

A NOTE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear SOTA I Families,

Happy April! It is wonderful to see the signs of spring finally arriving. With the changing weather comes a renewed sense of energy in our hallways and classrooms.

As we head into this busy season, here are a few important updates and reminders:

Showing What We Know: WI FORWARD

April marks the beginning of our state assessment window for our **3rd - 5th grade students**. These assessments are just one of the many ways our students get to show off all the incredible things they have learned this year.

To help your child feel confident and prepared, please ensure they:

- Get a good night's sleep.
- Eat a healthy, filling breakfast.
- Arrive at school on time.
- Know that you are proud of them no matter what! A little encouragement goes a long way.

Spring Weather & Recess

"April showers bring May flowers!" As the weather fluctuates, please make sure your child comes to school dressed in layers.

Upcoming Events → Spring will also be busy with the Orchestra Concert, Music Concert, Informance, Art Auction, Graduation & Family Nights. Thank you for your engagement during this busy time and supporting our school and your student!

With appreciation,

Jenna Fernholz - Hamilton/SOTA I Principal

IMPORTANT DATES

- March 30–April 3: NO SCHOOL Spring Break
- April 14: SOTA Steering Committee Meeting
6:00–7:30pm
- April 13–17: Forward Testing
- April 20–24: Forward Testing Makeup Dates
- April 22: Music Concerts
- April 28: BMX Assembly
- April 28: Family Night
- May 7: Orchestra Concert- SOTA I 6:00
- May 14&15: Seal a Smile Event
- May 20: Informance Performance
- May 22: Fifth Grade Graduation
- May 22: Family Night
- May 25: NO SCHOOL Memorial Day
- May 27: Field Trip to Rivoli- K-5 grades
- May 29: Last Day of School: half day



Hamilton/SOTA I Elementary School

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT: NEW DISMISSAL TIME

**SCHOOL DAY
SCHOOL DAY**



**DISMISSAL TIME:
2:35 PM**



**10-MIN.
SHIFT**

Additional 10 minutes for more learning, activities, and end-of-day routines.



Effective: March 23rd

Hamilton/SOTA | Elementary School | Phone: (608) 789-7695

Hamilton/SOTA I dismissal time will be extended by 10 minutes to make up for our most recent snow day. The last day of school will remain a half day.

Reminder students need to be in school by 7:45am for the start of the day. Doors open for breakfast at 7:25am.



You're Invited

to the
5th Grade Graduation

Friday, May 22nd
9:30-10:30
School Cafeteria

Enter through door A for screening before entry.
Bring your photo ID for check in.

CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP

We are creating a group for
parents, caregivers, and guardians
of LGBTQ+ loved ones.



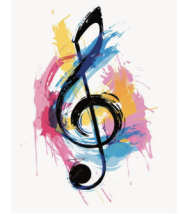
**Our first in-person meeting is
Tuesday, May 19th 5:30pm-6:30pm at
The Center: 7 Rivers LGBTQ Connection
(230 6th St S, La Crosse)**

Scan the QR Code to help
us build this group through
our survey!





Spring Music Concert



The all school (Hamilton and SOTA I) spring music concert will be

Wednesday, April 22nd

Join us to celebrate the year with your students. All performances will be in the Gym, each performance is about 20 min. long. (More details to come about arrival times and what to wear.) Please make every effort to attend because we are all better together! Let Ms. Mandy know right away if you have questions.

K/1 5:30 pm

Come watch your students retell the story of Stone Soup in a “Rock” Opera.



2/3 6:15 pm

Come swim along with us in “GoFish!”



4/5 7:00 pm

Join our 4th and 5th graders in their “Moment to Shine”

moment
TO Shine

LIBRARY

Celebrating School Library Month: Beyond Books at Hamilton/SOTA I Library

In April we are celebrating School Library Month and the vital role of librarians in our Wisconsin schools. It is a time to celebrate the transformative role that school libraries and librarians play in our students' lives. At Hamilton/SOTA I, our library is no longer just a quiet place for borrowing books; it is also a dynamic center of "Transforming Learning" where everyone belongs.

In today's rapidly changing digital landscape, the school library is no longer just a room full of books; it is a dynamic hub of innovation. As your school librarian, I wear many hats—instructional leader, technology partner, and literacy expert—all focused on our students and their wellbeing. I feel that the library is the heart of the school and school libraries and librarians matter now more than ever!

