treat that looks almost real.

Fourth grade artists are putting their own creative spin on *The Great Wave*, exploring bold lines, dynamic movement, and imaginative color choices while reimagining this famous masterpiece in their own unique styles.

Fifth graders are kicking off their fan-favorite "Is It Clay?" unit, where they'll be sculpting hyper-realistic food that makes viewers stop and ask, "Wait... is that real?" This project pushes patience, precision, and creativity to the next level—and it's always a highlight of the year.

Board of Education

Lisa Reitan, President
Bryan Makarius, Vice President
John Galligan, Trustee
Jennifer Keller, Trustee
Andrea Spaniolas, Trustee

Don't Forget . . .

School will be closed :
February 16th—20th Mid-Winter Recess

Citizenship...We help others!

District Office Administration

Seth A. Lipshie, Superintendent of Schools
Susan G. Craddock, Assistant Superintendent
Colleen V. Card, School Business Official
Christopher J. Herrschaft, Director of Human Resources
**Ron Petrie, Administrator for Physical Education, Health,
Athletics and Intramurals**
Kurt Roth, Administrator for Instruction and Data Reporting
Barbara A. Weir, Director of Technology
Wayne M. Casey, Director of Facilities
Jeremy Koch, Administrator for Pupil Personnel Services

Helpful Hints . . .

Kindergarten Registration:

Children who will be five years old on or before December 1st, 2026 are eligible to enter Kindergarten in September 2026. Registration will be held at **District Office** from March 2nd through March 20th ***by appointment only!*** To schedule an appointment, please visit the District Information—Registration section of the district website to register through the [appointment link](#). Please be sure to bring all the requested documentation and completed forms to your appointment. If you know of a neighbor or friend residing in the Miller Place School District who has a child who is eligible for kindergarten in the fall, please share this information and feel free to contact either District Office or AMPS with any questions.

Before & After Care Program: Did you know that SCOPE Educational Services offers before and after school programs at both AMPS and LADSBS? For more information, you can visit their website at www.scopeonline.com.



“The sum of us is greater
than all our parts.”
Maya Angelou

