



School Newsletter

VALLEY ROAD SCHOOL NEWS January, February and March 2024

January Dates:

31- Elementary Math Night K-2 6:30-7:30

February Dates:

2- Interims Posted

Wear your VRS gear or blue as we celebrate Cougar Cub Pride

9- Me & My Sweetheart Dance (Grades K-2 6:00-7:15) (Grades 3-5 7:30-9:00)

Wear your favorite jersey or gear in honor of the Super Bowl. Any sport can be represented.

12- PTA meeting 7p

13- 100th Day of School

14- Valentine's Day(see guidelines for this day later in this newsletter)

16- Wear your most "snuggle-rific" sweatshirt and/or sweatpants.

19- School Closed- Presidents Day

23- Wear your craziest sock or hair...or why not do both!

29- Science Fair grades 3-5 6:30 pm at ALJ

Leap to another decade- 50's, 60's, 70's, 80's, 90's, 2000's, 2010'srepresent a decade!

March Dates:

1- Read Across America

Tricky Tray 5:30 ALJ

4- Author Visit K-1

7- Author Visit grades 2-5

8- Reading Dance Party

12- Mystery Fun Night Grades 3-5 6:30

12-14- Book Fair

15- 5th Grade Fun Night 6:30

25- PTA Meeting 7p

27- VRS Play

28- Report Cards posted

29- School Closed- Spring Break

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Sensory path

Special thanks to Darlene and the PTA for allowing me to use the funds generated from Artsonia to purchase this for our students. Near the path are two signs that explain how each path can benefit our students, but in a nutshell....sensory paths help a child to re-align their sensory systems through a series of moves that target specific muscle groups and joints. It is not simply a "fun" thing to do down the hall, but rather a useful tool to help students refocus.



Valentine's Day

Card exchange February 14, 2024

We are planning to have students exchange Valentine Day cards following these guidelines:

Cards only! No trinkets, snacks or candy please! Any items sent in with these items attached would have to be sent home and not distributed.

Teachers will make decisions on how students will gather the Valentines that they receive, for example, decorate boxes or bags.

Look for details from your children's teachers regarding this.

Health:

Please keep children home if they do not feel well.

Pedestrian Safety

We have noticed that people walking have not always had safe paths to cross the lot. Please when walking at arrival and dismissal to use crosswalks as drivers are expecting people to be in the Crosswalk. They do not expect people to walk out from behind parked cars. So we ask those people walking through our lots, to do so at assigned crosswalks.



Virtual Backpacks

Please be sure to visit our Virtual Backpack on the Valley Road School website. Each week important information will be uploaded to our Valley Road School Virtual backpack or our PTA Virtual backpack. Everything you need to know will be available there. We hope you find this to be a valuable tool in locating information for Valley Road School. You will also be able to locate district information and Flyers from the Community on the Clark Board of Education website under the “more” tab. Click on “more” and you will see the District’s Virtual Backpack. We also have information under School Resources and the VRS Handbook.

Assistant Principal’s Message

Please take a moment to review the information about our attendance procedures which can be found in the student/parent handbook. As long as your child is healthy, it is so important that you get them to school, and that you get them here on time, by **8:40a.m!** If we may be of any assistance in making this happen, please let us know. **If your child is absent because they are sick, please make sure you take steps to secure documentation from a physician so we may mark the absence as excused.** Attendance letters will be sent through Genesis for students with excessive days absent or tardy.

A reminder that parents of students in grades 3-5 are able to view their child’s grades through the Genesis parent portal. Teachers will post at least one grade per week, so it is recommended that you monitor your child’s progress by checking the portal on a fairly regular basis.

For students in grades 3-5, it is time for the Elementary Science Fair! Procedures were emailed to parents/guardians with a link to the Google Form for registration. Space is limited to the first 60 projects so if your child is interested, please sign them up. The link to the registration can also be found on the Valley Road School website.

For students in grades K-2, we will be offering an Elementary Math Night on **Wednesday, January 31** from 6:30-7:30, held in various classrooms at Hehnly School. Parents must accompany their children. This will be an opportunity for parents and students to learn about and play some of the games and activities from our Everyday Math series. A link to register for this event was emailed. Space is limited to the first 30 students at each grade level.

Always remember we are a team. Keep us updated on anything happening at home that may affect your child, and we promise to keep you in the loop about what's going on at Valley Road School. Together we can make your child's educational experience one they enjoy.

NAEP Testing:

Selected grade 4 children will be given the NAEP test in reading and math. This test is one that the national government uses to determine how well the United States Schools are achieving. We do not get these results. Only those selected take the test which will be on February 6th. There will be two sessions, one in the morning and one in the afternoon.

