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TURNAGAIN ELEMENTARY STUDENT NEWSPAPER

Turnagain students prepare to level up

By Evie Shasby

The move from elementary school to middle school is one of the most exciting yet scary times in a student's young life. From kindergarten to fifth grade, most students become used to having one teacher for each grade, playing with the same friends on the playground, and seeing the same specials instructors and staff walking through the hallways. With the move to middle school, students must step out of the comfort of elementary school into a whole new world in their educational journey.

Evelyn Ryan is a fifth grader in the Russian immersion program at Turnagain. When asked what she thinks will be different about middle school she said, "Well, I think it's different because it's much bigger and you won't have two classes or just one." Mia Bellino, a fifth grader from Mrs. Eastham's class said, "It'll be bigger, much bigger, with lots of people. Much more people." Isaac Lukhtanov, a fifth grader from the Russian immersion program, said, "Homework's going to be harder. It's going to be a lot bigger and there's going to be a lot more people in classes."

Although Isaac thinks middle school will be more challenging than elementary school, there are things he's excited about, "Probably getting to choose my classes and being able to go to the library over recess. It's, like, a lot more choice." Evelyn Ryan says she's looking forward to "going to the library a lot and being in the art hall."

Mrs. Olga Pustina, Turnagain's fourth-fifth Russian immersion teacher said, "I think that the way that the school is set up will give students a lot more responsibility and also a lot of independence and they will have to track their own schedule, their own classes, being on time, keeping track of all the assignments and the homework. But it's also a fun time too where you get to choose what you do, as when it comes to certain subjects."

Sophia Fell is a sixth grader at Romig Middle School and a former Turnagain student, she said, "One thing about it that's different is you have seven different classes ... different teachers. You don't have classes with the same people unless you get really lucky, and there's a lot more homework. Also it's, like, more independent, like you go to your own classes. No single file line."



Turnagain Elementary School exterior

Sophia says one of her favorite things about middle school is, "Probably that the classes are so short that it's like the moment you start to get bored, there's like only five minutes left of class, then you're off to your next class."

Marcelle Shasby, another former Turnagain student, is an eighth grader at Romig who is preparing to move on to West High school, "I actually remember sitting in the cafeteria getting talked to as a little sixth grader and the counselors were telling us all the electives and everything that Romig has to offer and it was just all very overwhelming and just doing that during this time of year again for West also brings back all the feelings that I had when I was in Turnagain going to Romig." Marcelle said, "But one thing that I hope that all these new middle schoolers keep in mind is that the first couple weeks of school is really where you just get set in a daily routine and seeing what time you wake up and what time you have to catch the bus or 'oh I need to go get to this class now because it's further away.' ... But if you make friends and don't misbehave all the time, then I'm sure you'll be off to a pretty good first year of middle school."

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Field trips lead students down pathway to success

By Emlyn LeBoeuf

Turnagain Tigers are headed down a pathway to success with a new plan to ensure appropriate field trips for all grade-levels. The "Pathway to Success" was created by Turnagain's Guiding Coalition. Amanda Kyle, a fourth-fifth combination teacher at Turnagain, is one of seven members of the Guiding Coalition. When asked what the Guiding Coalition does at Turnagain, she said, "We help ... bring everybody's voices together to come up with solutions for things that need a focus in the building."

Ms. Kyle said the Pathway to Success was created because, "We were noticing that a lot of times different classrooms would be doing the same field trips, like they'd go to the zoo a couple times, the museum a couple of times. So, kids weren't getting a variety of locations to go and see. So, we went through the social studies and science curriculum to see what each of those focuses were and we separated out so each grade level gets to have a different experience outside the building."

The Pathway to Success starts in kindergarten with a visit to the Botanical Gardens. The next step is the Alaska Zoo for first graders. Next is the Alaska Museum of Science and Nature in second grade. In third grade, the students will be able to go to the Anchorage Museum. Fourth graders will have a chance to visit the Alaska Native Heritage Center. The last step in the journey happens in fifth grade when students visit the planetarium.

Ms. Kyle said that the Pathway to Success is important because it goes along with Turnagain's student creed and helps develop real-world skills, "Developing those real-world skills, we take it outside of the building and we practice. What does that look like having those strong habits of mind?"

In the fall, second graders got to test their real-world skills at the Alaska Museum of Science and Nature. Mrs. Sarah Yagodin was the second grade long-term substitute at the time, and she said, "The really cool thing about the museum is they got to see the dinosaurs. They got to touch the bones and they got to hear other scientists talk about it." When asked why field trips are important, Ms. Yagodin said, "They need to be able to see it and feel it and experience things from different perspectives."

When asked what her favorite part about the field trip was, Cecilia Starzec, a second grader in Mrs. Ashcraft's class said, "My favorite part was that I got to be in a museum with all these cool things and like all these things just popping into my brain and being around with my friends and it was just amazing."

In February, the fifth graders visited the Planetarium and Discovery Center at the Anchorage Museum. Heather Ballard, the fifth grade English immersion teacher, said, "It was really interesting because we got to do a lot of hands-on activities about all different science topics and we also got to go into their planetarium and look at the night sky from all different perspectives."



Photo courtesy Sarah Yagodin: Second graders visit The Alaska Museum of Science and Nature.

When asked what she learned during the field trip, Scarlett Nidoy from Mrs. Eastham's fifth-grade class said, "I learned, like, gravity and forces and about planets." Evelyn Ryan from Ms. Ballard's class said she learned "turtles could stay where they are for a while and look like they're a statue, but they're actually real."

Ms. Ballard said that the fifth graders experienced an unexpected real-world skill when a fire alarm went off during the field trip, "At the end of the field trip when we were at our last lesson with the educator, there was a fire at the museum and so we actually had to evacuate the building." Evelyn Ryan said she was, "A little scared and surprised" about the unexpected evacuation, but a representative from the museum reported that everyone remained safe. According to Adam Baldwin, deputy director of visitor engagement, "There was at no time an actual fire at the museum that day nor were our guests in any danger." He said the alarm went off as a result of the floor crew setting off a smoke detector while grinding the floor for the lobby floor refinish project. Baldwin said, "Since our smoke detector is many times more sensitive than a common household or business detector, these things happen periodically."

When asked why she thinks field trips are important, Ms. Ballard said, "I think field trips are really important for students so that you understand you can learn about new things in all different places around the community and so you can also learn from experts in different fields, not just from your teacher."

As each student travels on this pathway to success, by the end of the year, and the end of their time at Turnagain, everybody will have learned an important skill for their future.

Super Sweepers to the rescue!

By Clarissa Boekhout

Not all heroes wear capes, some of them carry trash bags. On May 9, Turnagain students will have a chance to be super heroes when they sign up for the Super Sweepers event at Turnagain.

Joyce Hudson, Turnagain's kindergarten-first grade English partner teacher, is the Super Sweepers coordinator. Mrs. Hudson said, "It's a day when all our snow melts and we find all the trash on the ground. We spend time just getting sure we get all that trash picked up so we can beautify Anchorage and have a nice place."

Mrs. Hudson remembers doing Super Sweepers as a student at Turnagain and got involved as a coordinator over 10 years ago when she worked at Abbott Loop Elementary School, "I always used to love doing it as a kid ... I really think cleaning this whole city up and making it look better is a really important thing. It helps everyone feel happier to have a clean city."

Milton Berry, a second grader from Mrs. Ashcraft's Russian immersion class, is one of the students who helped at Super Sweepers in the past. Milton says he thinks Super Sweepers is important "cuz it helps our environment get keep clean." Milton also said, "It was really fun cuz when we were there, we got to clean up and sometimes when you didn't want to clean up, you could take a little break and play on the playground. And it was really fun cuz you could come with your friends. And so, I thought it was really fun. So, I came with my family."

Brooklynn Spooner is the events manager for the Anchorage Chamber of Commerce, the orgainzation that sponsors Super Sweepers. Ms. Spooner said, "Super Sweepers is the Anchorage Chamber's youth engagement component of Citywide Cleanup. The program partners with the Anchorage School District to teach students the value of stewardship, volunteerism, and community pride. Each year, dozens of schools participate, empowering students to take an active role in keeping Anchorage clean and beautiful." Ms. Spooner went on to say, "The program is open to K–12 schools, allowing students of all ages to get involved in serving their community."

Aurora Barron is a fourth grader in the Russian immersion program. Aurora has been to Super Sweepers twice in a row. Aurora does Super Sweepers because she wants to keep the school grounds nice and clean. Aurora said, "I'll go into, like, the woods areas, cuz, you'd be surprised, a lot of people actually litter there. It's actually really nasty." Aurora said that one time when she was doing Super Sweepers, her friend's mom found a whole metal pole in the wooded area behind the ice rink.

Mrs. Hudson says she's also seen some strange things thrown away over the years, "One time somebody brought a broken barbecue. That was pretty strange ... Another time somebody brought a whole rug."



Archival photo, May 2022: Super Sweeper Janson Seda prepares to clean up around Turnagain.

Spooner said each participating school receives a case of 200 cleanup bags. Aurora says she usually fills up one and a half bags with trash if she's lucky.

Attendance numbers vary by school and thousands of students participate each year across the district. Turnagain has about 300 students. When asked how many students show up to help at Super Sweepers, Mrs. Hudson said, "We only get about 15 people who show up to help. So, we get a decent amount, but it's not really the majority of the school probably." Mrs. Hudson went on to say, "I just really hope that we can get more people out cuz then more people are aware of ... what just throwing the trash on the ground, what it does and how much and how hard it is to pick up."

During Super Sweepers and Anchorage Citywide Cleanup, families are encouraged to clean up in their own neighborhoods, parks, and local green spaces. Event organizers encourage students and families to focus on visible litter in safe, accessible areas. Spooner said, "If you can see it, you should clean it!"

Mrs. Hudson says you can help keep your environment clean all year long, "If you have something like trash ... don't just throw it on the ground. Sometimes it's hard cuz you have to hold it for a while before you either get home to throw it in the trash can, but it's much easier than that; the parks all have trash cans that you can put things in. So instead of just throwing your trash on the ground, pick it up and put it in the trash cans."

Please be a hero and join the Super Sweepers on May 9! A hotdog meal is available to all participants and if you fill at least one bag, your name is entered for a chance to win a $50 gift card to Fred Meyer.

