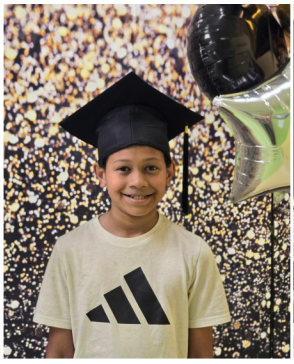
# OUR COMMUNITY SCHOOL REFLECTION

# MAY 2026

**Celebrate Success!** **Share What We Learn!** **Updates on Projects!**

## Fifth Grade Graduation






Our 5th Grade Graduation was a beautiful celebration of memories, accomplishments, and exciting new beginnings. With over **175 family and community members** gathered to cheer on and congratulate our students, the room was filled with pride, applause, and a few happy tears as we honored this special milestone. Students shared **heartfelt speeches** and hopes for the future, while the **orchestra performed** and added to the meaningful atmosphere of the evening. Families enjoyed an **ice cream sandwich reception**, a **slideshow** featuring photos and memories from the students' years at Hamilton, and plenty of time for pictures together. One of the most special moments was when each 5th grader **received a decorative key** on a ribbon, symbolizing that they will always be welcome at Hamilton. We are so proud of our students and cannot wait to see all the amazing adventures that await them in middle school!















**Third graders** participated in the **annual "Slide Into Safety"** event at the Omni Center, put on by local organizations. They rotated through stations, including **swimming/boating safety, fire safety, safety at the park**, and much more! Students learned about **basic first aid** and what is an emergency and a non-emergency.











## SLIDE INTO SAFETY & PETTIBONE FISHING













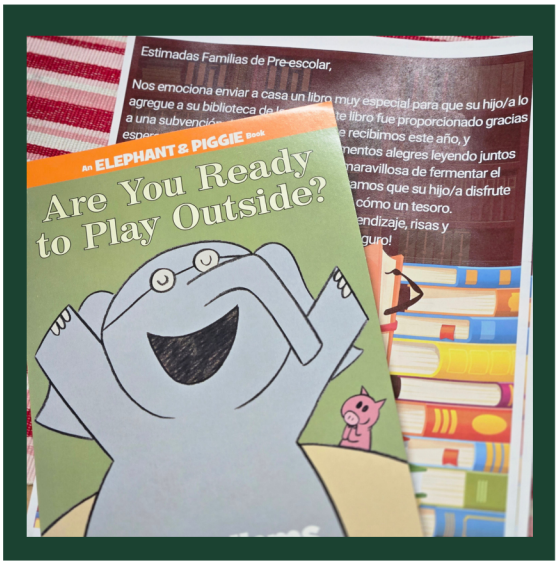


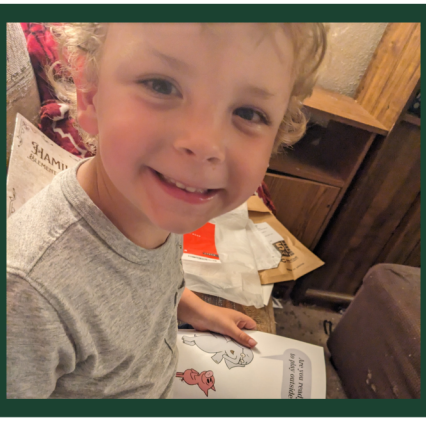



After those presentations, they bussed down to **Pettibone Lagoon** for fishing lessons with **Mrs. and Mr. Blakstad**! Students practiced **casting**, dropping a line, and some even **baited their own hooks**! Many fish were caught and released, including sunfish, blue gills, bass, perch, and even a dogfish. It was a fantastic experience for everyone.

# BUILDING HOME LIBRARIES
## ONE BOOK AT A TIME

We are excited to continue building home libraries one book at a time! Our PK-3 students each received another special book to take home and enjoy over the summer months. Preschool through first grade students were thrilled to receive **"Are You Ready for Summer?"** featuring favorite characters **Piggie and Elephant**. Our second and third grade students received a **"Pizza and Taco"** book. We love seeing our students develop a love of reading both at school and at home. Thank you to our wonderful families for partnering with us and **encouraging your children to read, explore stories, and grow as readers** all summer long!

