



MLE News

SEPTEMBER 2026
MAPLE LAKE ELEMENTARY
ANNA REEDY, PRINCIPAL

IRISH PRIDE, IRISH PROUD!

The month of September has been a busy one. We have completed grade level meetings, Fastbridge testing, school pictures, and next week is Homecoming!



Our grade level teams have begun meeting to form our first academic intervention groups based on Fastbridge data. Up to this point, classroom L.U.C.K. Times have been focused on community building activities and working to ensure each student has an adult to go to in the building should he/she need help of any sort. Our first round of academic interventions will begin after fall break.

In the Wednesday Envelope on Sept. 23, you should have received notification of two of our upcoming events: Parent/Teacher Conferences on Oct. 12-14 and National School Hot Lunch Day on Oct. 13. We look forward to having all of you in the building on our shortest week of school in October! We will also have our Scholastic Book Fair open during all conferences, so be sure to check out the selection. New this year, the book fair will be held in the library!

I am super proud of how well our students have begun the year!

Only more great things to come!!

REMINDERS

- Calls for end-of-day change of destination would be greatly appreciated by **1:00PM**.
- **Parent Drop-Offs/Pick-Ups:** Students should **exit/enter your vehicle on the curb side** to ensure our process is safe and efficient.
- **Please remember that student drop-off at school in the morning begins at 7:45AM.** We do not have supervision prior to that time. Students must wait outside or in the vestibule until staff supervision at 7:45AM.
- For the safety of our entire building, **parents/guardians are not allowed beyond the main entryway at any point without a visitor's badge.** Thank you for working with us to keep all kids safe at MLE.



UPCOMING DATES

Sept. 28-Oct. 2: MAPLE LAKE HOMECOMING

Oct. 2: Irish Pride Celebration

Oct. 8-14: Scholastic Book Fair!

Oct. 12-13: Parent/Teacher Conferences, 4-7pm

Oct. 13: NATIONAL SCHOOL HOT LUNCH DAY!

Oct. 14: Parent/Teach Conferences, 8-11:30am

Oct. 14-16: NO SCHOOL - FALL BREAK

Oct. 21: Picture Retakes

Oct. 26-27: Vision/Hearing Screening

NEW YEAR, NEW POLICY

WE LOVE WHEN YOU COME VISIT OUR SCHOOL!

If you are coming into the building as a visitor, you are now required to leave a form of ID in the main office and wear a visitor's badge throughout your visit. Your ID can be picked up when you return the visitor's badge on your way out of the building.

GOLDEN NUGGET

September is **National Literacy Month**, a time to celebrate the power of reading and promote access to literacy for learners of all ages. Check out the following pages for information from the Minnesota Department of Education regarding the 5 literacy skills that we focus on in literacy education, and games you can play at home with your learner!



Phonemic Awareness	Phonics	Vocabulary	Fluency	Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is the ability to **understand and make sense of** what is being read.

More information about MDE and the READ Act can be found at <https://education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/READ/eng/toolkit/>.

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READY, Set, Roll

Instructions: Child rolls the die or chooses a numbered card or paper. Complete the challenges in the boxes below for each skill area. *Supply options:* 1 die, playing cards, Uno cards, or strips of paper numbered 1-6. You can use anything where your child can randomly draw/roll the numbers 1-6!

Child rolls...

1 •	2 • •	3 • • •	4 •• ••	5 •• •• •	6 •• •• ••
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Phonemic Awareness 	Child claps once for each word in a sentence.	Child claps the syllables in two words.	Child must say three words that rhyme (nonsense words are acceptable)	Adult says a word (hat). Child changes the first letter to make four new words (cat, bat, mat, fat)	Adult says a word. Child says the beginning, middle and end sound. Repeat x5	Parent writes six 3 letter words. Child writes the words with a different end sound (cat becomes can)
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Variation: Child sets a goal of 30 points. They roll a Three.

If they do the task correctly, they score three points. Can they meet the goal?

Instructions: The Parent writes six rows of words that follow a pattern, as shown here:
Row one: pat, hat, cat, bat, fat | Row two: pen, den, men, hen, nen (nonsense words are acceptable).
Continue the pattern with your child or ask your child to continue the pattern.

Phonics 						
(nonsense words are acceptable).						

Variations:

- Child reads the word and states the vowel sound, beginning sound, or ending sound
- Child claps syllables
- Eventually the child reads words with ch, sh, th, ck, ss, tch, ght, ed, ing, tt, qu, etc.

Child rolls number or chooses number from card or paper. The following 3 games include using a children's book you have at home or from the library.

1 •	2 • •	3 • • •	4 • • • •	5 • • • • •	6 • • • • • •
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Fluency	The child whisper reads the page.	The child reads the page with another person.	The child reads the page using their best dinosaur voice.	They read the page with a tiny mouse voice.	They read the page with a voice like their teacher.	The child reads the page like a robot.
						