Turnagain lunches go old school

By Cora Moe

Turnagain's new meal model is a huge hit! Starting on March 16, the hot lunch line backed up almost to the office and was filled with kids waiting patiently to try the brand new lunch service. Instead of meals pre-wrapped in plastic, Turnagian's cafe now has "traditional service" with trays of fresh food. More meals are being prepared from scratch at the central kitchen, located off of Old Seward Highway in South Anchorage. Marci McGill, senior director of student nutrition, said, "Our goal is to represent 75% of our menu from scratch in the next 3-5 years." McGill also said that breakfast and lunch will both become more interactive, with choice and flexibility, "Students will see the food, choose their items, and build their own meal." Olive Walker, a third grader in Mr. Mason's class said, "I used to eat some things, but not all of it, and now I can choose if I want it."

In addition to being packaged and served differently, there are updates to some meals. For instance, instead of round saucy personal pizzas, Turnagain now has fancy thin slices of pizza. First grader Martin Moe said, "We have never, ever, ever, ever had pepperoni pizza before this week!" Another new popular meal is teriyaki chicken with rice. Brooklynn Delph, a fifth grader in Mrs. Eastham's class, said, "There are better food options and, to be honest, it just tastes lots better." Ms. Martha said she's expecting even more new food options next school year.

As well as being delicious, the new model is better for the earth. Now that there is no more plastic wrap on the lunches, there is not as much waste going out of the building every day. In addition to less material waste, the traditional model may cause less food waste. Brooklynn said, "I don't think I'm wasting that much food anymore because I feel like I'll eat more because it tastes better." In fact, Ms. McGill said, "Researchers from the University of Alaska Anchorage studied the traditional meal program to see how it impacted students. They compared traditional meals to the old pre-packaged meals and found students ate 92% of their entrée with traditional meals versus 61% before."

Ms. Martha says the new meal model is more popular than the old model, "Yes, way more popular. My numbers have increased a lot." The new hot lunch is so popular it's causing a new problem: during the last lunch, which consists of four of Turnagain's fourth and fifth grade classes, the line is so long that some days students hardly have enough time to eat their lunch! To fix this, staff have started allowing two classes to get hot lunch at a time while the other classes sit at the tables until the line is shorter, then the other two classes are called to get their lunch. The classes alternate who goes first each day so that a class does not get their lunch last two days in a row.





Photographer Lorelei Benson: Above, Mrs. Binta and Ms. Debbie serve students using traditional hot lunch model. Below, fourth graders eating lunch in cafeteria.

If you read the article in the first issue of *Paw Print,* "Hot Lunch Count – Something's not adding up!" by Ryann Kyle, you will remember the issue of lunch counts being inaccurate, in large part, due to the number of tardy students each day. Ms. Martha said it's still a problem, but it's getting better, "Because now instead of getting my envelopes at 8:30, I get it at 9:00, so all the late kids, they can raise their hands." Even with the teachers bringing lunch counts later, Ms. Martha said accurately judging how many kids will be there remains an issue. Also, because the new lunch isn't prepackaged, Ms. Martha said it's harder to measure out how much food is needed per person. Ms. Martha said she feels "a little bit stressed out because I don't know the portions of the food and getting the numbers right." Thankfully, Ms. Martha does have help. When the new traditional lunch model started on March 16, Ms. Debbie McCarthy came on as a temporary substitute cafeteria assistant. As of April 8, Mrs. Binta Jammeh joined the cafeteria team; they help serve food, pan food, and do dishes, and they always do it with a friendly smile!

Despite the learning curve for students and staff, the traditional lunch model has been well-received and seems to support the ASD Student Nutrition mission of "Fueling Student Success"!

Fifth graders take a look back

By Ryann Kyle and Ms. Karen

As Turnagain fifth graders prepare to make the move to middle school, *Paw Print* wanted to know more about their time in elementary school. We asked a few students about their favorite memories, funniest moments and what they'll miss the most. Their answers can be found throughout the paper.

Favorite Memories:

Felise Aleni, Ms. Kyle
"It's when we went to The Dome."

Charlotte Hansen, Mrs. Pustina and Ms. Ballard
"One of my favorite memories is probably going swimming for the fifth grade thing."

Lila Raven, Mrs. Pustina and Ms. Ballard
"One of my favorite memories is when Vasilika left and we all got to hang out with her and make posters for her."

Bradley Price, Mrs. Eastham
"I'm pretty sure this was in second grade when Mr. Freestone was still working here ... There was a chair over there next to the basketball hoops and I was out there with Sebastian and my friend Levi ... and we got to pie him in the face which was a really fun memory."

Gatorian Houston, Mrs. Pustina and Ms. Ballard
"Probably, like, movie nights would be – it was really fun. And pajama day." "You can, like, hang out with your friends and watch a movie at the same time and so you can just wake up without actually dressing up your clothes and just go to school."

Nicole Ndokwu, Ms. Kyle
"The concert and the field trips, especially the swimming."

Gesselle Rambaud, Ms. Kyle
(Memory from Lake Hood) "There was this one event. I think it was like this tradition thing like where you would dress up and then like show your tradition."

CONTINUED FROM LEAD STORY: TURNAGAIN STUDENTS PREPARE TO LEVEL UP

Turnagain is preparing for two fifth grade promotion ceremonies. The Russian immersion completion ceremony will be on May 18th and the neighborhood students will celebrate on May 19th. So why are the promotion ceremonies and the move to middle school such a big deal? Evelyn Ryan says, "I think it's important because you're kind of graduating or celebrating your time here and also kind of saying goodbye to your friends." Marcelle Shasby said, "This is basically the most important first six years of your life that you just spent in school, and you have lots more, ... but these ones are very important and they're fun and you learn so many things, like you learn how to read or some of the Russian immersion kids they learn a whole new language and you learn to make social connections with all these different people and I think that it's very important because you get to celebrate all those times and memories that you've made."

Speaking of preparing, many fifth graders have been preparing for middle school in their own ways. Evelyn Ryan said, "I've gone to go see the school. My mom's read me a bunch of things from a paper." Isaac Lukhtanov said he's done math flash cards, read books, and practices Russian with Duolingo. Several students also visited Romig during an open house held in February and the counselors from Romig visited Turnagain in March where fifth grade students got to choose their electives for next year and learn about after school activities.

When asked what advice she would give to fifth graders preparing to move to middle school, Sophia Fell said, "Be yourself. Be open to getting new friends. Definitely get ready for a good amount of homework. Don't procrastinate ... On the first day, find some nice people cuz that'll make you feel a lot better. And also the security guards are not scary. That's one very major thing to know." Sophia went on to say, "Also, you're not going to be tardy to class. Trust me, you're going to be able to find your classes." She also suggested practicing some math skills and said to make sure to get a zip up binder. Mrs. Olga Pustina said, "You can't just start preparing for middle school at a certain point. You've been working on it all your six years at Turnagain."

As every Turnagain student prepares to move on to the next grade level and our fifth graders approach the end of their time at Turnagain, Mrs. Pustina's advice is, "Follow your dreams and don't give up. There will be a lot of hard times as they go to Romig and then West High School and then college and then life, but never give up is the key to the success."

The Turnagain Spelling Bee takes a "suspicious" turn

By Janson Seda

At what seemed to be an ordinary spelling bee, things took a "suspicious" turn in the fifth round. On January 21, 20 hopeful spelling bee participants assembled in the MPR for Turnagain's annual spelling bee.

Ms. Maddy Ramuglia (Ms. Ram) was one of this year's spelling bee teacher sponsors along with Mrs. Eastham. When asked why the spelling bee is important, Ms. Ram said, "Although we have a lot of assisted technology nowadays ... being able to spell ... is, I think, still a very important skill. The other reason I think the spelling bee is important is because ... you're getting that practice speaking in front of a crowd, in front of your peers and showing what you can do. Not everyone can do that and it's a really scary experience. So a spelling bee kind of lets you get practice at that as well."

According to spellingbee.com, the National Spelling Bee began in 1925 when nine newspapers joined together to host a spelling bee. In 1941, the E.W. Scripps Company assumed leadership of the program. 100 years later, the competition has grown to include millions of second through eighth grade students from around the country competing on a local, state and national level.

Ms. Ram said that each second through fifth grade class at Turnagain held a mini classroom competition and the two winners of that mini competition went on to the school spelling bee.

The school spelling bee is done in rounds. Each participant takes a turn walking up to the mic, getting a word from the pronouncer, and spelling that word. If the speller spells the word correctly, they move on to the next round. If the speller spells the word incorrectly, they are eliminated from the competition. Ms. Ram said, "So every round we lost more and more students as the words got harder."

When asked about the rules of the competition Ms. Ram said, "So the main rule was... you have to spell the word correctly ... you should say the word before you spell the word ... then you say it again to know to say you were done." Ms. Ram went on to say, "Other rules were being a good sport."

There were also rules for the audience. Before the competition began, Mr. Pustina, the spelling bee pronouncer, asked the audience to hold their applause until the end of each round. He also told the audience that whispering, mouthing, or saying letters out loud was not permitted. In the fifth round, one of those rules was broken.

During his turn in the fifth round, Zylahn Lauano, a fifth grader from Ms. Kyle's class, stepped up to the microphone. Zylahn said, "The word was 'SUSPICIOUS.' Uh, and a person was talking while I was doing it, but I didn't know how to spell suspicious in the first place. So he basically gave me a redemption round. But yeah, I spelled it wrong and he was, like, making noises like saying 'U.' And then ... I think Ms. Dawn heard it and she was like, 'No, come again. You're going to spell another word without no interruptions.'"

Ms. Dawn said, "At first I heard some kids saying letters. Like the first time I heard it, I kind of just put it aside because I was like, maybe did I mishear that? But the second time it was clearly someone saying, I believe it was a 'U.' And so I had to call it out right then because as a judge, I have a duty to make sure that the spelling bee is fair for every student."

And that's when Ms. Dennis intervened, allowing Zylahn to continue in the bee. Ms. Dawn said, "And she was absolutely spot on ... it's important that he got to have another chance because ... there was too much vocalizing during his turn."

To win the bee, a speller must spell two words correctly in the final round. In round 6, there were three spellers left in the competition: Zylahn, fifth grader Jesse Reeves, and third grader Hugo Nicelo.

Jesse was eliminated in round seven missing the word "BRACKEN."

In round 10, Hugo spelled "GALORE" correctly, while Zylahn misspelled "ATRIUM." Hugo took the win in Round 11 with the final word, "SAVANT."

When asked how he prepared for the spelling bee, Hugo said his mom helped him practice at home, and he tried to memorize how to spell the words on his own.

When Hugo was asked how he felt when he won, he said "I was like happy because it was like my first time winning in the spelling bee at Turnagain and I feel so happy that my mom congratulated me." Zylahn said it felt good to come in second place.