The school library is a "unique and essential part of a learning community," as it serves as a vital connection between school and home. Whether we are exploring the ethical use of Artificial Intelligence or diving into a new favorite story, our goal is to foster a lifelong love of learning and a "culture of reading".

At the Hamilton/SOTA I Library we are leading from the library to empower every learner at our school.

As the librarian, I select high-quality materials at all reading levels. I also:

- Collaborate with teaching staff to teach research and information/media/ digital literacy skills at all grade levels
- Collaborate with educators on resources to support their curriculum
- Teach lessons to all students in Hamilton/SOTA I PreK-Grade 5
- Promote reading for pleasure and academic purposes in both classes and 1:1 Readers Advisory
- Complete collection analysis & development: reading reviews and purchasing new diverse materials, evaluating and weeding the collection for relevance & accuracy
- Tech support and training for students and staff, printing support for students and staff Develop and execute professional development for staff meetings, district meetings, and beyond
- Partner with La Crosse Public Librarians
- Provide a safe, trustworthy, no judgement place to Grow Readers create a reading culture and promote the love of reading

Happy School Library Month!

Mrs. Harden



HAMILTON & SOTA | FAMILY NIGHT

PICNIC, PEDAL, & PLAY

Tuesday, April 28th
4:30-6:00

Bike Rodeo

Family Time on the Playground
Bag Toss
Jump Rope
Spike Ball
Jacks
Chalk
Hopscotch

Dinner:
Hotdogs
Hamburgers
Pickles
Carrots
Grapes
Chips
Cookies
Lemonade

Enter through the
8th St Playground Gate



Must have your grownup present to attend

HAMILTON AND SOTA | FAMILY NIGHT
PICNIC, PEDAL, & PLAY



BIKE RODEO

TUESDAY, APRIL 28TH
4:30-6:00

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO:

- YOU MAY BRING YOUR OWN BIKE AND HELMET
- MUST HAVE YOUR GROWNUP PRESENT TO ATTEND
- MUST WEAR A PROPERLY FITTED HELMET TO RIDE

FEATURING:

- FREE BIKE REGISTRATION AND SAFETY CHECKS
- FREE HELMETS FOR THOSE WHO NEED THEM
- ADVANCED SKILLS TRAINING
- BIKE DECORATION STATION
- BIKE SAFETY COURSE
- BIKE PARADE
- BOOK SHOP



Bike Helmets Must Fit to Protect



Step 1: Size
Should fit snugly
and not rock side
to side.



Step 2: Position
No more than
two finger widths
above eyebrows.



Step 3: Straps
Should form a
"V" under, and
slightly in front,
of ears.



Step 4: Buckles
Center the
buckles under
chin and lock
sliders.



Step 5: Chin
No more than
one or two
fingers should fit
under strap.

