



THE PAW PRINT CUB EDITION

February 2026

Inaugural Edition

Meet THE Team

MORE on PAGE 2.



This year, our school is starting its very first elementary school newspaper! A group of students are working together to share school news, stories, jokes, and drawings with everyone. We are all very excited to create a paper just for elementary students, written by kids like us. We can't wait to interview teachers, write about school events, and share fun facts. The members of the newspaper want to say a big thank you to our principal, Mr. Tabbitas, for giving us this wonderful opportunity. We also want to thank Mrs. Wilson and Miss Duffy for being our faculty advisors and editors and for helping us do our best work. We are proud to start something new for our school!

Meet the Team



Hi my name is Ava Abu Laban. I'm in the third grade. My favorite food is falafel sandwiches and my favorite hobby is drawing, soccer, football and basketball. My favorite thing about Petrides is how learning becomes fun! My favorite animal is a dog. Lastly, my favorite colors are purple and blue.

Hi! My name is Julianna Buckheit, and I am in fourth grade. I have four siblings and enjoy making rubber band bracelets. My favorite color is lavender, and my favorite food is pizza with rising crust. I love swimming—especially the butterfly stroke. My favorite thing about Petrides is the orchestra because I love the sound of the violin. My favorite book is *Dork Diaries* because it's so funny!



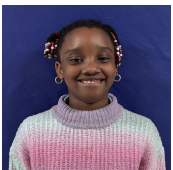
Hi! My name is Yasmin Buschmann and I am in the Elementary Newspaper Club. I am in Fourth Grade, and my favorite color is blue. My favorite food is latkes. I have a cat, and one of my favorite things to do is crochet. My favorite thing about Petrides is the teachers that are here.

Hello! My name is Winona Christensen, and I am in 4th grade. I have been at this school for one year. I enjoy spending time with my friends, writing scary stories, swimming, and playing games with my sisters. I like reading the *Dork Diaries* series and newspaper comics, and my favorite game is *Animal Crossing: New Horizons*. My favorite foods are my grandma's spaghetti and meatballs, stew, corn and roast beef, and the dill cucumbers my mom and I make.



Hi! My name is Abigail De Los Angeles and I'm in 3rd grade. My favorite food is pasta and my favorite hobby is gymnastics. I love to talk to my friends. My favorite thing to do at Petrides is learn new things.

Hi! I'm Seth Destajo. I am a student and am currently in 3rd grade! Something I like about MJPS is that the lunch lady and the staff members make a good hot lunch. My favorite food is bacon egg and cheese sandwich that my mom makes and my favorite drink is coca cola. And my favorite hobbies are doing math division problems and I like to goof around with my brother!



My name is Tirenoluwa Kujun. I'm in grade 3. My favorite food is noodles and my favorite hobbies are writing, art, and drawing. My favorite thing about Petrides is it is special. My favorite subject is writing because it is fun and you make your own ideas like what I am doing right now! My favorite color is... I like all the colors. I like oranges as one of my favorite fruits. These are some things about me.

Hi! My name is Elaysia Melendez and I am in the 421 family! I enjoy, writing, reading, drawing, and coloring!! have a big sister named Egypt who also enjoys drawing like I do! My favorite subject is GYM because it is so active and cool! Not only gym but new newspaper club is my second favorite subject. My favorite food is salmon patties!! I love my new club and can't wait to start getting jobs and writing about cool and awesome topics, taking pictures, drawing, and interviewing with Ms. Wilson and Ms. Duffy!



I am Leonardo Mezzacappa and I am 9 years old. My favorite food is fish sticks. I like swimming, running, fishing and many more awesome things! I like helping others and cheering people up. My favorite thing about Petrides is that my parents went here too. My favorite subject is science but I also like writing. A fun fact about me is that I was an only child until October 20, 2025 when I became a big brother.

Hi my name is Alianna Mora! I'm in the third grade. My favorite food is sweet potato casserole and my favorite drink is Sunny D. My favorite hobbies are playing soccer and drawing. My favorite colors are baby blue and light pink. My favorite things about Petrides are the newspaper club and PAL because they are so fun. My favorite book is My Hero Academia.



Hi! My name is Ashlynn Olah. I love gymnastics and i really love watching the sunset. I'm in 4th grade in Miss Duffy's and Mrs. Erickson's class. I love writing stories and my favorite food is tacos. I also really like listening to music. my favorite thing about Petrides is learning new things everyday! That is some stuff about me and I hope you have a good day!

Hi! My name is Tiwatope Kuju and I am in 4th grade at Petrides. My favorite subjects are Science and Math. My favorite food is noodles with spice; while my favorite hobbies are drawing and playing with my sisters. My favorite thing about Petrides is that everyone I know at Petrides treats me nicely.



Hi! My name is Mazen Sallam and I am in 3rd grade. I am Egyptian. My favorite food is pizza. My favorite colors are blue and green. My favorite book is Diary of a Wimpy Kid. Soccer is my favorite sport. My favorite thing about Petrides is art and gym class. My hobby is roller-blading.