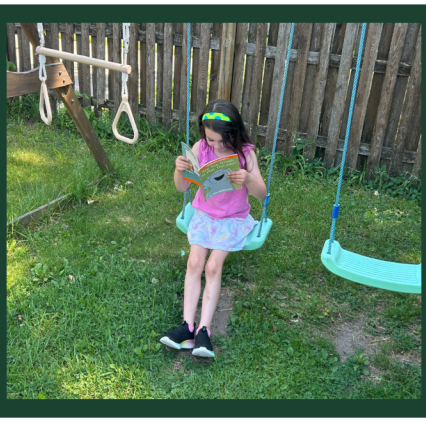


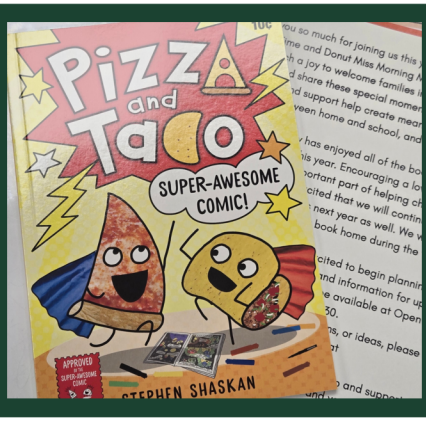















# Family Night Dance

Our final family night of the year was one to remember as families came together for an exciting **all-school dance party** with **DJ Brettly**! The night was filled with energy, laughter, and music as students, families, and staff **danced and sang along** to favorite songs. **Light-up accessories** like glowing bracelets, flashing wands, and fun sunglasses added extra sparkle and excitement to the celebration. It was wonderful to see our school community connecting, making memories, and enjoying time together on the dance floor. What a fun way to celebrate the year and end our family nights on a high note!
















## National Principal Day




On National Principal Day, we were proud to **celebrate Mrs. Fernholz** and all she does for our Hamilton school community. Mrs. Fernholz greets each day with a smile and works hard to **build meaningful connections** with students, staff, and families. Whether she is **visiting classrooms**, **encouraging students** in the hallways, or **supporting staff**, she helps make Hamilton a welcoming and positive place to learn and grow. Her kindness, leadership, and dedication to our school community are appreciated each and every day. Thank you, Mrs. Fernholz, for all you do to **help our students shine**!

## 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—then enjoy a homemade treat!


















# FIELD DAY



The dictionary defines a “field day” as “a time of extraordinary pleasure, success, or opportunity,” and that perfectly described this year’s **Hamilton Field Day**! With bright sunshine and smiles all around, students enjoyed a day packed with fun, laughter, teamwork, and exciting activities. The celebration was even more special because it was also **“USA Day”** during our ABC Countdown, as we joined in celebrating **America250**. Students and staff showed their spirit by wearing red, white, and blue while enjoying the festivities together. One of the biggest highlights was the **dunk tank**, where Mrs. Fernholz, Tyler from BGC, and our 4/5 teachers bravely volunteered to get “dunked” for the entertainment of students and staff. Cheers, splashes, and laughter filled the air all afternoon, making Field Day a memorable celebration for our entire school community!













































# NATIONAL SCHOOL NURSE DAY

**School Nurse Appreciation Day** gave us the opportunity to recognize the many ways our health assistant, **Ms. Moua,** helps care for our students and staff each day. As a new member of the Hamilton community, she has quickly become someone students can count on for **comfort, support, and encouragement**. Whether she is helping with scrapes and bandages, patiently working through problems, or stepping in during unexpected moments like a breakfast syrup spill, Ms. Moua always does it with **care** and **compassion**. Her **calm presence** and helping hands make a difference throughout our school each day, and we are incredibly grateful to have her as part of the Hamilton family.






# SCHOOL LUNCH HERO DAY

On **School Lunch Hero Day**, we celebrated our cafeteria superheroes, **Ms. Jordan** and **Mr. Brett**, for all they do to keep our students fueled and ready to learn each day! Students and staff joined in the fun by **dressing up as superheroes** to honor the **care, kindness, and hard work** they bring to Hamilton every single day. From preparing **meals with smiles** to **building relationships with students**, Ms. Jordan and Mr. Brett make a positive impact far beyond the lunchroom. We are so thankful for our lunch heroes and the important role they play in our school community!