Sources: NHTSA.gov, WeMakeItSafer.com



MUST HAVE YOUR GROWNUP PRESENT TO ATTEND

All City Strings Performance 2026



Hamilton and SOTA Family

DANCE NIGHT

Friday, May 22nd

5:30-7:00 pm

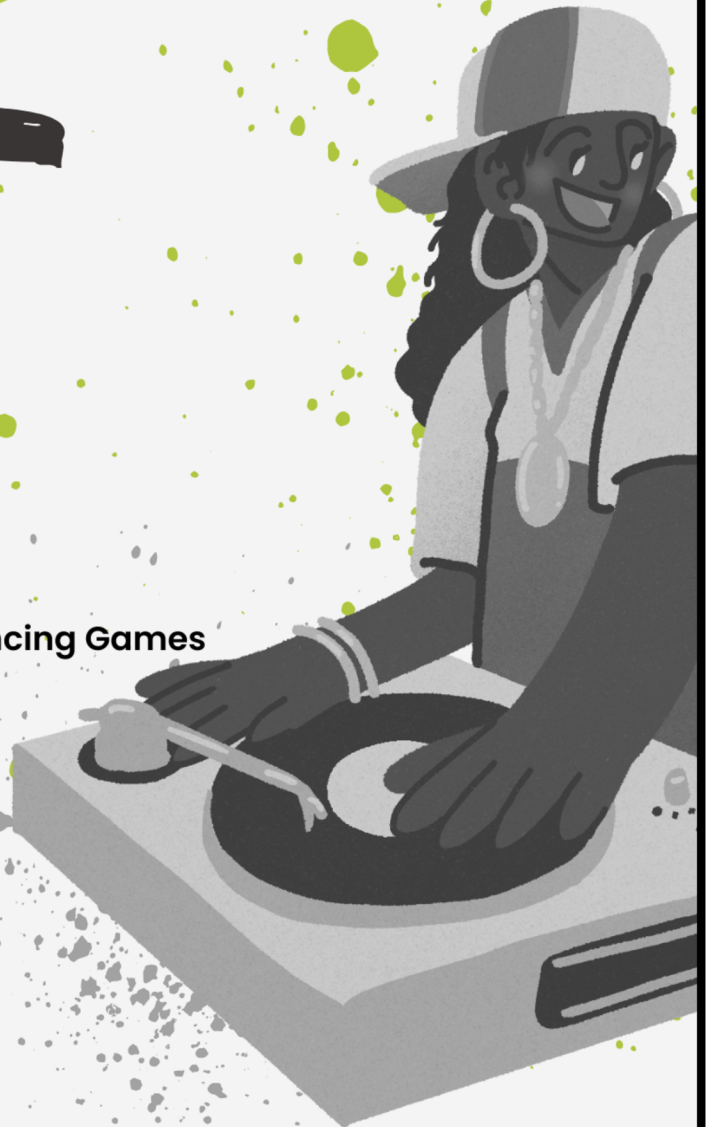
Enter through Door A

Music by DJ Brettly including:

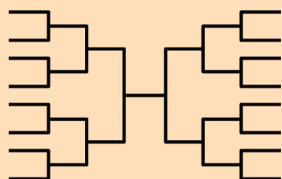
Hokey Pokey, Chicken Dance, Dancing Games

- Photo booth
- Lots of prizes
- Quiet game space
- Glow-in-the-dark items provided

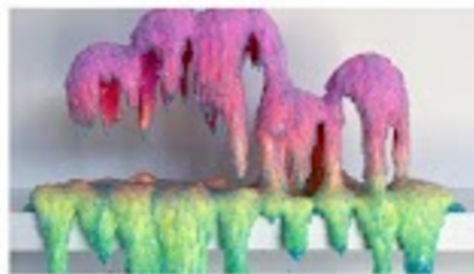
Wear your favorite dancewear!



**Winner of our
Art Madness Bracket**



Dan Lam





SCHOOL NEWS

April 2026

What's the Dirt on Compost?

There will be three spring garden lessons for each class. In the first lesson we will learn what compost is, how it is made and how it is helpful to growing plants. The theme throughout the year will be **"Exploring our gardens from the bottom up."** We will dig into the science of compost and the importance of healthy soil for growing the fresh foods that fuel our bodies. Students will participate in the entire seed to table process with produce tastes along the way!



Summer Programming Registration

Look for the Summer Sprouts Garden Club & Summer on the Farm opportunities in the School District summer enrichment course offerings. You can also register for a July 14th - 16th Summer on the Farm session directly at <https://GROWLaCrosse.org/farm-camps/>.

GROW PLANT SALE & MORE

Western Technical College Horticulture Center, 624 Vine Street, La Crosse

THURSDAY, MAY 7TH
3 PM TO 6 PM

FRIDAY, MAY 8TH
8 AM TO 6 PM

SATURDAY, MAY 9TH
9 AM TO 1 PM

GROWLaCrosse.org

All proceeds will go directly toward connecting youth to healthy food and nature.