Hi! My name is Daniel Selby and I'm in 3rd grade. I have been a student at Petrides for 4 years. I like to play soccer. I play for the Petrides soccer team. I have 2 dogs; one is named Dora and the other is Max. I also have 2 cats, one is Bill and the other is Ted. I have seven siblings. Five of my siblings are spread out all throughout the world. Two of my siblings live with me.



Hi! My name is Elsa Wang! I'm in Third Grade. My favorite food is steak and my favorite drink is Fever Tree in the flavor yuzu lime. My favorite color is pink and I like to draw. My favorite thing about Petrides is field trips because they are so fun! My favorite book series is Diary of a Wimpy Kid. My favorite book from the series is Party Pooper

Hello, my name is Haven Weah and I started Petrides at the beginning of the school year! I enjoy playing with my family, and I especially like having parties with friends. I have had four dogs in my life, and my parents just decided to get a new dog. My new dog's name will be Mary or Maxwell. My favorite foods are pasta, pizza, hamburgers and I like to drink tea, Pepsi, coke and water. And I love to cook and bake!



Hi! My name is Lithuli Wijenayakage and I'm in Fourth Grade. I have three siblings and I'm turning ten this year. My favorite color is baby blue. My favorite food is taquitos and my favorite hobby is to jump rope. My favorite animal is parakeets. One thing I love about Petrides is that they have after-school programs for kids that are skilled and a library to pick books from to take home.

Hi! My name is Miss Duffy and I have been a teacher at Petrides for 7 years. I love teaching students how use creativity in their writing. My favorite thing about Petrides is the Fourth Grade Family! I love to read and go for walks when the weather is nice. My favorite food is my mom's meatballs!



Hi! I'm Mrs. Wilson and I have been the librarian at Petrides for 26 years. I enjoy sharing my love of reading with my students. I also enjoy crocheting and going to Disney. I have a dog named Atlas and a cat named Jon Snow My favorite color is purple and my favorite food is sushi.

TEACHER SPOTLIGHT

By: Julianna Buckheit, Tirenoluwa Kuju,
and Ashlynn Olah

The Teacher Spotlight this month was Ms. Ponzi. We asked her interesting questions about what she does at Petrides and her outside life. In the following paragraphs we will tell you what we learned about Ms.



Ponzi from our interview. Can you guess what she would have been if she wasn't a teacher? Read until the end to find out!

We asked Ms. Ponzi about her job here at Petrides. She said that as a teacher she taught the 5th, 6th, and 7th grade. Ms. Ponzi's favorite grade that she taught was 7th grade. Did you know that Ms. Ponzi has been a part of Panther Nation since 1996? Ms. Ponzi first came to Petrides as a student in the sixth grade.

We also asked Ms. Ponzi about her outside life. Did you know that Ms. Ponzi was a baker before she was a teacher? Did you also know that if she was not a teacher she would be a travel agent? Another interesting fact we learned is that Ms. Ponzi played basketball her whole life and is very competitive!

These are the interesting facts we learned about Ms. Ponzi. We are really grateful we got to interview her. Make sure you keep on reading the Paw Print Cub Edition to learn more about our staff in the next teacher spotlight!

THE AMAZING OCTOPUS

By: Alianna Mora

Octopuses are amazing creatures and they also have a lot of talents! Octopuses are masters of disguise. That means they are really good at hiding! They can also regrow their limbs. They do that so they can protect themselves. They also only live to 20 years old.



Believe it or not, there are more than 300 species of octopuses! Octopuses mostly eat small fish, clams, crabs, and snails. Another fun fact is that each one of their arms has a mind of its own, which means the octopuses brain doesn't actually control the arms. They also are one of the smartest animals in the world and they have been around for over 300 YEARS! Next time you see an octopus I hope you remember how amazing they are!

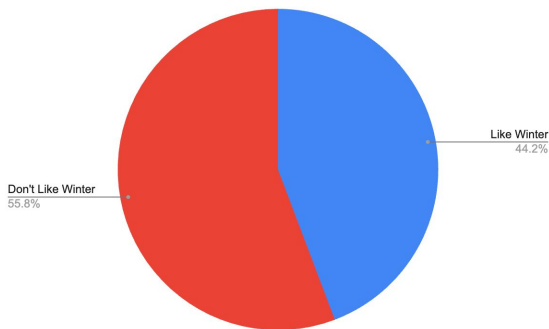
WHAT'S WITH THIS WEATHER?

By: Haven Weah

Photo by: Ava Abulaban

Hello Panther Nation. Our names are Ava and Haven and we are this month's weather reporters and let's just say it's been very cold here in New York. Most days the past month we were at or below freezing temperatures. On Saturday, January 24, the morning temperature was 10 degrees but with the wind it felt more like 8 degrees **below zero!** That's like the weather in Antarctica!

We were interested in knowing how people felt about the cold. We asked 52 people at Petrides if they liked or disliked winter and this is what they said. Twenty-nine (29) adults and students at Petrides said they **did not like** the winter weather and 23 adults and students said they do like the winter weather.



In our opinion, winter is fun because of the snow but when the snow doesn't go away, it's hard for people to park, walk their dog, and do other outdoor activities.

That is all for this month Petrides. Claws out, stay warm and have an amazing month.

