



OUR COMMUNITY SCHOOL REFLECTION

OCTOBER 2025

Celebrate Success!

Share What We Learn!

Updates on Projects!



Ms. Schneider plays an essential role at Hamilton/SOTA I, supporting both students and staff in countless ways. She helps ensure that testing for AIMS runs smoothly and efficiently, making the process easier for everyone involved. Ms. Schneider is also a key **leader in implementing and supporting our new writing curriculum**, helping teachers feel confident and prepared. **Her deep knowledge and problem-solving skills make her the go-to person for almost any question that arises.** Whether it's offering guidance, finding resources, or lending a listening ear, she's always ready to help. Her dedication and positivity make a lasting impact on our school community each day. We recently celebrated Ms. Schneider on **National Instructional Coaches Day** to show our appreciation for all she does. Hamilton/SOTA I is truly lucky to have such a supportive and talented academic coach!



PBIS BINGO



To celebrate the end of **Quarter 1**, our school had a special **PBIS Celebration** with a whole-school game of bingo! Students from every grade joined in on the fun together. Some of our older students were wonderful helpers, sitting with younger students to make sure everyone could play. There were **cheers, laughter, and lots of smiles** throughout the building. Mrs. Fernholz called out symbols of fall, and students eagerly marked their cards hoping for a bingo. She shared a link with all the teachers so everyone could connect through their smart boards. It was exciting to see Mrs. Fernholz and all the different classrooms playing together on the screen. We had such a great time and are looking forward to an amazing 2nd Quarter!

PBIS ASSEMBLY

Our October assembly focused on **National Anti-Bullying Month** and the importance of kindness and inclusion. Our **first graders, led by Drama Teacher, Mr. Nofsinger, performed One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish**. They did an amazing job memorizing and acting out the story, which highlighted themes of friendship, diversity, and creative problem-solving. We also celebrated our **"Moment Makers of the Month,"** students who were nominated by teachers and staff for making a positive impact. To end the assembly, students participated in a fun hula hoop "Minute to Win It" game that brought lots of laughter and teamwork. This assembly tied perfectly into our schoolwide theme—making every moment count!



CUSTODIAL APPRECIATION DAY

We are so thankful for our **Phenomenal Custodial Staff—Dan, Joe, and Tanee!** They work hard every day to keep Hamilton/SOTA I clean, safe, and welcoming for everyone. To celebrate Custodian Appreciation Day, each class signed a “broom” to show their gratitude. Students surprised our custodians with a bulletin board full of kind words and messages of appreciation. It was a wonderful way to honor all the **care and dedication** they bring to our school community!



OT APPRECIATION WEEK

We loved celebrating Occupational Therapist Appreciation at Hamilton/SOTA I! **Ms. Laura Kish** is truly a gift to the students she serves. She supports our learners in building the skills they need to be successful both in and out of the classroom. Her **patience, creativity, and care** make such a positive difference every day. We are so grateful to have Ms. Kish as part of our Hamilton/SOTA I team!



LISTENING & LEARNING

SPRING TEACHER CONFERENCES - RESOURCE FAIR

Last March, we did a **Serve & Return** during our Spring Teacher Conferences - Resource Fair, families engaged in powerful conversations around student attendance and readiness for learning. **Together, we explored our attendance data**, which showed that 34% of Hamilton and SOTA I students were chronically absent as of February 2025.

From the student survey, we learned that only 63% of students reported feeling awake and ready to learn, and 43% said they struggle to come to school because they feel tired. **Families shared valuable insights** and reactions! 54 families took time to reflect and respond.

Their feedback was clear: the **most common request was for resources and information about nighttime and morning routines** to help students get the rest they need to start the day strong.

TAKING THE NEXT STEP

FALL TEACHER CONFERENCES - RESOURCE FAIR

Fast forward to our **October Teacher Conferences**, where families were ready to take action! At our Resource Fair, **families eagerly signed up for Nighttime and Morning Routine Schedules**, designed to help students establish consistent, healthy habits for rest and readiness.

In total, **73 children** were signed up to receive their own routine schedules. It was inspiring to see so many families and children excited about using the schedules at home.



COMMUNITY IN ACTION — VITERBO SERVICE SATURDAY

Making these **Routine Schedules** possible was a true community effort! On October 4th, **12 volunteers from Viterbo University joined us for Service Saturday**, dedicating their time and energy to prepare materials for our families. Volunteers laminated, cut, and assembled the Nighttime and Morning Routine Schedules, ensuring each one was ready to go home.

By October 16th, the schedules were delivered to families—thanks to the teamwork between our school community and Viterbo's amazing volunteers.