Hugo took a test in hopes of moving on to the 2026 Alaska State Spelling Bee. Unfortunately, he did not qualify. The state bee took place on March 20 and featured the top 75 spellers from across Alaska.



Photographer Evie Shasby: 2026 Turnagain Elementary School Spelling Bee Champion, Hugo Nicelo.

Turnagian readers go to battle!

By Auggie Baldwin

Four brave Turnagain teams fought their hearts out and put their knowledge to the test during this year's Battle of the Books competition. Battle of the Books, fondly nicknamed BOB, is a school activity where students read a pre-selected list of books and then go against other schools to test their knowledge. Julie Doepken, Turnagain's librarian and the fifth grade BOB coach said, "Battle of the Books is a, hopefully, motivational reading program where ... 10 to 12 books, depending on your level, are chosen and it's hopefully to encourage kids to try something new, to try new authors and then you read and you try to remember details from the book." Amanda Kyle, Turnagain's fourth-fifth combo teacher and the third-fourth grade BOB coach said, "It encourages that love for reading and again finding maybe some different books and different genres you wouldn't have otherwise picked up on your own."

Battle of the Books questions aren't easy, so kids start reading books and preparing in October. 27 participants hoped to earn a spot on the third-fourth grade team and 14 students fought for a spot on the fifth grade team. Students read books and practiced weekly, but only the top eight students from each grade level moved on to the competition. Mrs. Doepken and Ms. Kyle picked their final teams in January, using similar methods, with Mrs. Doepken saying, "One, attendance. Two, how many books you read and if you read the same one more than once ... And then also your score on a test. So, I just add those three up, and that's how I chose the teams."

The two third-fourth teams included Aurora B., Victoria P., Emilia L., and Clarissa B. on team #59 calling themselves "The Tiny Nobles" and Auggie B., Miriam G., Lorelei B., and Sofiia Z. on team #60 calling themselves "The Blue Banana Bookworms."

Fifth grade team #56 included Cora M., Aria R., Mia B., and Janson S., and they called themselves "The Super Reader Project." Scarlett N., Brooklynn D., Jesse R., and Evie S., made up team #57, and called themselves "The Lost Readers."



Fifth grade Battle of the Books teams with coach Doepken



Photo Courtesy Kristie Benson: Third-fourth Battle of the Books teams with coach Kyle

Turnagain's teams each went against upwards of 60 teams in the regional Battle of the Books competitions at West High School, with the two fifth grade teams battling it out at the fifth-sixth competition on February 3, and the two third-fourth grade teams fighting for a win on February 5, 2026.

The battles consist of three rounds with twelve questions in each round. Three to four teams participate in a round. There are three main roles on each team: a speaker, a writer, and a runner (also known as a messenger). On a team of four there is an alternate who sits out. Competitors have thirty seconds to write down an answer to each question, which includes the title and author of the book. The runner delivers the team's answer to the judges, then the team's speaker states their answer out loud. Teams get eight points for knowing the correct title and author. If an answer is incorrect, teams have the option to challenge. During a challenge, a team has two minutes to read through the text of the book they believe the answer came from and provide evidence showing that the scenario also happens in that book; teams get three challenges per round.

Aurora Barron, a fourth grader from the Russian immersion program, was one of the top eight. She said that she was excited and nervous going into the competition, "I was a bit shaky at first but then I got used to it."

Sofiia Zozulya, a third grader from Ms. White's class, said she was also nervous and excited. When asked if her team had a strategy, she said, "We try to read as much books as we can and then we had three books to reread."

Fifth grader Aria Raidmae said she joined Battle of the Books because, "I like the opportunity to read different books that I never thought I would ever read, and it's just fun teamwork and I like a little bit of competition." When asked what her team's strategy was, Aria said, "Each person had like three books and we tried to overlap so like each person didn't have to remember all 12 books." **CONTINUED ON PAGE 8**

Reading with a buddy makes learning fun

By Lorelei Benson

Everything is better when we work together, that's why third and fourth graders are pairing up with kindergarteners and first graders for reading buddies. Ms. Natalie White, a third grade teacher at Turnagain said, "Reading buddies is when two classes get together and they share time together. Normally the older buddies read to their little buddies. But we do more than just read. We'll do projects with them. We'll help them with their work. But mostly it's a time to get together and socialize with the little guys."

This year, Ms. White's third grade class and Ms. Asch's first grade class partnered up. Also, Ms. Ram's kindergarten class buddied up with Ms. Plumhoff's fourth grade class. Every Tuesday, Ms. White and Ms. Asch get their classes together, same as Ms. Ram and Ms. Plumhoff. Classes take turns hosting their buddies each week.

Ms. Plumhoff said reading buddies has been an important experience for her class because "it teaches the fourth graders how to be role models. And it shows the kindergarteners how to act and builds relationships between the two classes." Ms. Plumhoff went on to say, "I enjoy getting to see my fourth graders act responsible and them getting to make friends with the kindergarters. And then when we pass them in the hallway, they have friends in kindergarten and the kindergarteners get super excited to say hi."

Reading buddies are usually paired up by their teachers. Miriam Greenrose, a third grader in Ms. White's class said, "My reading buddy is Sloan and I like reading to her and playing bingo or ... a game with dice." Miriam said reading buddies is important because "it helps them learn to read a bit and they can learn to play with kids that are bigger than them."



Photographer Violet Moore: Third graders play a dice game with their first grade reading buddies.

When asked how she feels about reading buddies, Miriam's buddy, first grader Sloan Tennant said, "It is fun to be in reading buddies and the most fun moment was when me and Miriam met."

Jeremiah Franklin is a third grader who said that his favorite thing about reading buddies is "reading with them and playing games with them."

Ms. White's favorite thing about reading buddies is "I really enjoy seeing the kids interact, especially the siblings. To watch the siblings interact is ... really neat." Another great thing about watching reading buddies is watching kids express themselves in a positive way. Ms. White said, "I think it's a nice thing to do at the end of the day. I think all the kids enjoy it and it's fun for Ms. Asch and I to see – some of our kids are kind of introverted – you can really see them come out with their little buddies."

Whether it's reading, crafts, activities, or learning to socialize, you always get something out of reading buddies.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7: TURNAGAIN READERS GO TO BATTLE

In the end, for the third-fourth battle, "The Blue Banana Bookworms" took 14th place and "The Tiny Nobles" came in 23rd place. When asked how she felt about how her team placed, Sofiia said, "Good. Like 14th place out of 60 teams is pretty good." For the fifth grade teams, "The Super Reader Project" took 5th place and "The Lost Readers" took 15th place. Aria, whose team took first place at Battle of the Books last year, had mixed feelings about her team's showing, "I felt kind of sad and disappointed because I won the third-fourth Battle of the Books. But then I felt ... happy and proud because I was against sixth graders."

Mrs. Doepken said she would have been proud no matter how her teams placed, "This was one of the best prepared set of teams that I've had because even though not everybody read all the books ... I felt like the kids were more invested and more kids read more books and really paid attention during practices ... they were really committed teams this year."

The winning teams from each night of competition moved on to the state Battle of the Books competition, held via Zoom.

When asked why students should consider trying out for BOB next year, Ms. Kyle said, "Why not? It's fun to read and find new and interesting books." And Mrs. Doepken said she's already looking forward to "next year's eager readers that want to do it."

Love of Literacy brings families together

By Violet Moore

Everyone has a story and on the eve of Valentine's Day, Turnagain families came together to share their stories through reading, games, and a whole lot of love... of literacy.

This year Turnagain hosted three family nights and on February 13th, the theme was “Love of Literacy.” Julie Doepken, Turnagain’s school librarian and co-coordinator of family nights said, “We realized that the family night for February was set really close to Valentine's Day and thought love of reading matches with the love of Valentine's and so that's why it ended up being the theme.”

Stations around the room let students make valentine cards with foam hearts, string messages onto pipe cleaner with letter beads, and play word games like “slap-a-word.” Families also enjoyed magnetic poetry, mad libs, crack-the-code, and sight-word bingo.

For parents, family nights are a chance to be a part of their child’s school world, not just hear about it later. Kelly Campbell, mom of first grader Thomas Campbell, said of Thomas, “He loves coming to all the family events!” When asked what she likes the most, Kelly said, “Actually seeing all the other kids in the school, the classmates. You hear about them, but you don’t often get to meet them.”

Students had their own favorite parts about this family night, too. Oliver DeHaan, a first grader in Ms. Asch’s class, said his favorite activity was “cracking codes.” First grader Jasmay Witkowski said she came “Because it was fun!” and she also said that her favorite part was, “There was a code word one that I liked.”



Photographer Ryann Kyle: Students create valentine cards at Love of Literacy event.

When asked why she thought the theme was “Love of Literacy,” Jasmay said, “Because we learn about books” and “we got to learn about words.”

Mrs. Doepken said, “It makes my heart so happy to see everybody come and have a good time. And I just love seeing the families in the school and interacting with whatever activities we've come up with. And ... it's just good energy and I think we learn and have fun at the same time.”

With families learning side by side, the Love of Literacy family night did more than celebrate reading, it brought the Turnagain community together one letter, one word, one story at a time.

Funniest Moment:

Charlotte Hansen
“Probably when one of my classmates said, ‘Let's play math monsters.’ And then to 4 x 3, he yelled out 8.”

Gatorian Houston
“When me and Dwayne made jokes probably. Like it was, we just sometimes just die laughing.”

Lila Raven
“When we were at lunch bunch and I burped and I blamed it on Abby and I said, ‘That's not very ladylike.’ And she choked on a boba ball. That was pretty funny.”

I’ll Miss:

Gesselle Rambaud
“Probably Mr. Post cuz he's like a really fun teacher.”

Bradley Price
“Probably Mrs. Doepken because she's a really nice and calm person. She's like, she makes everybody feel joyful and especially when you're sad, she'll cheer you up.”

Charlotte Hansen
“I'm probably going to miss pretty much all the teachers, not going to lie ... because I love them. They're my besties. Trust.”

Once upon a time...

By Emilia Lagoda

Walking into the MPR on Friday, February 20, felt like walking into a fairytale. Olga Pustina, the fourth-fifth Russian immersion teacher at Turnagain said, “This event is called ‘In the World of Russian Fairytales.’ *V Gostiakh u Skaski.* This event is designed for the students to show their talents and to show the stories that they read during their Russian class in different grades.” Fourth grader Eranae Leboeuf said, “And also ... a bunch of people said lovely poems.”