Thank You Garden Sponsors



Vicki Miller



GROWLaCrosse.org



APRIL 2026

ELEMENTARY BREAKFAST & LUNCH MENU

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
				
		1 NO SCHOOL!	2 NO SCHOOL!	3 NO SCHOOL!
6 day 5 BREAKFAST #1 Snackbread LUNCH #1 Popcorn Chicken #2 Yogurt & Cheese Stick	7 day 6 BREAKFAST #1 Sausage Pizza Bagel LUNCH #1 Bakalars Hot Dog #2 Pizza	8 day 1 BREAKFAST #1 Waffle Dunkers LUNCH #1 Buttermilk Pancakes #2 EZ Jammer & Cheese Stick	9 day 2 BREAKFAST #1 Breakfast Tater Bowl LUNCH #1 Chicken Walking Taco #2 Pizza	10 day 3 BREAKFAST #1 Donut Holes LUNCH #1 Cheese Filled Breadstick #2 Sub/Wrap Choice
13 day 4 BREAKFAST #1 Muffin LUNCH #1 Orange Chicken #2 Yogurt & Cheese Stick	14 day 5 BREAKFAST #1 Breakfast Croissant LUNCH #1 Flatbread Turkey Club #2 Pizza	15 day 6 BREAKFAST #1 Colby Cheese Omelet LUNCH #1 Spaghetti w/Meat Sauce #2 EZ Jammer & Cheese Stick	16 day 1 BREAKFAST #1 Pancake on a Stick LUNCH #1 Fish Basket w/Sticks #2 Pizza	17 day 2 BREAKFAST #1 Cinnamon Roll LUNCH #1 Texas BBQ Pork on Bun #2 Sub/Wrap Choice
20 day 3 BREAKFAST #1 Breakfast Bread LUNCH #1 Chicken Sandwich #2 Yogurt & Cheese Stick	21 day 4 BREAKFAST #1 Breakfast Bacon Pizza LUNCH #1 Shredded Turkey & Gravy #2 Pizza	22 day 5 BREAKFAST #1 Buttermilk Pancakes LUNCH #1 Mini Corn Dogs #2 EZ Jammer & Cheese Stick	23 day 6 BREAKFAST #1 Crispy Chicken Bisc'wich LUNCH #1 Chicken Woodies (Framen) #2 Pizza	24 day 1 BREAKFAST #1 Apple-Filled Donut LUNCH #1 Cheesy Mac Bites #2 Sub/Wrap Choice
27 day 2 BREAKFAST #1 Muffin LUNCH #1 Chicken Egg Roll #2 Yogurt & Cheese Stick	28 day 3 BREAKFAST #1 Breakfast Croissant LUNCH #1 Cheeseburger #2 Pizza	29 day 4 BREAKFAST #1 Waffle Dunkers LUNCH #1 Macaroni & Cheese #2 EZ Jammer & Cheese Stick	30 day 5 BREAKFAST #1 Breakfast Tater Bowl LUNCH #1 Chicken & Waffle #2 Pizza	

Breakfast is served with FF chocolate or white milk.
Breakfast choice #2 is always cereal.
Lunch includes fruit, veggie, and choice of milk.
Menu is subject to change.

What We've Been Learning in March

Pre-K completed implements and floor hockey, learned rhythm through **cardio drumming**, practiced underhand rolling with **oppositional stepping**, explored social dance, and developed balance and **muscular endurance on floor scooters**.

K-1 mastered floor hockey and **bowling with underhand rolling and oppositional footwork**. Students integrated math skills by tracking pins and calculating scores while building social skills through turn-taking and cooperation. They also enjoyed **cardio drumming, social dance, and floor scooters**.

2-3 advanced their underhand rolling skills and focused on **bowling with basic score keeping using addition and subtraction**. Students practiced proper footwork for accuracy and participated in **team handball**, learning offensive and defensive strategies while building teamwork and communication skills. **Cardio drumming** supported rhythm coordination throughout.

4-5 specialized in **archery**, learning proper stance, nocking, drawing, anchoring, aiming, and release while emphasizing safety protocols and goal-setting. Students also engaged in **bowling with official score keeping**, reinforcing advanced math skills through multiplication and addition.



What's Coming in April

After spring break, students will **wrap up their current units** (dance, scooters, team handball, and archery) before transitioning to **soccer-based skill activities and modified games**, where they'll extend their ability to control objects with their feet.

The end of April focuses on **tee-ball, softball, and baseball skills** to prepare students for summer play, including batting, fielding, base running, and game strategy.

Why These Skills Matter

These activities build **object control, coordination, teamwork, and confidence**. Math integration with bowling strengthens academic connections, while archery teaches focus and personal responsibility. Soccer and baseball skills prepare students for lifetime recreational enjoyment and summer success.

Reminders: Send students in **active-wear and sneakers**. Email with any **injuries or restrictions**. Ask your child to **demonstrate what they've learned**—they love sharing!