# Moment Makers: Character Counts

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



## 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.







**98% Attendance**



**Fifteen students had 98% or better attendance this school year!**

## TEACHER APPRECIATION WEEK

Teacher appreciation week is the first week of May. Our staff were celebrated by our families, Franciscan Sisters Of Perpetual Adoration, La Crosse Public Education Foundation, SOTA I Fifth Graders, SOTA Steering Committee, Hamilton PTO, and Double Good. **We are so thankful to have such a supportive community!**

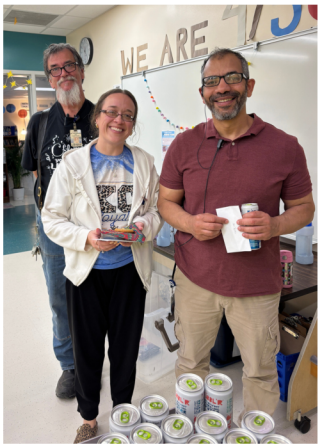















## SCHOOLWIDE PBIS CELEBRATION

To celebrate our quarter four school-wide PBIS success, our entire Hamilton/SOTA I community enjoyed a special **trip to the Rivoli Theatre**! Approximately **240 students walked together** to the theater to celebrate the **positive choices**, **kindness**, and **responsibility** shown throughout the year. Students enjoyed popcorn and Starry or root beer while sharing the experience as a school community. This year, students had the opportunity to **vote on the movie**, and the winning choice was the animated **film "GOAT"**. We are so thankful for opportunities like this that bring our students together, celebrate their hard work, and create lasting memories for everyone involved.












# Mentor Breakfast

On May 12th, **mentors and mentees** spent time celebrating their time as a whole group with special **breakfast treats** and a roaring **kickball game** of Mentors vs. Mentees in the gym. The rain did not put a damper on the day. There were lots of smiles and laughs to close out the year. Hamilton is so **thankful** for the meaningful hours that were donated to our students.





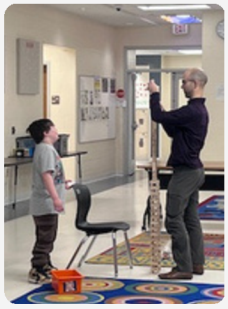














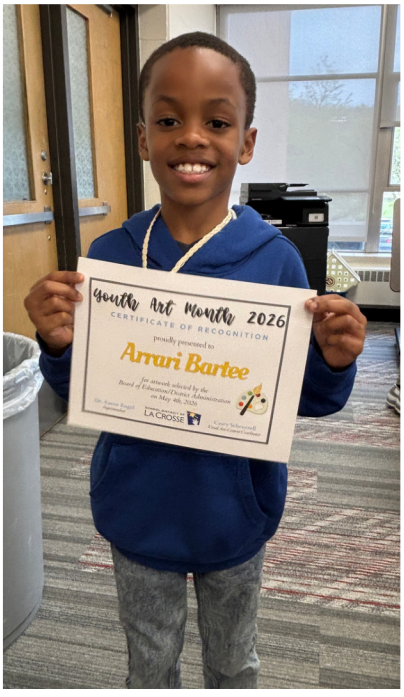


**Mentors collectively volunteered for 874 hours during the 2025-2026 school year!**



## SCHOOL BOARD ART SHOW

Each year school board members select one piece of **art from each school** to hang in the **school district office**. From all the art at our art show, **Hamilton 2nd grader Arrari** and **SOTA 4th Grader Soraya's** pieces were chosen. We were proud to have them present their work at a May meeting of our school board.



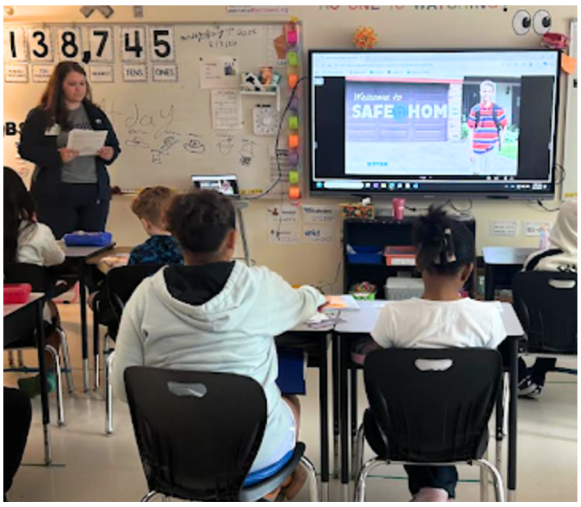




## ORCHESTRA CONCERT

Hamilton 4th and 5th grade orchestra students performed in their spring concert on Thursday, May 7th! 4th grade students, who started on their instruments this fall, performed two short pieces. 5th grade orchestra also performed two pieces of their own before combining with 4th graders for a finale of Ode to Joy! The students did a fantastic job!