New Jersey State Testing Grade 3, 4 and 5

Valley Road School's New Jersey Student Learning Assessment (NJSLA) schedule is set for the months of April and May for students in grades 3, 4, and 5.

All small group testing sessions are planned for the morning of testing days dedicated for that grade level. Make-up assessments are planned and will be utilized as needed on days to be determined on a day by day basis to meet the makeup testing needs..

<u>Dates: (Subject to change depending on testing needs)</u>	<u>Grade Level(s) Testing</u>
April 29 & 30 May 1 - 3 & 6	Grade 5
May 6 - 9	Grade 4
April 30 May 1 -3,	Grade 3

NOTE: ELECTRONIC DEVICES, SUCH AS APPLE WATCHES, GOOGLE WATCHES, CELL PHONES, OR ANY DEVICES THAT CAN SEND OR RECEIVE MESSAGES, ARE NOT PERMITTED IN SCHOOL during testing. IF YOUR CHILD HAS ONE, IT REMAINS IN HIS/HER BACKPACK. THIS IS MOST IMPERATIVE DURING TESTING.

While we have headphones for each student, if a student prefers to bring in their own they may certainly do so; however, the headphones **cannot be** wireless/bluetooth compatible.

As a reminder: **Students must bring their laptops to school on testing days. PLEASE MAKE SURE THEY ARE FULLY CHARGED!**

We also request that students have a good night's sleep the night before a testing day and that they eat a good, healthy breakfast on the mornings of testing days.

Elementary School News:

STEAM:

Thank you for all the paper towel rolls and plastic bag donations. Having an abundance of supplies really enhances projects and allows students to try out multiple ideas and improvement options. THANK YOU!!

Kindergarten

In Kindergarten we had community helpers come in at the end of October. We are beginning to blend sounds more regularly and increasing our writing and focusing on ways to label our writing. In Math we are working on different ways to add up to 5. We are easing back from vacation! We are using this week as a catch up/review week. This week we are starting word families and focusing on decoding the words and rhyming them.

First Grade

In first grade we are having so much fun! We are continuing to work on our blends and spelling patterns in Language Arts, as well as story skills and comprehension! Please be sure to be practicing Kindergarten and first grade red words at home with your child. In math we have been working on unit 3- and have been getting into number stories and skip counting. In Science and social studies we have had a fun time using measurement, and learning about Election day and Veterans day! Looking forward to seeing everyone during conferences!

We hope everyone had a wonderful winter break! In first grade our skills are starting to increase in difficulty as we near the middle of the year. Please be sure to practice spelling patterns, reading fluency, and comprehension with your child! This week we are starting with nk and ng sound units, and beginning weekly comprehension questions. In math we are working with the equal sign and finding true and false number sentences. In social studies we are learning about winter habitats and animals as well as celebrating Martin Luther King day by making our own "I Have a Dream" speeches.

Second Grade

Grade two is working hard in language arts. We are having success with our Orton Gillingham spelling rules, learning how to write strong sentences, learning about subjects and predicates, and learning how to go back into text for answers. In math, we just

wrapped up Unit 2 and are continuing to work with addition strategies as well as some fun math mysteries! In social studies we continue to take our trip around the world visiting the 7 continents. We completed some fun Halloween writing and are beginning to work on a special Thanksgiving project.

Happy New Year! Grade 2 is excited to be back and ready to work hard. In language arts we will be starting unit 3 where we will be exploring the author's purpose, similes, compound words, synonyms, and antonyms. In math we are moving into measurement as well as expanded form and telling time to 5 minute intervals. We are also discussing am and pm. We are moving away from social studies for the time being and moving into physical science where we will also start exploring various types of measurement.

Ms. Semon

In Ms. Semon's room, we work on improving our reading, writing, and math skills using fun, multisensory approaches to instruction!

Instruction in ELA and math is delivered in small-groups and centers to cater to every type of learner in the classroom. This way, everyone gets what they need in order to succeed! In order to show what we know and practice our skills, we have spelling tests and math quizzes/tests at the end of each week.

Science and Social Studies is a time where we come together and learn as a whole class as well as engage in fun activities. Engaging in whole-class discussions surrounding essential questions, watching exciting videos, reading interesting articles, the students love this and so do the teachers!

As the year continues, we are looking forward to spending time learning and growing together!

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AEI

Mrs. Warnick and Mrs. Haney's AEI students have been hard at work during each class period. The younger grades have been working on vowel sounds and decoding strategies, while third, fourth, and fifth graders have been learning strategies to figure out

unfamiliar words, as well as using clues to gain understanding and comprehension. Math classes have been concentrating on practicing facts, and providing support of their classroom math instruction. Mrs. Haney and Mrs. Warnick have been enjoying their classes, and want to thank the parents for their support.