OUR ENDANGERED FRIENDS SEA TURTLES

By: Winona Christensen and E'laysia Melendez

Have you ever heard of sea turtles? They are awesome animals that have very interesting facts. Here, let me tell you! Sea turtles can be found in the ocean. They mostly live in the tropical parts of the oceans. Sea turtles live there because they are cold blooded and rely on the tropical ocean's warmth. As well as they require a warm, sandy beach for nesting their eggs.

Sea turtles live long periods of time. Some sea turtles live longer than others. The Green Sea Turtle is the longest living sea turtle so far! The Green sea turtle can live 50 -100 years! On the other hand, the Loggerhead sea turtle lives 70-80 years. Not as long as the Green sea turtle! Here are some more sea turtle facts: The Hawksbill turtle lives up to only 30-50 years. Poor sea turtle! The Leatherback turtle lives up to 45- 50 years (on average) But if they are lucky, they can live 90-100 years. One more fact about olive ridley & kemp's ridley sea turtles: This species is estimated to live 10-20 years or more.

Sea turtles are endangered because of the littering on the beach. Plastic goes in the water and floats. Because of sea turtles' poor eyesight, they mistake it for jellyfish, which is in their diet. So they eat the plastic, and because of that their population is dying as we speak from pure littering on the beach. We can help by stopping littering on the beach or in general to avoid problems like these.

There are currently about 6.5 million green turtles left, 1.76 million leatherback turtles left, and 5.6 million olive ridley turtles left, yet the number is dropping as we speak from pure dirty littering of plastic.

Well, you might be wondering or you maybe even know! But, I will say this:

- 1) DO NOT LITTER ON BEACH
- 2) PROTECT THEIR NESTING BEACHES
- 3) PRACTICE RESPONSIBLE OCEAN BEHAVIOR



By following these three simple rules, I think we would be able to help and protect sea turtles. Hope you enjoyed it!!

CURRENT EVENTS

THE WINTER OLYMPICS

By: Lithuli Wijenayakage

Have you heard about the winter olympics? Well, if you haven't, I can inform you all about the 2026 Milano Cortina Winter Olympics. The winter olympics started on Feb 6. There were exactly 93 countries competing in the Olympic games in 16 different sports.

If you didn't know, one of our first grade teachers, Ms. Moore planned an event for our elementary school students. Each class got a country chart to keep track of what medals their country got. Both Mr. Tabbittas and Ms. Ponzi got the USA. If you want to see how many medals your country got, examine your country tracker chart on your classroom door.

In addition to tracking medals, some classes worked together to create Olympics artwork. Ms. Cicale's 4th grade class worked with Mrs. Moore's 1st graders. Mr. Castro's 2nd graders worked with Ms. Mastropasqua's Pre-K class.

Mr. Blyth, a retired teacher that still comes to our school for special occasions, has made a wonderful Olympic torch and each class had an opportunity to display Mr. Blyth's wooden torch. The torch went around the school for the month of February. The class that has it now is Ms. Duffy and Mr. Erickson's class, who will carry on the torch to Ms. McFarland. She will then display it in her classroom for everyone to see.

The top 5 countries that received the most medals are Norway, The USA, The Netherlands, Italy, and Germany.

Congratulations Norway! Norway won 41 medals including 18 gold, 12 silver, and 11 bronze. The USA came in second with 12 gold and silver, and 9 bronze, equaling to 33 medals in all. The Netherlands won third with 20 medals; 10 gold, 7 silver, and 3 bronze. Italy placed fourth with 10 gold, 6 silver, and 14 bronze, equaling 30 medals in all. And finally, Germany got fifth with 26 medals; 8 gold, 10 silver, and 8 bronze.

The 2026 Milano Cortina Winter Olympics ended on Friday, Feb 22, 2026. The winter olympics is held every four years so mark your calendars! The next Winter Olympics will be held on Fri, Feb 1st - Sun, Feb 17, 2030!



WHAT'S SO FUNNY?

Joke of the Month

By: Abigail De Los Angeles, Daniel Selby, Elsa Wang, Luthuli Wijenayakage

Why does the pencil's statement not make sense?



Answer: Because it had no point!

FEBRUARY WORD SEARCH

By Abigail de los Angeles, Seth Destajo, Tiwatope Kuju & Mazen Sallam

H	R	B	S	K	N	F	H	J	I	W	H	S	X	L
X	A	X	D	M	O	A	S	S	Z	O	E	E	P	K
K	O	R	L	N	P	Q	R	K	L	P	A	N	O	X
X	B	P	R	O	S	E	C	A	R	D	S	R	I	B
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U	I	X	S	U	Q	L	O	N	S	H	A	D	O	W
O	G	Y	H	V	H	N	U	C	K	O	N	N	K	Z
R	H	Z	I	W	O	M	A	A	L	A	P	C	B	O
G	T	K	P	V	P	Z	Z	X	M	N	O	V	X	Z

Word Bank

CARDS

FAIR

GROUNDHOG

HARRIET TUBMAN

HEARTS

LOVE

PRESIDENT

RIGHT

ROSE

SHADOW

VALENTINES