## SAFE AT HOME

Our community school partner **Emplify Health by Gundersen** taught the **"Safe at Home" course** to our 4th and 5th grade students. It is a safety education class that teachers:

- What to do when someone calls/stops when no adults is at home
- Leadership decision-making skills
- What to do in an emergency
- Fire and personal safety

We are thankful for this partnership and opportunity!

## MATT HESSEL MIAL WRITING CONTEST

Congratulations to **Juanita, a 4th-grade student** in Ms. Ross's class. She won **second place** for 4th grade in the **thirty-sixth annual Matt Hessel-Mial Creative Writing Contest**! In his eight years, Matt exercised his passion for writing by writing creative short stories, some of which were published, such as "The Great Planet Swap"! In keeping his spirit for creative writing and curious imagining alive, the annual writing contest aims to inspire writers in grades second through fifth to share their unique **storytelling talents**! Students must write a **fictional story**. Topics are unlimited! In addition to a copy of Matt's book, she also won a backpack filled with goodies and cookies for her class.






# ABC COUNTDOWN

Students and staff had a blast with our **ABC Countdown to Summer**! Each day highlights a different letter of the alphabet with a special theme or activity to celebrate the end of the school year. From **A for Amazing Authors to Z for Zip-Up and Zoom Home**, every letter brings new excitement and fun.

**A** mazing Authors



**B** ubble Day



**C** reate a Masterpiece



**D** aredevil Stunts



**E** xtra Recess



**F** ancy Dress-Up



**G** low in the Dark



**H** at Day



**I** ce Cream Day

**J** ammie Day

**K** indness Day




**L** ego Day

**M** Mo Willems Day




**O** utside Day



**P** opsicle Day

**Q** uick Trip Day

**N** ew Name Day

**R** ainbow Day

**S** illy Socks & Sunglasses

**T** eam USA Day



**U** nder the Table Day







**V** isiting Day



**W** acky Hair Day



**X** -change Autographs









**Y** ear-End Clearance



**Z** ip Up and Zoom Home



**Thanks to Hamilton PTO for purchasing a yearbook for each Hamilton student this year!**

# Amazing Race

Our staff wrapped up the school year with an unforgettable Amazing Race **adventure** around town!











Teams raced from place to place completing **fun and creative challenges**, all while capturing picture proof along the way.










There were plenty of laughs, **friendly competition**, and memories made as staff worked together to earn points and race toward victory.















# KICKBALL & LAST DAY OF SCHOOL

Our last day of school ended with one of our favorite traditions—the **5th grade vs. staff kickball game**! Students and staff brought lots of **energy, teamwork, and laughter** to the field as families and classmates cheered them on. It was a fun way to celebrate our amazing 5th graders, reflect on a wonderful school year, and send our students into summer with great memories.

































USA









WHAT DAY
IT?















*Building community, one game and smile at a time!*

## SAVE THE DATE!

### NATIONAL NIGHT OUT: AUGUST 4TH, 2026

This will be the 3rd year that we will be supporting the games at National Night Out for our local neighborhoods.

Consider joining us this summer. More information will be sent out closer to the date.




*Back to School*

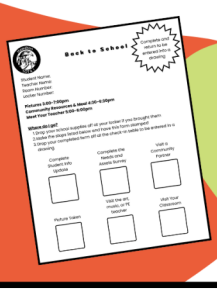
# OPEN HOUSE

Get ready for the new school year by coming to open house!

**AUGUST 18, 2026**

COMMUNITY RESOURCES & MEAL 4:30-6:30PM

MEET YOUR TEACHER 5:00-6:00PM



You'll receive a scavenger hunt form when you arrive. It will include teacher assignments, steps to complete, and a map. Complete and return it to be entered into a gift card drawing.

# thank you Donors




- Linda Lee - pet food for pantry
- Toyota of La Crosse - groceries for pantry
- Gundersen Vision Services Department - $500 for pantry

## 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 jzinniel@lacrossesd.org**