Kindergarteners did a Russian fairytale called “Kolobok.” “Kolobok” is about a grandpa who is hungry, so the grandma makes a loaf of bread and sets it on the windowsill to cool down. The loaf of bread comes to life and travels far away meeting different animals who want to eat him along the way. Kolobok sings a song about how he ran away from the animals and the grandma and grandpa. At the end, a fox tricks him and says, “I cannot hear you, I am old. Please hop on my snout and sing the song again.” Then, the fox eats him!

First graders did a poem called “Kotyata” which is about five different kittens and their personalities. They also performed a skit from the fairytale “Twelve Months.” From January to December, each student was a month and recited a poem.

Second graders charmed the audience with “Telephone.” Second grader Lucas Lukhtanov said, “It's about these animals who are asking to, like, get stuff from this guy and he's telling these people to deliver it to them. And it's about them asking for all sorts of different stuff like books or shoes or stuff like that.” Lucas went on to say, “Amazon's, like, delivering the stuff to the animals, cuz they wanted to make it show how, instead of just saying the author sended it over, they made a scene in the thing and it's called Amazon. It's what delivers stuff in our play.”

Third graders performed the Ukrainian fairytale “Mitten” which is about an old man who drops his mitten while on a walk. A mouse finds the mitten and calls it home. Later the mitten becomes home for a lot of different animals, big and small. The story teaches children about kindness, sharing, and helping others.

Fourth graders performed a play called “Morozko.” Isabelle Livengood played one of the main characters in the play and said, “It was about two sisters. I was the evil sister and then Clarissa is the good sister and what happened was the good sister got kicked out of the house and then Morozko, it's like Russian Santa, gave her a present and it was golden gems ... Then I was jealous cuz I was a bad sister ... Then him knowing I was bad gave me a present, but when me and my evil mom opened it, it was like pine cones and fish bones and nasty stuff.” Isabelle said the moral of the story is, “Be kind, cuz if you be kind, you will eventually get rewarded with something good and if you be mean you will get ... rewarded, but it won't be a good thing. It'll be more like a consequence.”

Fifth graders wrapped the show with the introduction to the fairytale by the famous Russian poet Alexander Pushkin. Mrs. Pustina said, “Their story is called, in English, it is called, ‘There is a Green Oak by the Curving Shore’.”

Mrs. Pustina said events like these are important for many reasons, “They’re all learning the language in their classrooms and their peers know their success but when the kids bring it out to public, they feel more successful.” Mrs. Pustina went on to say, “they feel the purpose of why they are learning the language because they can show what they're learning to others.” When asked how events like this help students in immersion programs learn the language, Tony Komorowski, Turnagain’s third grade Russian immersion teacher, said, “They get a chance to speak publicly. They get a chance to perform, sing and dance, say poems. So there's a lot of exposure to language.” Isabelle said events likes these help with Russian studies because “it gives you more knowledge, like, it gives you more words to know and ... it makes you understand those words better.”

Eranae thought everyone enjoyed the performances and said, “A lot of kids and teachers were laughing, guardians were laughing too, they loved it, and they love seeing their children play.”

The moral of the story is everyone loved “In the World of Russian Fairytales” and they all lived happily ever after. The end!



Kindergarteners from the Russian immersion program perform a scene from “Kolobok.” The grandma and grandpa look on as the fox chases Kolobok.

Goodbye winter, hello spring!

By Cora Moe

After the long winter months, Turnagain celebrates Maslenitsa and the coming of spring. Maslenitsa is a Slavic folk holiday celebrated in Russia and other nearby countries to welcome spring. In Slavic countries, Maslenitsa traditionally happens the week before Lent. This year Maslenitsa was celebrated the week of February 16 - February 22. Here at Turnagain we celebrated from March 30 - April 3. Olga Pustina, the fourth-fifth Russian immersion teacher, said we celebrate Maslenitsa at different times than it's traditionally celebrated because "we like to move it a little bit closer to that time for us in Alaska, in Anchorage, which will be about the end of March, when we really feel that warm air and we really feel that spring is really close."

During Maslenitsa people feast on blini, which is a very thin pancake, kind of like a crepe. They are sometimes topped with whipped cream, berries or savory toppings. Fourth grader Svetlana Mironenko said, "My favorite blini topping is honey or whipped cream." People eat blini because it is hot and round just like the sun. The legend is that the more blini you eat, the faster spring will come. At Turnagain, parents volunteer to make and distribute the blini to all of the classrooms, including the neighborhood classes. This year students enjoyed eating blini on Thursday, April 2. Galina Ryabova-Houston is a Turnagain parent and the treasurer of MIR, a Russian immersion parent group. She said, "Parents at school can volunteer and make blini and we usually ask to make 30 blini each just to make sure all of the kids in classes get them." She also said her and the other parent volunteers make extra blini for teachers and staff.

When asked why it is important that blini get delivered to the neighborhood classrooms, Mrs. Pustina said, "It is very important to have a community. So even though we do have a special program, we're still one big school of Turnagain. And I think for them to know some of the traditions and also be a part of the school is very important. So it just kind of makes the whole school be one rather than two different programs."

One tradition done in Russia and nearby Slavic countries for Maslenitsa is burning the chuchelo, which is a giant lady made of straw. The chuchelo is a symbol of winter and people burn her as a way to welcome spring. Before burning the chuchelo, people often gather around it to sing and dance. Another tradition sometimes done in Slavic countries is taking a ride in the troika, which is a sleigh pulled by three horses.

Maslenitsa is seven days long. The first day, a Monday, is called "Vstrecha" or "The Welcoming." On this day people traditionally make the chuchelo and the blini. At Turnagain we start drawing pictures that will be entered into a Maslenitsa art contest. Over the next few days the



Turnagain kindergarten and first graders perform at Maslenitsa student showcase.

immersion classes play games and do crafts about Maslenitsa. The last day of Maslenitsa is on Sunday when people burn the chuchelo; this day is called "Provodi" or the "Forgiveness Day."

Turnagain ended its week of Maslenitsa celebrations on Friday, April 3 with a Russian immersion student showcase. Parents, grandparents, family and friends came to watch students show off their Russian skills. Each class got to be a part of the show by singing songs, reciting poems and doing dances about Maslenitsa.

Eranae Labeuf, a fourth grader in Mrs. Pustina's Russian immersion class said her favorite part about Maslenitsa is "that it's sunny and that spring is coming back. It gets more warmer, less snowy."

Mrs. Pustina said celebrating Maslenitsa is important because, "Here at Turnagain we learn Russian and learning the language is not just learning the words and being able to speak, it's also learning about the culture. And since Maslenitsa is a cultural event, it's a good way to kind of feel that culture and live it."

Students had one last opportunity to welcome spring at the annual Maslenitsa celebration organized by the Russian immersion students from West High School on April 25 at Romig Middle School.



Maslenitsa crafts displayed in the MPR.

Turnagain's got talent!

By Janson Seda

On April 3rd, 10 amazing acts proved that Turnagain's got talent at the annual talent show. Mrs. Eastham said the talent show is important because "It gives people a chance to get in front of a big audience and to learn how to overcome fears." She also said, "It's really, really hard to get up there, in front of your peers especially, and to show people something that you love to do like sing or dance."

Evelyn Ryan kicked off the show with her version of the song "Cups (When I'm Gone)" which was made popular by the movie *Pitch Perfect*.

Next up was a ballet and hip-hop inspired dance performed by "The Rapping Cats." Eleanorah (Norah) Yagodin, a fifth grader in the Russian immersion program, was one of the members of the dance group. She said she did the talent show for fun. When asked what it was like to perform in front of all those people, Norah said, "It was, like, kind of scary. I just looked away from people cuz I get ... really scared in front of people." Even though she was scared, Norah thought the talent show went pretty good.

Some of the other acts included first grader Noa Brinley on piano, fifth grader Mia Bellino with an Irish dance, a group of third graders who performed a short play about Pyramus and Thisbe, and Scarlett Nidoy with a gymnastics routine.

Second grader Nikolai Musto ended the show with a magic act that included three big tricks. In the first trick, he pulled a bouquet of flowers out of a colorful cloth. In his second trick, Nikolai pulled a handkerchief out of his empty hat. And in his final trick, he placed the handkerchief into a wooden box, covered the box with a red scarf, then abracadabra, a plushy bunny appeared out of nowhere!

Nikolai said that even though he was scared, "it's just magic and you just have to be confident of yourself." When asked how he prepared for his act, Nikolai said, "My dad told me how to do them and he teached me how to do it." Nikolai said several people asked him how he did his tricks, but like a true magician, Nikolai would not tell, saying, "Cuz they're magic tricks and they're secrets." When asked why a magician's tricks are secret, Nikolai said, "Cuz then the magic will go away."

Mrs. Eastham said the talent show gives students the chance to see another side of their peers they might not normally get to see, "You know, you probably didn't appreciate them before, but now you appreciate them and you see that they're more than just language arts and math. It's more than just being able to draw or how fast you run in PE. There's other talents that people have that you never knew about."

In the end, the audience's response showed they didn't like the acts... they loved them!



Nikolai Musto closes the talent show with an amazing magic act.



Scarlett Nidoy impresses the audience with her gymnastics routine.



"The Rapping Cats" show off their moves with their ballet and hip-hop inspired dance.

Student council holds “fundracer” for popular school activities

By Bartholomew Hewes

Ready, set, race! During second semester student council organized another fundraiser and teamed up to get input from students about their school.

The fundraiser was called “Race to First Place” where grade levels raced cars made out of paper across the multipurpose room, kind of like “The Giving Snake” from first semester. Last semester, during Snack Shack on Tuesdays, students could buy a part of their grade’s snake. The grade that made the longest snake and raised the most money won a prize, but the real goal of the fundraiser was to raise money for Red Cross. When asked how much money was raised through “The Giving Snake” fundraiser, student council co-advisor, Ms. Ram said, “We raised over, a little over $500, like $512, and it was all donated to the Red Cross.” Ms. Ram went on to say, “The Red Cross was really impressed with our donation. So, um there's actually a student here ... who is related to someone who works at the Red Cross. So, they came in and presented us with a certificate and gave us some stickers and pins and the kids got to kind of see their work in action ... Red Cross talked a little bit about what they do and they're going to write a little story about it on their website.”

With the “Race to First Place” fundraiser second semester, students could purchase “fuel” during Snack Shack. When students bought the “fuel” they had to say what grade they were in and how much money they wanted to donate to the “fundracer.” For every dollar spent, students could move their grade’s race car one inch across the MPR.