Together, we're turning family insights into action—helping students arrive at school refreshed, ready, and excited to learn each day.

A huge thank you to Hannah Bertram (School Counselor) and **Jenn Speckeen** (Title Teacher & Family Engagement Coach) for bringing this project to life! They created and developed the schedules—and even spent time at home adding Velcro to countless icons. **We're so grateful for their dedication and creativity!**

If you would like a Routine Schedule, contact Hannah Bertram, School Counselor hbertram@lacrossesd.org, and we will get your child a schedule.



BASKETBALL NIGHTS WRAP-UP!

Coach Mo and the UW-La Crosse Women's Basketball Team, in collaboration with the **Boys & Girls Club**, once again hosted Basketball Nights over seven Mondays this fall. More than 50 members took part, building skills in **sportsmanship, teamwork, community, and social-emotional growth.**

We wrapped up the season with a fun **Pizza Party**, celebrating everyone's hard work and handing out certificates of achievement!

A huge THANK YOU to the UW-L Coaches & Players, the Boys & Girls Club staff, and all the participants who made another great season possible!



LA CROSSE FIRE DEPARTMENT VISITS OUR SCHOOL!

What an exciting learning experience! The La Crosse Fire Department (LCFD) stopped by our school ahead of **Fire Prevention Week** (October 6–12) to help students learn how to stay safe, be prepared, and have fun doing it! Each grade got to experience a special hands-on lesson:

- **Pre-K & Kindergarten** met “friendly firefighters,” watched them suit up in full gear, and played Hot or Not before checking out a real fire truck!
- **1st Graders** read Prepare with Pedro, learned what to do in an emergency, and got an up-close look at the fire truck too.
- **2nd Grade** explored the “sounds of safety,” focusing on smoke alarms and what they mean.
- **3rd Grade** met Sparky the Robot Fire Dog and worked in teams to design their own family escape maps.
- **4th Grade** took on safety challenges outside in the LCFD Safety Trailer and played Identify the Risk!
- **5th Grade** dove into The Science of Fire with hands-on experiments and mini science demos.

To wrap things up, students were reminded that everyone can be a fire safety hero—at school and at home!

Special Thanks to our incredible **La Crosse Fire Department** for making learning about fire safety so engaging and memorable!





SMOOTHIES

We had a special guest, **Ms. Richelle**, visit Hamilton to make healthy smoothies with each grade level! She shared why it's important to **choose healthy snacks that give our bodies energy** to learn and play. Every student got to enjoy a delicious smoothie for their snack — yum! Many students loved it so much they asked for the recipe, so we're sharing it here. This is the same one we used at school, but Ms. Richelle encouraged everyone to get creative and try adding different fruits and vegetables at home.



Hamilton Smoothie Recipe

- ½ avocado
- 1 banana
- ½ cup frozen strawberries
- ½ cup greek plain yogurt
- 1 cup ice
- 1 cup orange juice

ART HUB CLUB

We had a great start to Art Hub Club! Students get a chance to follow guided drawing videos and then continue to use their creativity in their own way.





SPIRIT WEEK

The last week of October was full of fun and school spirit at Hamilton/SOTA !! We kicked off Spirit Week by dressing as **scarecrows and farmers**, bringing lots of smiles and creativity to the halls. One day was all about cozy vibes as students and staff wore their favorite **pajamas and comfy clothes**. We celebrated the apple harvest by wearing **red, yellow, and green** to show off our favorite apple colors. The week ended with a festive finale—everyone dressed in **black and orange** for Halloween. From start to finish, Spirit Week was full of laughter, creativity, and school pride!



STUDENT LEADERSHIP TEAM

The 5th grade Student Leadership Team helps support our school community in multiple ways. They **tackle small problems, plan special events, and assist both Teachers and younger students**. So far this year, our leaders have run a fundraiser at our local Dairy Queen, volunteered in classrooms, refereed for assembly games, and helped set up for Family Night. We meet weekly to discuss what it means to be a leader and brainstorm future projects.





Food Forest Flourishes with Community Support

On October 13th, our school partnered with **GROW La Crosse** and volunteers from **Altra Federal Credit Union** as part of **Altra Gives Back Day**. Together, they helped prepare the Food Forest for the winter months.

We're so grateful for their time, care, and continued commitment to helping our Food Forest thrive!



Hamilton Mentors

The Hamilton Mentoring Program has taken off again this year. We have had an outpouring of wonderful community members who signed up to be matched with a student to spend a little time with them once per week in the morning. Students are so excited to see their mentor when they arrive at school and have some special time to do crafts, games and talk.