LA CROSSE COUNTY
Health Department
Nationally Accredited



KIDS Dental Care



During the
school day

Our Services

- Dental exam and x-rays
- Cleanings
- Fluoride varnish treatments
- Sealants
- Referral to a local dentist if needed

Hamilton/SOTA | Details

- May 14 - 15, 2026
- Grades K through 5th
- Sign up - pick up a form in the office or scan the QR codes below.



Serving all students at no cost
to families



STAFF SPOTLIGHT



Mr. Nofsinger

Mr. Nofsinger teaches drama at Hamilton & SOTA I. In his class, students have the opportunity to express themselves and work collaboratively. Mr. Nofsinger integrates school curriculum into his lessons.



Ms. Kromke

Ms. Kromke supports students with diverse learning needs by adapting lessons so every student can succeed. She helps students build academic, social, and life skills.



Ms. Mandy

Ms. Mandy teaches music to all 4K-5th Grade students at our school. In the music room, we practice singing, rhythm, playing instruments, and learn basic music concepts.



Ms. Gracee

Ms. Gracee is a teacher assistant for our students with disabilities. She helps students practice academic skills, supports during transitions, and provides behavior support.



Mrs. Speckeen

Mrs. Speckeen teaches orchestra and introduces students to the basics of playing and caring for stringed instruments. Students learn to read and play music through large and small group lessons.



Ms. Vang

Ms. Vang is the teacher assistant who assists our librarian, works in small groups with students, and supports students who need extra support at school.

Kappa Delta Pi's



MILES FOR MINDS

fitness levels welcome!



WALK/RUN TO SUPPORT LA CROSSE SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

April 11th, 2026

9 am Start @ UWLREC
1510 Badger St.
La Crosse, Wi 54601

SCAN HERE TO REGISTER & LEARN MORE



more info
[@kappa.delta.pi.uwl](https://twitter.com/kappa.delta.pi.uwl)

On April 11th, 2026 Community School Partner Kappa Delta Pi is hosting their 1st annual Run/Walk, “Miles For Minds” benefitting the La Crosse Area School District’s Special Education program.

During the 2024–2025 school year, approximately 1,025 students, nearly 18% of the La Crosse School District, received services and support through the district’s special education programs, a number that continues to grow. In alignment with Kappa Delta Pi’s mission to support excellence in education, our chapter is committed to advocating for inclusive, equitable learning opportunities for all students.

Join us for a fun, low-pressure run/walk to help raise awareness and support our community. This event is open to all ages and abilities—whether you run, walk, jog, or cheer from the sidelines, every step counts!

100% of the proceeds will be donated directly to the La Crosse Special Education Department, helping provide resources, support, and opportunities for students. Come out, move at your own pace, and make a difference together!

YOU'RE INVITED!