Ben Finau, a student council member and fourth grader in Ms. Kyle’s class said he thinks the fundraisers are important because “you are raising money to help a lot of people.” With “Race to First Place,” student council raised money for the ROAR store and for buses for the trip to The Dome for field day. Also, the grade that raised the most money won a popsicle party.

Switching gears, the other big project student council worked on second semester was making sure all third through fifth grade students took part in the School Climate and Connectedness Survey. Student council co-advisor Ms. Aschtyn White and three student council representatives went into each third through fifth grade classroom and did a presentation on the importance of completing the School Climate and Connectedness Survey. Ms. Asch said that they succeeded in making it to all the classrooms and all the students present that day completed the survey. When we asked what the survey is, Ms. Asch said, “The Climate and Connectedness Survey is pretty much a big survey that talks about how students feel in our school; if they feel safe, if they feel like they have adults to talk to, um, and if they pretty much feel seen in our whole entire building. Not only does ASD families see this, but actually all of Anchorage see this. So it's really important that we kind of have high numbers so when parents, or future families of Turnagain, they want to see those numbers to see if this is the school where they want to send their kid.” Ms. Asch said the survey was also sent to families and ASD staff. The results of the survey should be available in May.

Between the new school-wide elections in the fall, two fun fundraisers, and all the spirit days throughout the year, student council did their best to rev up participation around the school and hope students felt even more connected at Turnagain as they look forward to crossing the finish line of the 2025/2026 school year.

Calendar



May 7	Lunch with a Loved One
May 9	Super Sweepers
May 15	Spirit Day: Twin Day
May 18	Fifth Grade Russian Immersion Completion Ceremony
May 19	Fifth Grade Neighborhood Completion Ceremony
May 21	Last Day of School: NO BACKPACKS ALLOWED

SPORTS

PACER Test: Making Fitness Fun!

By Evie Shasby

Have you ever heard of the PACER test? Well, our school has been running it for two years. PACER stands for "Progressive Aerobic Cardiovascular Endurance Run." According to Fitnessgram.net, the test originated in the 1980s. It was first created for adults in 1982, and later modified for kids in 1988. The website says, "Today, it's used by millions of educators to inspire students to develop healthy habits that last a lifetime" and "It has become the most recognized tool for measuring aerobic power." The founders of the PACER test are Luc Leger and J.A. Lambert.

Have you ever wondered where the mile run went? Well, Mrs. de Guzman, Turnagain's physical education teacher, thought the PACER test would fit into the curriculum better. She said, "Fitness concepts is one of the strategies we are supposed to be teaching in PE and that also goes with endurance and muscular strength as well as physical strength and the PACER test is helpful for our upper grades and they will see that in middle school and high school as well." Mrs. de Guzman said, "The fourth and fifth graders do the PACER test one time in the fall and then one time in the spring in hopes that their score in the spring is better than the fall."

Here is how it works: two lines are set up 20 meters apart and you run back and forth across the distance, touching the line with your foot before a beep sounds. The beep gets progressively faster the longer you do it. If you miss two beeps because you can't get over the line in time, you are out. If you think this is hard, there is a strategy. The strategy is to not sprint the first few rounds because then you will wait and wait to hear the beep. The goal is to find the perfect pace and then let your pace get faster. You can find the sound/beep on Spotify.

Fifth grader Noa Amstislavski thinks the PACER test is important "to show growth and development and how fast you can run and how long you can run for." Noa said she was scared about the PACER test at first, but now she says "I actually really like the test and I think it's really fun!"

Rohan Borders, a fourth grader, really likes the PACER test and said, "I just hope we have a couple more this year."

The founders did not create the PACER test to be competitive. Instead, they wanted it to focus on personal progress and building confidence in one another. Today, it definitely still hits those standards!

Volleyball serves up some fun in PE

By Ryann Kyle

READY, SET, SERVE! Volleyball ran from January 20th to February 14th during PE classes. Students learned volleyball skills from the beginning stages to real gameplay. Mrs. de Guzman said, "I do like to start with the basics of the sports. So, like when we worked on our bump, set, and spikes, you know, those are the common ways to hit the volleyball. But ... once we actually get into gameplay, I think students are more excited for that."

According to Google AI, volleyball was made in Holyoke, Massachusetts by William G. Morgan in 1895. Morgan was a physical education director at the YMCA when he created a new game as an alternative to basketball for older adults. The game was called Mintonette, which combined elements from tennis, basketball, handball, and baseball. In 1896, professor Alphred Halstead attended the first exhibition match at Springfield College. Halstead noticed how the players volleyed the ball around and suggested the name volleyball instead. Volleyball gained popularity over the years and made its official Olympic debut in 1964.

Volleyball remains popular to this day. When asked how she felt about the volleyball unit at Turnagain, Kahea Llaneza, a fifth grader in Mrs. Eastham's class said, "Really fun. I like it so much." Volleyball made some fun memories for students and their friends. Alexandra (Lexie) Ruaboro, a fourth grader from Ms. Kyle's class, said that once while practicing with her friend, instead of just shooting the ball over the net she also made it into the basketball hoop! And Kehea said her funniest memory was, "We had a game and I bumped it a little too high and it touched the ceiling and then, like, everybody started, like, laughing."

Mrs. de Guzman said, "I have seen students enjoy it. I mean, I know whenever I have the volleyball nets out, they're very excited to see it."

Not only is volleyball fun, it also has good lessons, "Volleyball, again, is a great skill because it helps us with hand eye coordination ... helps with our teamwork and just learning how to use our body even" said Mrs. de Guzman.

Overall, students really seem to dig the volleyball unit at Turnagain.

ENTERTAINMENT

Movie Review: *The Parent Trap x 2*

By Cora Moe

In the movie *The Parent Trap* two girls meet each other at an overnight summer camp. At first, they hate each other pulling pranks and competing in camp activities against each other. Until they are put in an isolation cabin together and realize how similar to each other they are. One only has a dad and the other only has a mom, they have the same birthday, and they look almost identical! Could they be twins? Yes! And what if there was a way to bring their separated parents back together?

The story is based on the book *Das doppelte Lottchen* by Erich Kästner. It was first made into a movie called *The Parent Trap* in 1961. That movie stars Hayley Mills as the twins and also features Brian Keith as the twins' dad and Maureen O' Hara as their mom. Hayley Mills did a great job acting as both twins making them bright and slightly mischievous. A remake was made in 1998 starring Lindsay Lohan as the twins. It features Natasha Richardson and Dennis Quaid as the parents.

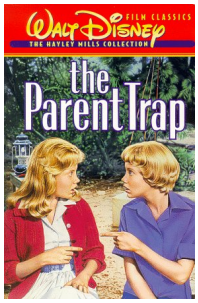
While filming these movies, Disney producers used techniques such as split-screen technology and a body double to create the illusion that two twins were interacting with each other. Both movies have the same basic plot with only a few differences. In the original movie, one twin is named Sharon and the other is named Susan. In the remake, the twins' names are Annie and Hallie. Another difference is in the original *Parent Trap*, both twins are 13 years old and in the remake they are only 11.

After watching both of *The Parent Trap* movies, the remake is my favorite. I like the remake slightly better because it is more emotional and modern. Lindsay Lohan does an excellent job making both twins have distinct personalities. No matter which version you pick, both are funny and entertaining movies that I highly recommend.

Both movies are rated PG, are suitable for ages 6+, and can be streamed on Disney+.

I give both movies 5 out of 5 paws. Enjoy!





Book Review: *Zeus: Water Rescue*

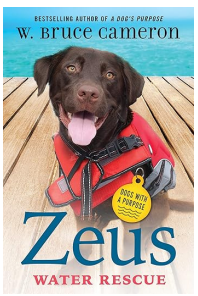
By Janson Seda

If you're a dog fan you need to fetch the book *Zeus: Water Rescue* by W. Bruce Cameron! The book is set in Hawaii and is about a chocolate Labrador puppy named Zeus who is chosen to be trained as a water rescue dog by a search and rescue team member named Marco. At home, Marco gives his son, Kimo, the task of training Zeus. Marco warns Kimo not to get too attached to Zeus, because Zeus is meant to be a working dog. Despite Marco's warnings, Zeus and the boy form an unbreakable bond. Unfortunately, once Zeus is trained, Marco plans to auction Zeus in Europe for $12,000! Kimo has to find a way to come up with the money himself to stop Zeus from being sold. The only way to do it is to win a dog surfing competition that will give Kimo enough money to keep him!

The book is written from Zeus's point of view, which is interesting and confusing in a funny way. I like the book because it teaches dog tricks, it has action, and it's a story of courage, friendship, and caring.

Zeus: Water Rescue is suitable for children eight and up and is available in the Turnagain Library.

I give the book five out of five paws. Hope you enjoy it!



TURNAGAIN TIDBITS

By Auggie Baldwin, Clarissa Boekhout, Ryann Kyle, Emilia Lagoda, Violet Moore, and Evie Shasby

ROCK, PAPER, SCISSORS – READ!

Turnagain staff took part in a school-wide competition on March 20 to find out who would take the title of Rock, Paper, Scissors champion. Each staff member started with 10 beads and challenged other staff members to play Rock, Paper, Scissors throughout the day. Challengers had to bid on how many beads to give the winner before starting each best-of-three battle. The goal of the activity was to model friendly competition and good sportsmanship. At the end of the day, classes gathered in the MPR to watch as the four staff members with the most beads competed in a final showdown. First, Mr. Sonny defeated Ms. Meredith. Next, Mr. Sawyer eliminated Mr. Sonny. Last up were Mr. Sawyer against Ms. Asch. In the end, the Rock, Paper, Scissors champion was... Mr. Sawyer! After the competition, beads were donated to the ROAR store for students to purchase.



Mr. Sawyer and Ms. Asch prepare to compete in the Rock, Paper, Scissors championship.



Mr. Sawyer and Mr. Sonny go hand-to-hand in Rock, Paper, Scissors championship battle.



Rock, Paper, Scissors champion, Mr. Sawyer!

FIELD DAY

On May 5, third through fifth grade students head to The Dome for an annual field day event. Field day is a celebration of finishing the school year and a chance for students to play games with their friends like ultimate frisbee, laser tag, Nerf guns, 9 square, kick ball, and spike ball. Some of the money raised for the buses for the field day trip are from the fundraiser "Race to First Place" organized by the student council. Kindergarten through second graders will have their own field day on the Turnagain playground the last week of school where they will also get to play fun games!

SEMIQUINCENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

The Turnagain choir dedicated their spring concert to the United States Semiquincentennial. Mr. Pustina picked the theme in honor of the upcoming anniversary on July 4, 2026, when the United States celebrates 250 years of independence. On April 30, the choir honored this historic milestone with songs like: "Fifty Nifty United States," "One Nation," and the USA's national anthem, "The Star Spangled Banner." Happy Semiquincentennial everyone!





Turnagain students were having fun and glowing crazy at the Let's Glow Crazy dance.

BINGO FOR BOOKS

Bingo for Books is a family event where you play bingo and books are the prizes. On Tuesday, April 21, students and their families filled the MPR excited to enjoy the last family night of the 2025/2026 school year. The event relies on donations of new and gently used books from the community, which are given as prizes. Bingo for Books happened to fall the day before Earth Day. Event coordinator Mrs. Doepken said, "I think it's really important that we recycle books ... It's a great way to keep books out of the landfill and have it breathe new life and have it find a new home." Mrs. Doepken said if you didn't happen to win a game, she would call out random winners anyway, "I joked last year that the game is rigged, but it's rigged in a good way because everybody will go home with books." It's safe to say that everyone who attended Bingo for Books went home feeling like a winner.



Students decide which books to pick as prizes at Bingo for Books.

LET'S GLOW CRAZY!

On April 17, Turnagain third, fourth, and fifth graders were cooking on the dance floor at the "Let's Glow Crazy" themed dance. The dance was organized as a fundraiser for shirts for the fifth graders who are being promoted to middle school in May. Students formed conga lines, did the limbo, and each grade-level got to lead the crowd in a popular line dance. This was one of the first dances to be held at Turnagain in around 10 years. Ms. Ballard said teachers wanted to bring back school dances and do something different, "We're going to have glow-in-the-dark makeup and glow-in-the-dark accessories and it's going to be fun." Students and staff thought the "Let's Glow Crazy" dance was low-key fire.



Students hoping the next number called will give them a BINGO! during Bingo for Books.

READ-A-THON

The Read-A-Thon is a fundraiser that the PTA and the library put on together as a way to raise money for field trips and school activities and it also encourages kids to read. This year the Read-A-Thon ran from April 6 through April 20, and both students and staff were encouraged to participate. Students created Read-A-Thon accounts where they could request donations from friends and family and log their number of minutes read. There were several prizes that encouraged students to read and raise money. According to Mrs. Doepken, "They can earn lunch with a friend. They can earn a little ice cream or popsicle treat. They can earn an invitation to a pizza party. They can earn a lunch with the librarian. And the biggy, biggy biggy, if you read the most minutes, you can be the principal or PE teacher or librarian for the day." In the end, the student with the most minutes read was Cora Moe with 3,145 minutes! Cora chose librarian for a day as her prize.

In all, the Read-A-Thon raised over $15,000. Mrs. Doepken said students read a total of 67, 924 minutes (surpassing last year's total by 12,000 minutes!) Way to go Tigers!

SPOTLIGHTS

Teacher Feature: Mr. Moyer

By Bartholomew Hewes

Color: Blue
Animal: Giraffe
Book: Science and fantasy books
Food: Cheeseburger, fries, milkshake
Hobby(s): Reading
Holiday: Thanksgiving
Sport/Sports Team: Los Angeles Rams and Dodgers
Vacation Place: Hawaii
Movie: *Ocean's 11*

Craig Moyer has been a teacher for over 30 years. He has been a classroom teacher, a Montessori teacher, and a reading interventionist. This is his first year at Turnagain. Mr. Moyer teaches Ignite at Turnagain two days per week.When asked if he had a favorite subject to teach, Mr. Moyer said, "It doesn't really matter. Reading, writing, math. I like all of them. ... I just like to see the excitement that kids like to learn and ... it's a good feeling when they get that aha moment. 'Yay, I got it!'." When asked what he likes most about Turnagain, Mr. Moyer said, "I love the students, the staff, it's just a friendly place to be. Everybody's very helpful and kind. And even though I'm not here full-time, I feel like I'm part of the school."



Photographer Bartholomew Hewes

Staff Spotlight: Ms. Meredith

By Violet Moore

Color: Purple
Animal: Her dog Jake
Book: Shel Silverstein's poetry books
Food: Italian
Hobby(s): Crocheting, board games, time with family
Holiday: Halloween
Sport/Sports Team: Hockey/UAA hockey team
Vacation Place: Seattle
Movie: *Inside Out*

Meredith Spears is the secretary at Turnagain and this is her first year at the school. Ms. Meredith works in the front office with Ms. Dawn, and her responsibilities include checking attendance, answering the phone, and helping Ms. Dawn keep the school safe. She says her favorite thing about Turnagain is how well teachers and staff work together to teach kids and keep them safe. She added that, "I also just really like the enthusiasm that everyone seems to have here, the students, the teachers. Everyone here is – they seem happy to be here, happy to learn and teach, and it just seems like everyone really loves what they do here."



Photographer Clarissa Boekhout

I'll Miss:

Lila Raven
"I'm going to miss everybody. They were like family to me. Specifically, Mrs. Thomsen and Mrs. Hudson."

Gatorian Houston
"Everything. I'm going to miss everything. Like the playground and stuff. Friends."

Bradley Price
"Everything ... Like just the happiness here. It's fun and like all the specials and people are nice to me. Yeah, it's super fun here."

Dott Llanos, Ms. Kyle
"Mostly a lot of the teachers and some of the students who won't be going to Romig, so I will be missing them too."

Student Spotlights

By Auggie Baldwin, Bartholomew Hewes, Emilia Lagoda, Cora Moe, Janson Seda, & Evie Shasby



Mazikeen Harrison is a kindergartener in the neighborhood class taught by Ms. Ram. She likes the color pink and her favorite animal is a cheetah. Her favorite book is *Kit* and she loves the movie *Descendants*. Her favorite subject in school is math and she also likes PE. Lastly, the thing that she likes most about Turnagain is doing crafts.



Noa Brinley is a first grader in the Russian immersion program. Her teachers are Mrs. Hudson and Ms. Olga. Noa's favorite color is pink and her favorite animal is a bunny. She also said that her favorite food is strawberries and her favorite movie is *Frozen*. Last but not least, her favorite thing about Turnagain is the amazing ROAR Store!



Cecilia Starzec is a second grader in the Russian immersion program and her teacher is Mrs. Ashcraft. Her favorite color is pink, and her favorite food is lemon pie. Cecilia likes *Zootopia 2* and her favorite sports team is the Green Bay Packers. Lastly her favorite part of Turnagain is making new friends.



Alice Boekhout is in third grade Russian immersion and her teacher is Mr. Komorowski. Alice's favorite movie is *The Pacifier* and her favorite book is *Wings of Fire*. Her favorite vacation place is Hawaii and her favorite sport/sports team is the Olympics and Team U.S.A. Lastly, her favorite thing about Turnagain is how fun it is!



Yedriel Camara is in Ms. Plumhoff's fourth grade neighborhood class. His favorite animal is a lion and his hobby is playing with friends. Yedriel's favorite book is *The Magic Treehouse* and his favorite movie is *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*. His favorite special is library and he likes science. Finally, his favorite thing about Turnagain is that it's nice to meet new people.



Thea Gloria is in Mrs. Eastham's fifth grade neighborhood class. Her favorite color is navy blue and her favorite animal is a cat. Her hobby is volleyball and her favorite sport is also volleyball. Her favorite special is PE and her favorite subject is math. Finally her favorite thing about Turnagain is the people and staff.



All smiles at the glow dance.



Fifth graders during planetarium field trip.



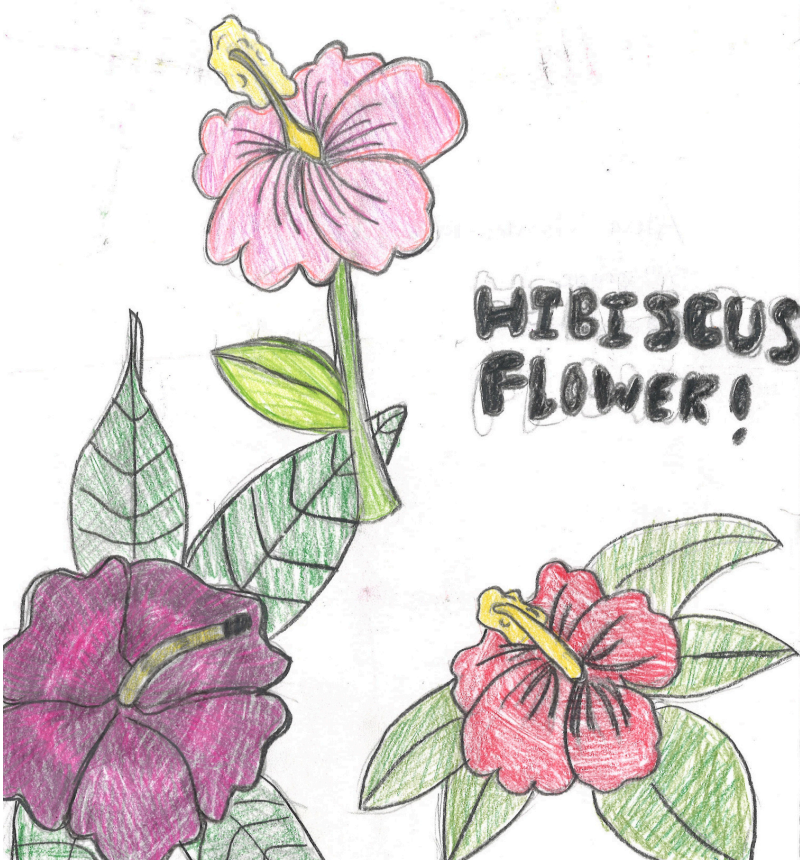
Second graders learn about dinosaurs.



First graders enjoying their blini feast.