Hamilton Mentor Quote:

"Thanks for all you do at Hamilton. Seeing your professional, caring staff interacting with your students renews my faith in humanity!" ~ Eric Garland



ATTENDANCE AWARDS

To celebrate weekly attendance, we use an online spinner with all the names of students who have had amazing attendance for the week. The spinner chooses 5 students from each school to pick a prize from the prize case. Our students look forward to Friday mornings when this is announced.



Birthday Baking

Each month at Hamilton, students come together for Birthday Baking, a special tradition where we bake and celebrate all the birthdays of the month. This fun and hands-on activity fosters a sense of community while allowing students to practice teamwork, measuring, and kitchen skills—all while enjoying a homemade treat!





Reading Buddies

SOTA 4/5 students read with Hamilton 2/3 students. All students were so engaged and really enjoy these opportunities.



Maps and 4th & 5th Graders

4th and 5th graders finished their geography unit by creating their own islands! They loved being creative while also using the skills they learned in the classroom.



MOMENT MAKERS: CHARACTER COUNTS



Look who was recognized for being extra safe, respectful, and responsible this month!



Trunk or Treat



Wow! What a Night!

Our Trunk or Treat Family Night was a huge success! **Over 400 family members** joined us, including 165 of our students and nearly 300 kids when you count siblings, cousins, friends, and neighbors.



A huge **THANK YOU** goes out to our amazing volunteers and staff! More than 60 volunteers helped with setup, activities, and cleanup to make the evening so special. We couldn't have done it without you!

Thank You FSPA for your financial support and making our Family Nights extra special!



October Family Night



Community Partners Involved: Alpha Xi Delta, Y on the Fly, Pizza Ranch, The Playground of La Crosse, The Dan Stacey Team, Hamilton PTO & SOTA Steering Committee, UWL Chemistry & BioChemistry Club, La Crosse Area Family Collaborative, Cub Scouts, The Parenting Place, Bluff Country Snakes, Emplify - Population Health, La Crosse Community Theatre, Neighborhood Resource Officers, The Paperback Rider, The League of Women Voters, & The Boys & Girls Club



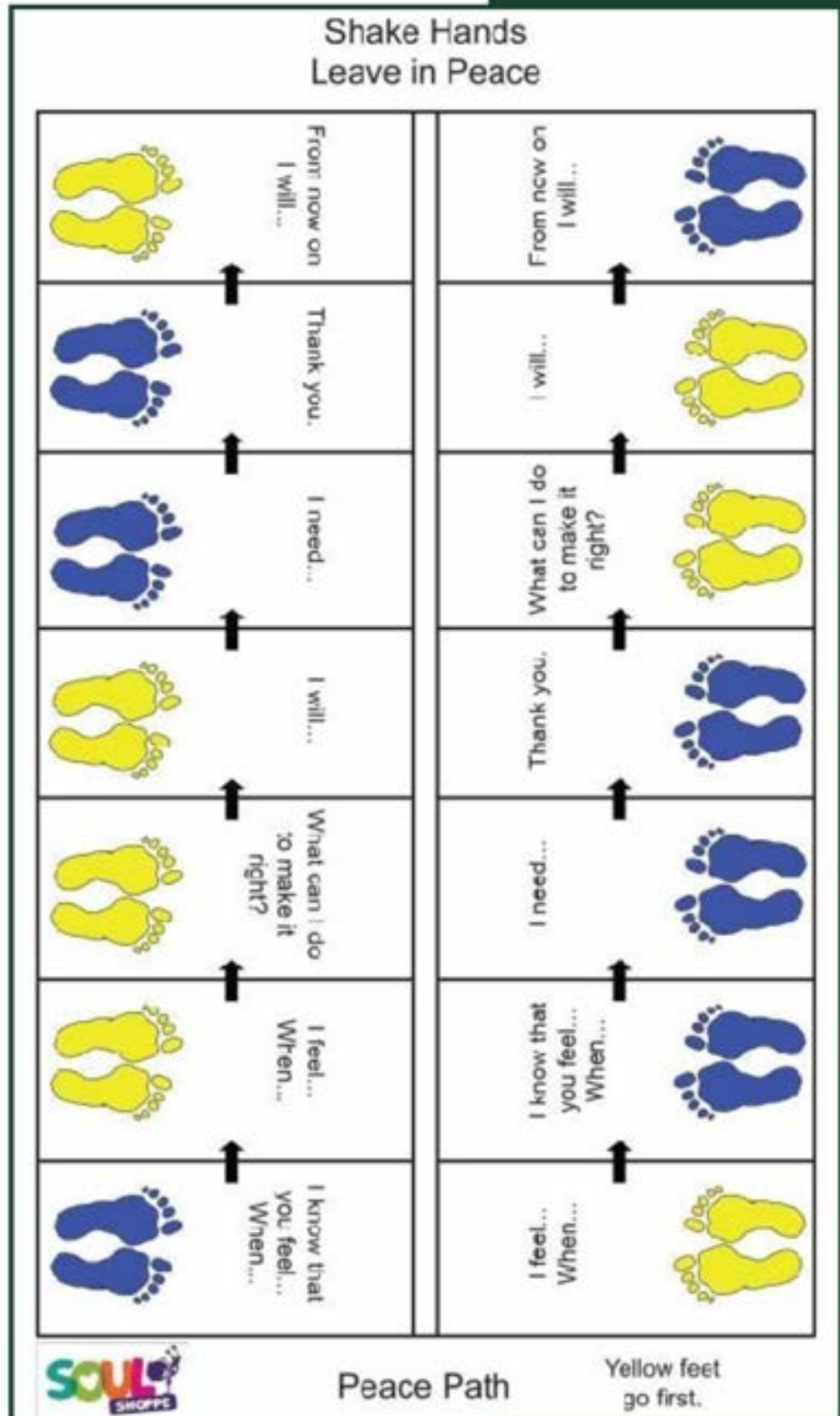
Staff Involved that Night: Mrs. Speckeen, Ms. Tester, Mr. Caden, Ms. Schneider, Mrs. O, Mrs. Harden, Ms. Sara, Mrs. Blakstad, Mr. Joe, Mr. Mickschl, Ms. Jordan, Mr. Bret, Mr. Tanee, Mrs. Hanneman, Ms. Mandy, Mr. Young, Mrs. Fernholz, Mrs. Howe, Mrs. Ross, Mr. Z, Ms. Grace, Ms. Morley, Mr. Semb, Ms. Anna, Mrs. Fread, Ms. Lizzi, Ms. Lizbeth & Mr. Mike