Instructions: Choose a new word from the text. Example: In a rabbit book, they may find the word “burrow.”

Vocabulary	Child says the definition in their own words.	Child says a synonym (word that means the same) and an antonym (opposite).	Child writes the word or a sentence using the word.	Child says a connection they have with the word (“one time I made a fort”).	Child draws the word.	Child makes up a silly sentence using the word correctly.
						

Instructions: Choose a new word from the text. Example: In a rabbit book, they may find the word “burrow.”

Comprehension	Adult asks, “What is the story about?”	Adult asks, “Who are the main characters?”	Adult asks, “Where is the setting of the story?”	Adult asks, “What is the problem in the story?”	Adult asks, “How is the problem solved?”	Adult asks, “What is your favorite part?”
						



Around the **HOUSE**



Phonics

Make labels. Give your child slips of paper and let them make labels for the contents of drawers and cupboards. Make labels for things in their room.

Cut and glue match.

- From advertisements, cut, glue and label items needed at the store
- Make wish lists
- Things that start with the first letter of their name, dad's name, etc

Read the list. Make a list of things found in the bathroom. Child reads the word and points to it. Reverse roles. Child writes, you point.

Calm and connect.

- Create a "thankful jar" and write what you're grateful for. Add to it periodically.
- Make cards for loved ones. Address envelopes and mail them.



Vocabulary

Sort! Lay various items out before the child. Think of ways to sort them.

- Big/little, minuscule/enormous
- Color (ebony, chartreuse, raw sienna, etc)
- Shiny/not shiny, opaque/transparent
- Sink/float
- Heavy/light
- Shapes (basic or geometric)
- Smooth/rough (It's even more fun to have them go gather the items (find three things that are rough and three that are smooth))



Fluency

Calm and connect.

- Stack a bunch of new library books on the floor. Pile pillows and blankets on the floor and have a pajama/reading party. Adults participate too. Take turns reading aloud.
- Read together using a flashlight.
- Read together in a blanket fort.



Vocabulary



Comprehension

Build an obstacle course. Using your home language, discuss what makes it difficult or challenging. The adult uses words that stretch the child's vocabulary (hefty, tangled, grueling, slippery, add to this list!).

Calm and connect.

- Build a puzzle together while asking each other fun questions
- Rearrange a room and discuss possibilities and functionality. Look through your child's baby photos.
- Discuss milestones, special toys and their purpose, people in photos and their relationship, traditions and more.
- Create a family time capsule - what should you put in it and why? Discuss symbols.



Phonics



Phonemic Awareness



Vocabulary

Scavenger hunt.

- Find something that can hold water
- Starts with the letter s
- Something that is a solid
- Something with 2 syllables
- Something slippery





Can You FIND It?

Instructions: Complete the challenges below for each skill area.

Phonemic Awareness



Adult tells the child that when the music starts they should go on a hunt around the house FINDING objects that start with a letter. When the music stops they bring what they found. Example: The letter is B, child grabs a banana, a Barbie and a book.

Variations:

- The child must FIND items that have two syllables.
 - The child FINDS items that end the same (Can....Child could find a pen, a man, a tin, etc)
 - The child tries to find something that rhymes with “hen”, “mat”, etc.
 - In the car, while looking out the window....When you find something that has three syllables, shout out its name.
- Parent: “I will say a two syllable word. You switch the syllables around. Can you FIND the nonsense word? Mon*key = Key*mon

Phonics



- While looking at a book, ask the child to FIND something in the picture that has the same beginning sound as ball, or an item with the same vowel sound as doll.
- FIND things outside, practice saying the sounds they hear in the name (b*i*ke)
- Look through your junk mail. FIND things (words or pictures) that have the same vowel sound as “bug”, “plane”, “rock”, etc.
- The adult FINDS a picture in the book (bus). The child writes the name of the object.
- The adult points to a word in the book. (The adult FINDS the word “bus”). The child reads the word and then does a quick draw of the object.
- At the grocery, let’s FIND things that have the same vowel sound as “grapes or can”.
- Play “secret words”....The adult FINDS three simple objects and lays them before the child. The adult has a spoon, tape and a pen. The adult writes _ _ p _ . The child has to FIND the correct object, say its name and finish writing the word.

Fluency



Using a book that is developmentally appropriate, the adult hides notes, stickers or photos periodically in the pages of the book. The child reads the book and FINDS surprises.

- Child should FIND 3 stuffed animals. Child reads their page in a voice that matches the first animal. Child reads page two matching their voice to the next animal, etc. (Dinosaur = a low growly voice, Mouse = a sweet, high voice, Chicken = a sharp, annoying voice)

Vocabulary



- Can you FIND the picture that matches this new vocabulary word?
- Adult plays I SPY to review words that may be less familiar to the child. Example: I SPY a tool the farmer used to pull weeds in his garden. Can you FIND the word? Can you FIND the picture?