TALENTED TIGERS

Alexa Morales Rodriguez, fifth grade



***Seven Days of Maslenitsa* by Janson Seda, fifth grade**



Space Boy **by Svetlana Mironenko, fourth grade**



Giyu Tomioka by Charlotte Moudy, fifth grade

Fan art of Giyu Tomioka created by Koyoharu Gotouge



Mickey Mouse by Ailani Shanklin, fifth grade

Fan art of Mickey Mouse created by Walt Disney



Evelyn Ryan, fifth grade

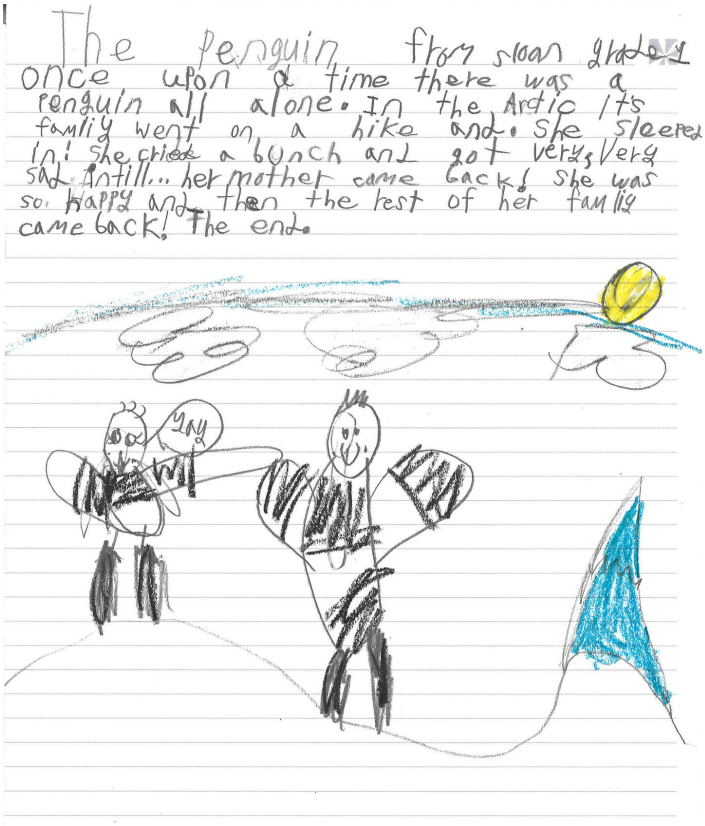


Shelly the Fossil by Remmy Turinsky, fourth grade

Fan art of Shelly the Fossil created by Delilah Keen



Sloan Tennant, first grade



Bexton Davis, fifth grade



Martin Moe, first grade

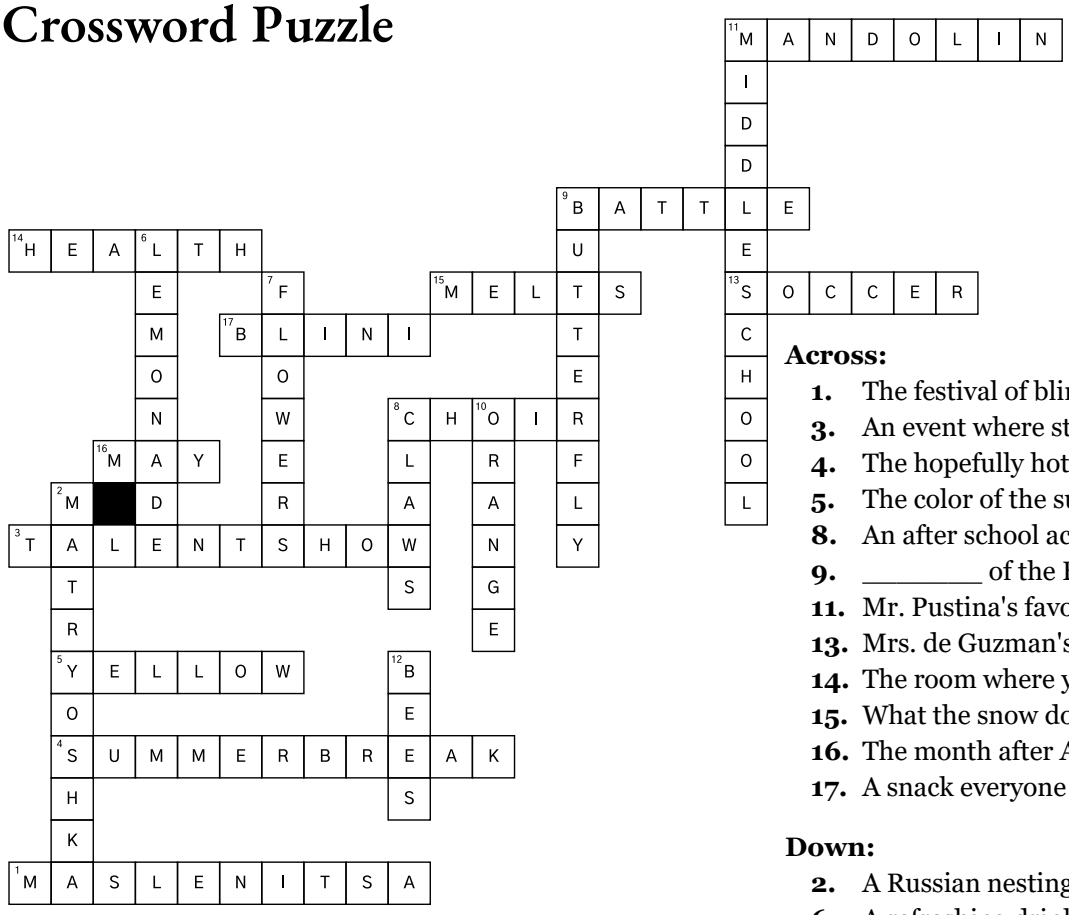


Remi Lagoda, kindergarten



FUN & GAMES

Crossword Puzzle





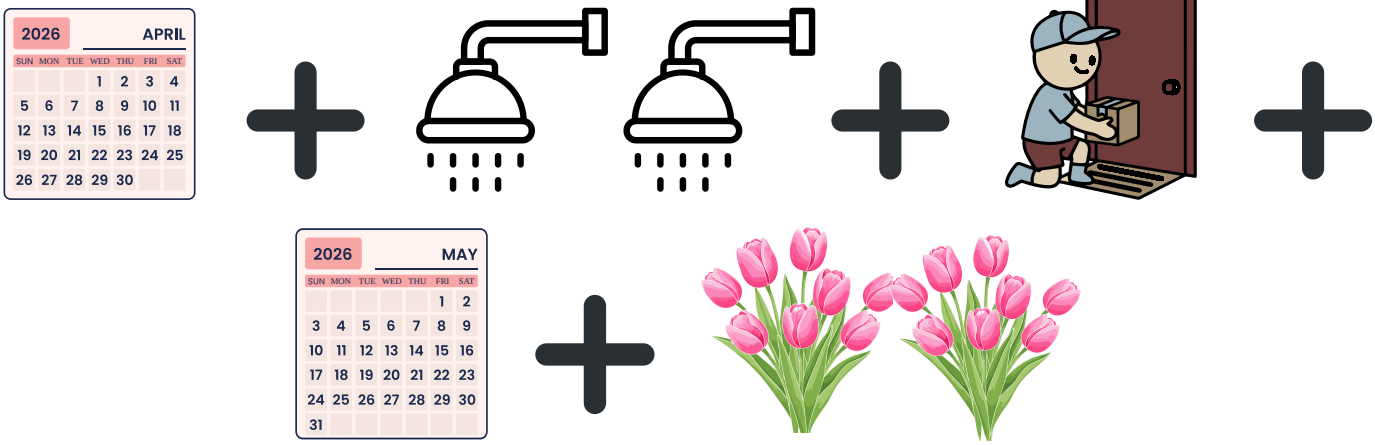
Across:

1. The festival of blini, butter, and spring
3. An event where students perform acts on stage
4. The hopefully hot sunny days off from school
5. The color of the sun
8. An after school activity where students sing
9. _____ of the Books
11. Mr. Pustina's favorite instrument
13. Mrs. de Guzman's favorite sport
14. The room where you will find Skelly the Skeleton
15. What the snow does in spring
16. The month after April
17. A snack everyone gets during Maslenitsa

Down:

2. A Russian nesting doll
6. A refreshing drink for the summer
7. April showers bring May _____
8. A tiger has these on their paws
9. Beautiful bug that comes in spring
10. One of Turnagain's school colors
11. It comes after elementary school
12. Flowers attract these buzzing insects

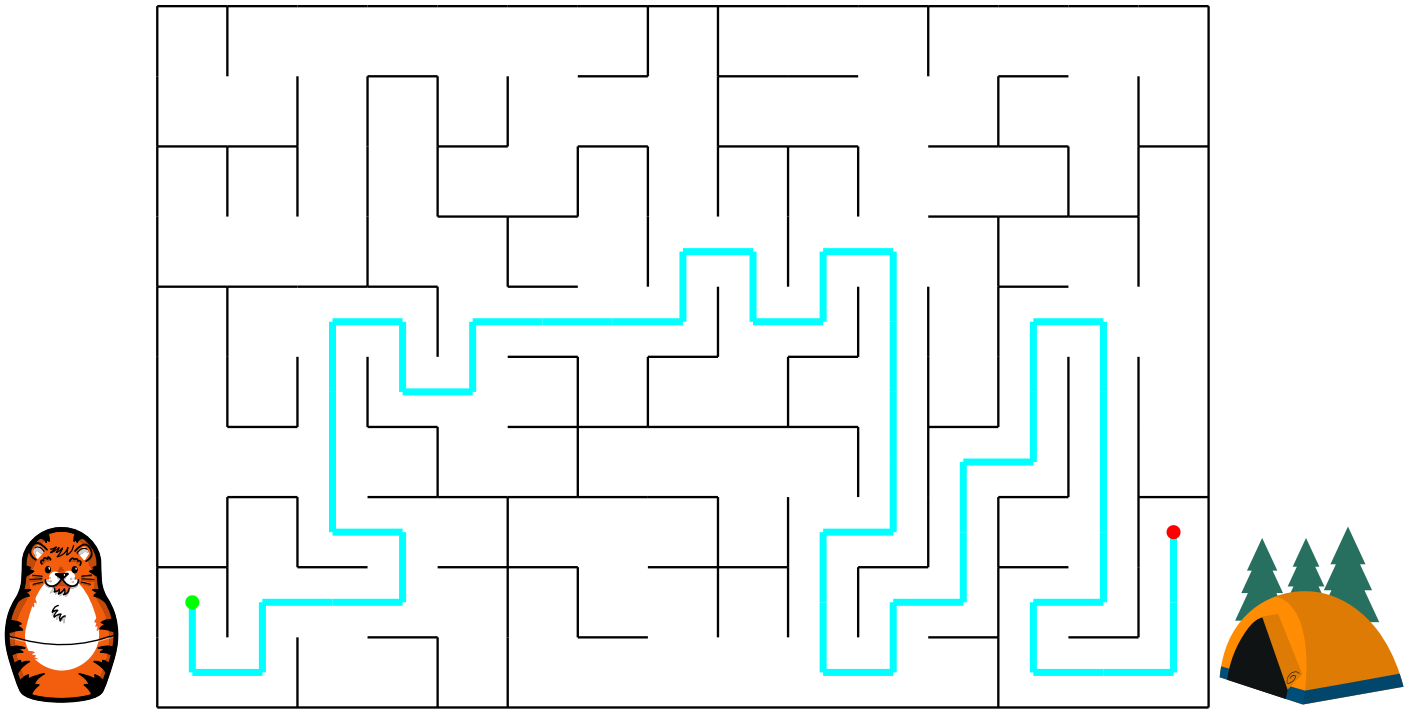
Rebus Puzzle



Answer: April showers bring May flowers

Maze

Help the tiger get to the campsite



Word Find

CLASSMATES
APRIL FOOLS
MASLENITSA
BUTTERFLY
FRAGRANT
SUNSHINE
FISHING
CAMPING
MELTING
SUMMER
PICNIC
SPRING
MUDDY
BLOOM
RAIN

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

Answers available in *Paw Print's* online newspaper at Turnagain.asdk12.org

Riddles

1.