Peace Path

Students in **2nd grade through 5th grade** have all had the opportunity to practice and use the Peace Path. **Children learn to express their feelings constructively and to listen to others**, which can lead to a more harmonious school environment. Peace Paths can reduce the need for adult interventions in minor disputes, allowing teachers to focus more on teaching rather than conflict resolution. This proactive approach to conflict resolution can also **decrease bullying** incidents, as students are equipped with the tools to address and defuse tensions before they escalate.

Adapted from The Fit and Fun Blog by Fit and Fun Playscapes.



OTHER EVENTS & PROJECTS



Join Our PTO

Our next Parent Teacher Organization Meeting on Wednesday, December 3rd from 5:00-6:00 pm in the Hamilton library.



HAMILTON & SOTA I FOOD DRIVE

We are collecting donations to help supplement our school food pantry program during this time. Your support will help ensure our families have access to the essentials they need.

We are accepting shelf-stable food items only. Please avoid glass containers for safety.

Donations can be dropped off at the Hamilton & SOTA I office on weekdays between 7:30am and 3:00pm.

Frequently requested food items include:

POP TARTS	CEREAL
CRACKERS	PASTA
PRETZELS	TUNA
CANNED CHICKEN	SOUP
CANNED VEGETABLES	PEANUT BUTTER
RICE	MAC & CHEESE
BEANS	BEEF STICKS
MICROWAVEABLE MEALS	CHEESE STICKS
SPAGHETTI SAUCE (CANNED OR PLASTIC JARS).	MUFFIN MIX
FRUIT (CANNED OR PLASTIC CONTAINERS)	
GROCERY GIFT CARDS (TO BE MANAGED BY OUR SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER)	

Thank you for helping us care for our community!



HAMILTON & SOTA I FAMILY NIGHT

TASTE OF 7TH STREET

Dinner Menu

Turkey
Mac & Cheese
Fried Rice
Collard Greens
Egg Rolls
Tamales
Green Beans with Bacon
Mash Potatoes
Gravy
Cornbread
Fry Bread
Stuffing
Cranberry Fluff
Horchata



Turkey Scavenger Hunt



Legos



Coloring



Hmong Ball Toss



Hmong Top Spin



Native Bracelet Making

Enter through Door A



NOVEMBER 20TH, 5:30-7:00

thank you
Donors

- Washburn Neighborhood Group - food donation
- Delta Kappa Gamma Alpha Omega Chapter - mittens and hats
- Toyoty of La Crosse- grocery donation

Your Voice Matters

We want to hear from you!

If you would like to learn more, ask questions, share your insights, or volunteer please contact Jon Zinniel, Hamilton Community Schools Coordinator at 608-789-5092 or jjinniel@lacrossesd.org