Comprehension



The adult has children FIND hints in the book that will help build comprehension.

Examples:

- Which character on this page is sad? Which words helped you figure that out? Can you FIND where in the picture it shows that?
- Who is telling the story? Can you FIND words that helped you know that?
- What words describe the setting? Can you FIND them and read them to me?
- Can you FIND a part that made you feel good?



MOVE Your Body



Phonics

Target Practice. Set up a target for your child to throw something at (a bean bag, a stuffed animal or another soft object will work great).

- Adult says a word and the child must produce a rhyming word. If the word rhymes they try to hit the target.
- Adult says a letter blend and to throw at the target, the child must think of a word that includes the blend (parent says “ch” and the child says “chop.”)
- Adult says “grapes” and the child says “gr.”
- Gameplay could include beginning sounds, ending sounds, blending sounds, vowels, etc



Fluency

Flashlight fun. Turn off the lights and have the child search for things with a flashlight. Search for things that start with “k” and other letters

- Search for rhyming items. Find something that rhymes with “bork” (nonsense words are fine!) Child thinks “fork” and shines the light on silverware.
- Tape words to the wall. The child has to find them and read them. The words could follow the same rule (bam, cam, Pam OR deck, peck, meck). This is also a fun way to read sight words.



Vocabulary

String word hunt. String some yarn around the room and tape words to it. Tell the child where to start and to follow the string.

- Tape all long o sounding words and have them figure out the rule (boat, snow, poke, most)
- Write a sentence on each piece of paper to practice fluency.
- Tape vocabulary words to practice and define.
- Tape a word and have them think of a word that rhymes

This same activity could be done by putting tape on the floor. The child can walk as on a balance beam or ride on a toy.



Comprehension

Long jump. The child reads a page and then steps up to the starting line. How far can they jump? Place a marker where they land and then read the next page. Repeat.

- Child completes a story book. To practice comprehension
- Adult asks, “What is the story about?” The child answers and then gets a jump.
- Adult asks, “Who are the main characters?” The child tries to beat their best jump.
- Adult asks, “Where is the setting of the story?” The child tries to beat their best jump.
- Adult asks, “What is the problem in the story?” (jump)
- Adult asks, “How is the problem solved?” (jump)
- Adult asks, “What is your favorite part?” (jump)



Phonemic Awareness

The muck is yuck! The object of the game is to not touch the floor because it’s filled with yucky muck! Instead kids can walk on pillows or bright pieces of paper taped to the floor. (Whichever you choose, place them in a way that the child will not fall).

- The adult says a word (“bat”). The child pulls the first sound off the word (“b”) and then jumps to the next spot.
- The adult says a word (“bat”). The child blends the sounds together quickly and restates the word. (/b/ /ă/ /t/....bat) The child jumps on the spaces (keep it fun and non-restrictive by giving them a few jumps before the next word)
- The adult says a word. The child stretches the sounds out and restates the word. (bbbbbaaaattttt....bat)
- Add a phoneme: Parent says “bat” and asks the child to add ch = “batch”
- Remove a phoneme: Parent says “guide” and the child removes the final phoneme = “guy.” Parent says “blast” and the child removes the initial phoneme = last.





On the GO

Games to practice the core reading skills from the car or out and about.



Phonics

Make labels. Give your child slips of paper and let them make labels for the contents of drawers and cupboards. Make labels for things in their room.

Road signs. Look for specific signs on the road - recognizing environmental print in. Stop sign, Speed limit 45, Yield, A food advertisement, a specific gas station, Culvers, Target, Starbucks (for extra fun have them spell what they see)

I Spy. Play I Spy using color words, sight words, beginning sounds, etc.

- Find on billboards
- Find on food products at the store
- Find on magazines at the check out



Vocabulary

Synonym and antonyms. Increase vocabulary by thinking of a synonym and antonym for words.

Example: AUTOMOBILE = car/semi



Phonemic Awareness

License plate fun to practice. ZHS 318 Make a sentence using the letters/numbers you see (Example: Zebra has stripes, 318 of them)



Phonics

Scavenger hunt. Make a list of things you may see while out and about or cut pictures from a magazine or grocery advertisement and glue them on a piece of paper. When the child sees it, they cross it out.

- All pictures begin with a certain letter or have the same ending **Phonics**
- Pictures have the same vowel sound (short a sound: plant, cab, van, gal, etc) **Phonics**
- Things they may see on a farm, different types of cars, etc **Vocabulary**



Vocabulary



Comprehension

Nature walk. Discuss, ask questions, share wonders (The more conversation, the more powerful the learning)

Look for

- Pine cone
- Berries on a branch
- A seed pod
- Cloud shapes
- Animal tracks
- Leaf trees/pine trees
- Bird nests/feathers
- Your breath

Smell

- Bark
- Snow
- Pine tree

