



Grade Level Updates

April 7, 2026 | Monroe PTO Public Meeting

Kindergarten:

This time of year is always fun in kindergarten. There has been so much growth since the beginning of the year, we have moved from working on letters and sounds to reading simple CVC words, writing sentences and even being brave and writing bigger words too! We have enjoyed our CKLA units learning about plants, traveling around the world to learn about the continents and learning about the farm. We can not wait to go to Gale Wood farm later this month to see the farm animals. In math we had fun celebrating the 100th day of school in February. We have had fun learning about money, 2D and 3D shapes and we are excited to use the balance scales soon in math. We have also enjoyed doing many PLTW units from making toys out of recycled materials, and learning about pushes and pulls and playing with the pinball machines. We are having a great time in Kindergarten!

First Grade:

First graders have continued to learn and grow each and every day!

In CKLA, we completed our units on Astronomy and Animal Homes and Habitats. It was great to connect both units to our Project Lead the Way Science curriculum. Students were able to use the engineering design process to create a shoe that could travel to one of the habitats we learned about. It was fun to see all their creativity! We are currently in our unit on American Independence. This is a new subject for most of our students and they are doing so well understanding the concepts. The big focus has been on identifying either the problem/solution or cause/effect of the stories we read. Students are using details to write captions for photographs. In Bridge2Read we worked through common vowel teams (-ai, ee, igh, oa, etc). We are currently working on reading two-syllable words and identifying the syllabication patterns in words to help us become EVEN better readers! We are excited to see all the reading and writing that happens over the next two months.

In math, we are completing unit 6, which is all about addition and subtraction strategies. We have been using penguins to help us solve these problems efficiently. We will continue our work with addition and subtraction as we move into the next math unit as well. We celebrated the 120th day of school before spring break. The number "120" is important because it is the first grade benchmark for counting. This includes counting forwards, backwards and skip counting by 2, 5 & 10.

(see other side)

First Grade (Continued):

We enjoyed our field trip to Wargo Nature Center in January. All classes learned more about the Subnivean Zone (under the snow) and ways animals stay protected and warm in the winter. Even though the weather was very cold, some classes got to experience walking on the frozen lake and taking a snowy hike. We look forward to going to the Works Museum next week and Springbrook Nature Center in May.

Second Grade:

Second graders were reading and writing about the Civil War. They also read poems and learned about the elements of poetry. Students wrote 'Memory Poems' as well as other types of poems. We celebrated our poetry writing by having a Poetry Cafe. Students read their poetry for others while the observers enjoyed snacks! We are SO proud of every second grader that showed courage and got in front of the class to read their poetry.

In math, students completed their geometry unit. We investigated 2-dimensional shapes, fractions, congruence, symmetry and transformations. We also explored tessellations as we created quilt pieces.

In PLTW, students used the engineering design process to design a seed dispersal device. As students prepared for the design problem, they learned about pollination, seed dispersal by animals, and seed germination. Students also learned how nature has inspired product design, including the invention of VELCRO® brand fasteners. This popular hook-and-loop fastener was developed by a Swiss engineer after observing how burrs, or tiny seeds covered in hooks, became attached to his dog while on a walk. Students also thought about what other products we use may have been inspired by something from nature.

We enjoyed a field trip to the History Museum. Students participated in a class about Native Americans in MN. It was a great connection to what students were learning with Ms. Eckhoff in Explorations.

Third Grade:

Third grade is always such a busy year full of new learning! We had previously studied Astrology and the vastness of our universe was mind blowing, absolutely hard to fathom! Perhaps this background added to the excitement of the launching of Artemis II. Currently, we are learning about the Indigenous People who inhabited areas all throughout the United States going back thousands of years. We have been spending some extra time studying the Great Lakes Anishinaabe and Dakota people, while also learning some of their stories and traditions. After we read each of these selections, we write complete main ideas and summaries. These young students are impressive!

We are slowly moving into a new PLTW unit on life cycles. Our intent is to learn as much as possible before going to the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum at the end of April.

Please don't worry, we have not neglected our Math brains with all of this content knowledge building. Our work has focused on expanding multiplication/division skills, as well as fractions and geometry concepts. We are working hard to integrate and apply everything to solve multi-step problems. It is all very fun to see their faces light up and hear them talk in depth as they share their knowledge and thoughts! Thank you for all of the support you provide in your homes! Monroe truly has the BEST students and families!

Fourth Grade:

4th grade just finished their novel study, *The Seasons of Styx Malone*. This is a coming-of-age story about Caleb, a ten-year-old boy living in a small town near Indianapolis. The novel explores themes of friendship, trust, family relationships, foster care, and freedom. The students **loved** both the complexities and parallels to their own lives. Our next unit after MCAs will be *Crafting Stories: A World of Tales*. In math we are working on multiplication, division, word problems and MCA review. In science we are looking at waves, both sound and light. This week we are headed to the Stages theater to see the *Girl Who Drank the Moon*.

Fifth Grade:

5th grade has been very busy since December. We enjoyed learning cribbage up until Winter break. January is always a crazy month for us as we started DARE and then Art Adventure, which leads to our field trip to the Minneapolis Institute of Art. Every year I'm unsure of how the kids will react there, but every year it seems like the kids enjoy exploring the museum more and more!

This all then led to Starbase at the end of February and beginning of March. It's always a long, tiring five days for everyone, but then you see the smiles and experiences the kids get making their own 3D Rocket fins and getting to see how they do when they launch their rockets.

Academically, we've enjoyed using our new reading comprehension model. We first used it when reading about Don Quixote, then ecosystems in the oceans and just before spring break, learning about Native Americans and their cultures. For math, we did a lot of work on geometry, specifically 3D shapes. And in science, we just started our patterns in the universe unit after talking about the water cycle and food chains.

Thank you for your continued support! The kids are excited about their trip to Crystal cave later this month and Maple Grove Community Center near the end of the school year!