Q: I am a room you can't enter. What am I?

A: A mushroom

2.

Q: What comes once in a minute, twice in a moment, but never in a thousand years?

A: The letter M

Tiger Trivia

Who was the first principal at Turnagain?

A. Gladys Wood

B. Timothy Turnagain

C. Agatha Trunchbull

D. Helena Batman

What staff member has had his/her picture displayed on the side of a People Mover bus?

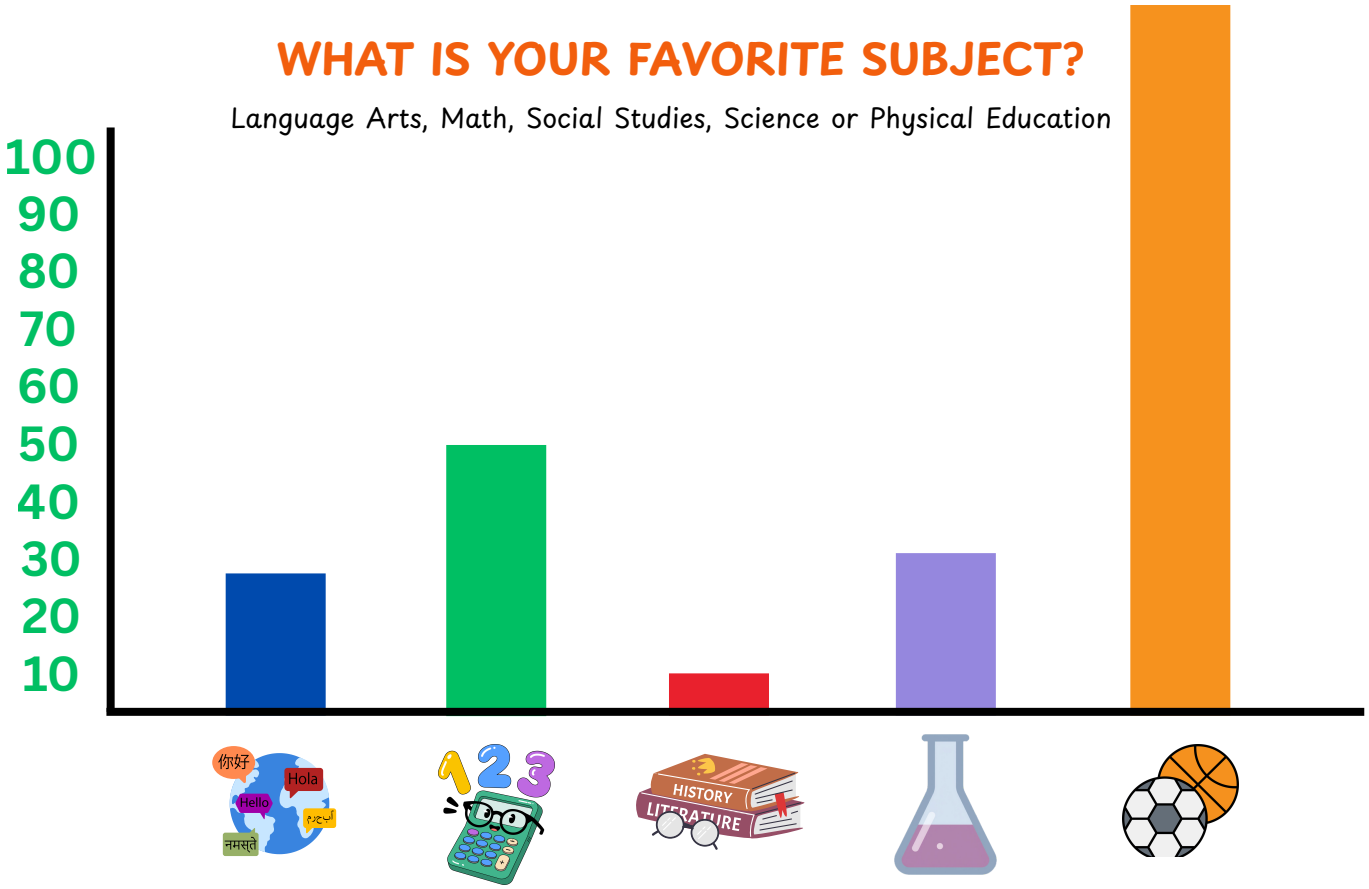
A. Sonny Seguro

B. Dawn Bloechl

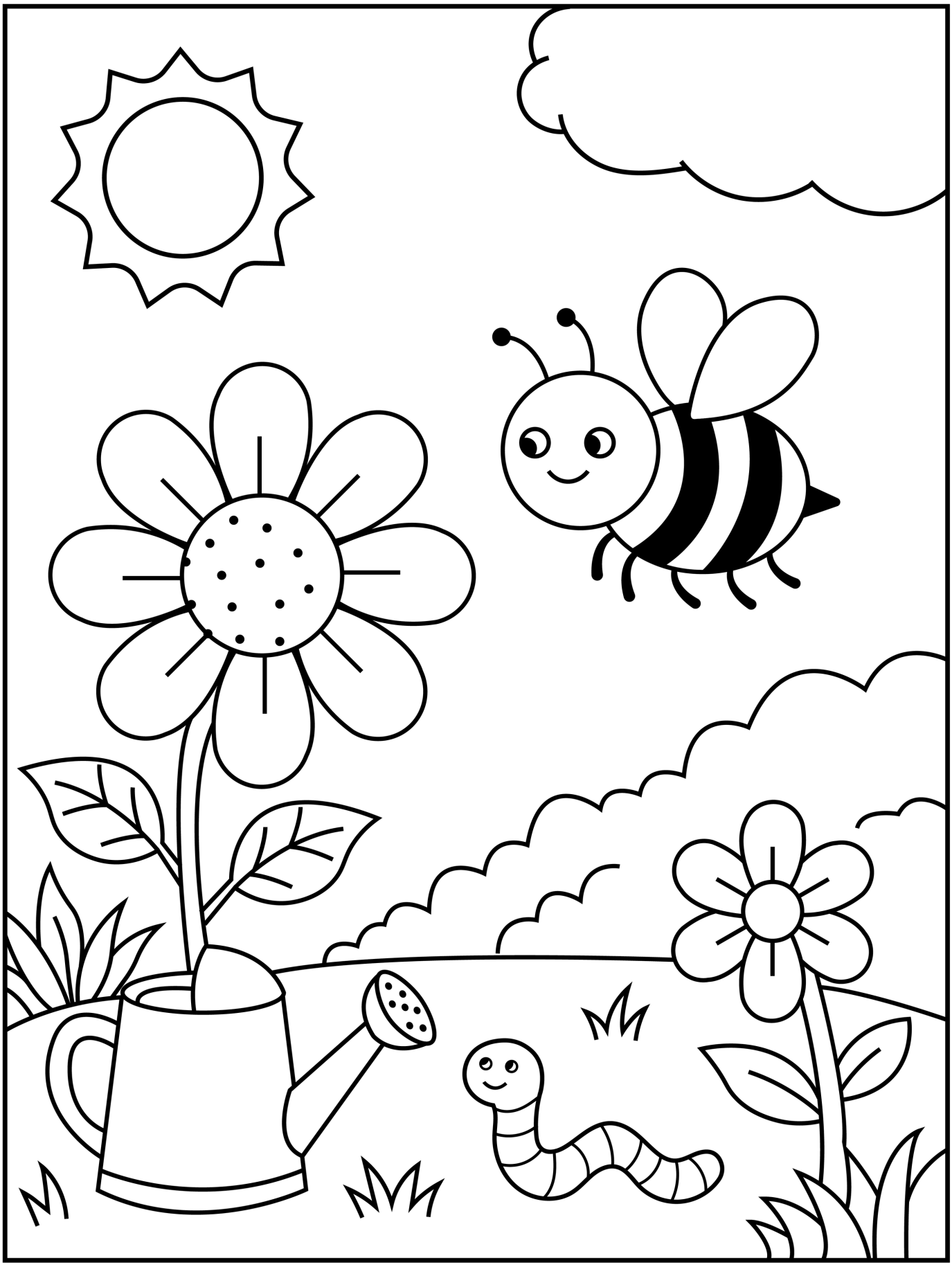
C. Reilly Plumhoff

D. Louise Coopchiak

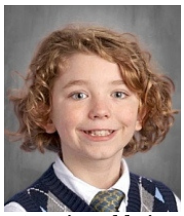
School Poll



Answers available in *Paw Print's* online newspaper at Turnagain.asdk12.org



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Fifth Grade


Evie Shasby
Fifth Grade


Karen Seda
Advisor


ASD Publication Services

Editor's Note:

This issue of Paw Print is dedicated to Turnagain's fifth graders. Their school journey began in an unusual way, starting kindergarten at home, on computers, during COVID. Despite this unexpected beginning, these students persevered and are ready to move on to middle school. Five of the fifth graders joined the *Paw Print* team; it has been an honor to create this student newspaper alongside these intelligent and creative young women and men. I hope they are proud of what we've accomplished — I know I am. ~Ms. Karen

Finally, the 2026/2027 school year marks Turnagain Elementary School's 70th anniversary! Do you know someone who was a student or staff member when Turnagain first opened? If so, we would love to hear from them. Please send contact information to seda_karen@asdk12.org.

PAW PRINT