FAMILY ASSEMBLY



TUESDAY
APRIL 28, 2026

STARTS AT
1:00 PM



FAMILIES WELCOME TO ATTEND

TAKES PLACE ON ADAMS ST BETWEEN 7TH & 8TH STREETS

QUESTIONS: 608-789-5051

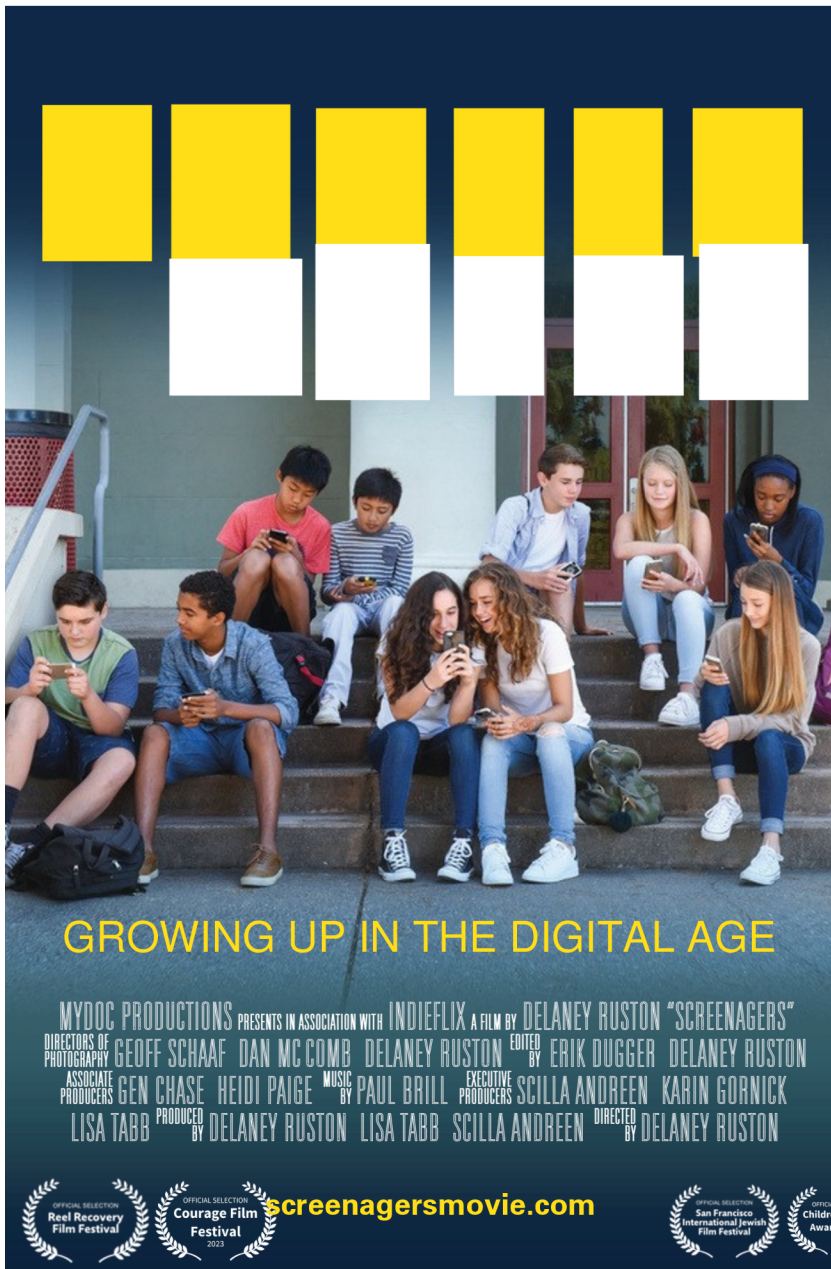


SCHOOL DISTRICT OF
LA CROSSE



FREE

**A must see
for caregivers
of ALL AGES**



Monday, April 13, 6:00pm-8:00pm

Logan High School Auditorium

Students & Caregivers

Encouraged to Attend





APRIL 2026



SOTA 1 Newsletter

Fifth Grade Spotlight

Margot Schwaller



Teacher: Mike
Favorite Color: Pink
Favorite Song:
Better in Stereo
Theme Song Version
Activities: Drawing and
Hockey
Favorite Subject: Art
Best Thing About SOTA:
Art Class

Evarie Olson



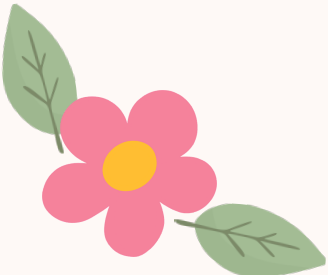
Teacher: Mr. Mickschl
Favorite Color: Dark Blue
Favorite Musical Song:
He Wanna Be Like Me
Activities: Hang with
Friends
Favorite Subject: PE
Best Thing About SOTA:
Friends and Memories

Ethan Staehly



Teacher: Mike
Favorite Color: Aqua Blue
Favorite Song: Notion
Activities: Football
Favorite Subject: PE
Best Thing About SOTA:
Fun Times

Happy
Easter





REPORTS



Japanese teachers came to some classrooms. Students made paper hats, learned how to write their names in Japanese, made origami tops and asked questions. We learned a lot and had a great experience. Thank you for coming!



Cribbage Club



We celebrated the first meeting of cribbage club by inviting the K/1s to play!

We have fun on Wednesdays at recess by playing and learning cribbage. A big thank you to Mr.Mickschl for letting us use your classroom.

We will also try to learn other card games.

Sincerely
cribbage club



Setting up pgs,cards, and boards



The teachers of cribbage!



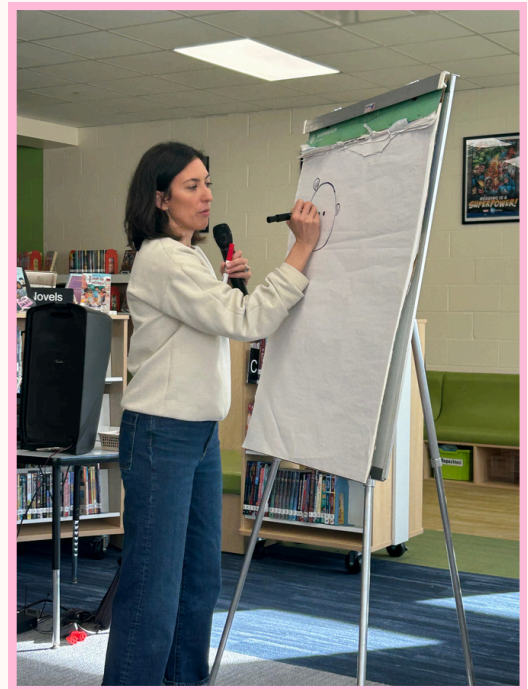
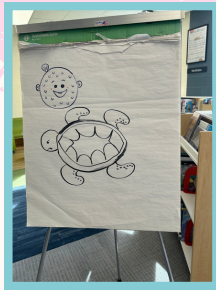
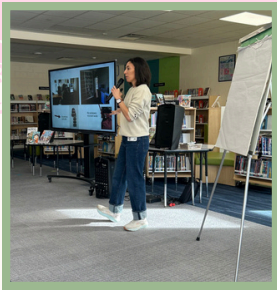
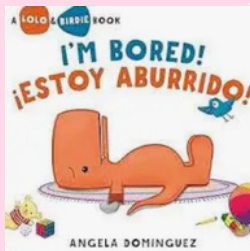
Playing in the hallway during WIN time



REPORTS

Author visit!

We had author and illustrator
Angela Dominguez visit our school!
She has written books like
the Stella Diaz series, Maria Had a Little
Llama, and Gabby Tomez Gets a Million Followers.



Newsletter Show

Amazing
April

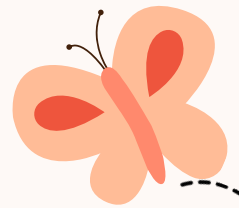
TO SEE THIS MONTH'S EDITION OF
SOTA 1 NEWS, SCAN OR CLICK ON THE
QR CODE

SCAN ME





APRIL 2026 Fun Stuff



Mad Libs

Behind the Scenes
Click or Scan to Watch

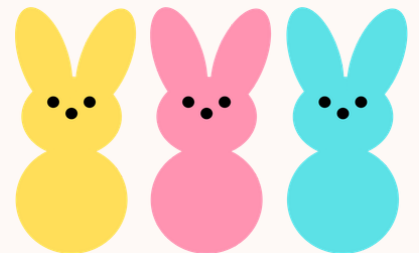


The Great Egg Hunt Rescue

It was nearly Easter morning, but the Easter Bunny was missing! White ^{Noun} checked the subway, Gilles checked the ^{Proper noun} Tower, and the forest animals were worried. They didn't want the children to be ^{Adjective}. Finally, they realized the Easter Bunny was simply ^{Verb} and fast asleep in a ^{Noun} hollow. The animals worked together to hide the eggs, ensuring the children found their treats, saving the day through teamwork.



PEEP!



Come on!
you can do it.

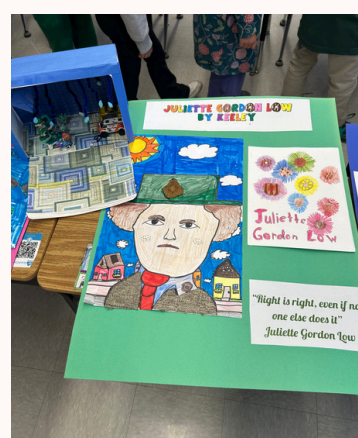
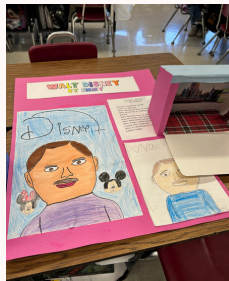


Come on! Get it in the basket.
It's almost Easter.





PHOTOS



EASTER HUNT

Look for these Easter characters around the school