AEI students are continuing to reinforce classroom strategies and appropriate grade level skills. Mrs. Warnick and Mrs. Haney use the small group instruction time to incorporate various manipulatives as well as fun activities to support these necessary classroom skills. As always, decoding, fluency, and comprehension are the main focus for language arts. In mathematics, in class support as well as one on one instruction are continuing to help students. Not only are students building their fundamentals of arithmetic, but they are applying these to new mathematical concepts introduced in the classroom. We look forward to working with our students.

Art - Mrs. Kennedy

Hello! November in art means we are gearing up for some holiday themed artwork. The children are always so excited for the lights, colors and sounds of the season, that it inspires us to create! Be sure to check Artsonia, there are some great deals for thoughtful holiday gifts. As always, feel free to reach out with any questions!

Happy New Year! I saw that many of you made purchases on Artsonia. Thank you!! I will try to post projects as soon as we finish them.

Computers Mrs. Lenau

Kindergarten/Ms. Hahn's

We are celebrating "World Kindness Day" with activities spelling the word KIND and "sprinkling" kindness

1st/2nd grades

Using our digital skills we will build a scarecrow and include a short write-up about it
3rd grade

We are creating a slideshow with images of how we experience autumn through our five senses

4th/5th grade

Making use of stop motion automation we are creating a Thanksgiving Day parade float and animating it

K-1: We are working on various winter-themed activities such as drawing a digital snowman scene and solving a logic puzzle

2-3: We are piecing together various jigsaw puzzles by solving math problems

4: Fourth graders are planning a winter party and using a spreadsheet to stay within budget

5: Fifth graders are tracking winter weather days in a spreadsheet and creating graphs to display the data

Gym- Mr. Raguseo

During the month of November we will be using the scooters. We will discuss safety, have relay races, play scooter polo and scooter hockey.

Excited to start 2024. Classes will begin Volleyball skills and modified games

Ms. Hahn

In Ms. Hahn's class, students are continuing to work on their individualized programs. Students have adjusted well to our routine, and following our schedule. We are beginning to work on requesting desired items throughout the day and on sensory activities in a group setting. I am so happy to see how much we are learning, growing, and developing every day!

Ms. Hahn's class has transitioned back to school well after winter break. We are continuing to work on our individualized goals.

Ms. Almeidinha

In room 1 students are improving quickly! In reading we are working on writing narrative stories including temporal words, parts of speech, and story elements. In math some students are working on missing addends, adding three addends and counting while others are working on multi-digit subtraction, place value, and rounding. In social studies we are learning about the continents and oceans.

In class we continue to work on our comprehension and fluency in reading! We are taking some time to do a mid year assessment on our phonics skills and the students are doing great! In math, students are working on multiplication, double digit and multi digit addition. In science we are beginning to learn about landforms and will soon be starting a project where we create our own landforms. We are excited to see how much we grow until the end of the year.

Third Grade

LAL- We are ending Unit 1 which introduced so many great skills. Students are reminded to read 20 minutes each night and complete reading bingo on their Google Classrooms when assigned.

Math- Finishing up Unit 2. Math test will be the last week in November after Thanksgiving. Unit 3 will focus on incorporating all 4 operations.

Science- Continuing to work through our Earth and Space unit. Specifically talking about weather, the water cycle and clouds.

Happy 2024 from team third grade!

Language Arts- Finishing up Unit two in the next few weeks. Working on skills like theme, Author's Viewpoint & Prefixes/suffixes. Continue working on Reading Bingos on Google Classroom as weekly homework.

Math- Finishing Unit 3 which has been focusing on all operations. Continue working on Kicking It with nightly homework to advance levels.

Science/Social Studies- We've completed through the water cycle, clouds, and Biomes. Thanks to all parents who helped with the Biome project being due right before break. We'll continue with some more Earth/Space Science before moving back to Social Studies.

Fourth Grade

In Reading we are working on Main Idea and Details with Expository Text. In Writing we are working on Starting Persuasive Essays - Don't Eat Turkey. In Social Studies we are learning Regions of New Jersey and Lenape Indians. In Math we are Wrapping up Unit 2 with Lines of Symmetry, Quadrilaterals and Triangles

Reading: We are working on Author's Point of View and reading Biographies. We will continue to work on responding to reading through a response

Math: We are working on Fractions and Decimals. We will be testing on Unit 3 soon

Writing: We are beginning to focus on Expository writing. Students have to pick a topic that they feel they are an expert in.

Social Studies: We are beginning a project on learning about the Lenape Indians. The students will create a poster on various groups and create an artifact to go along with it

Fifth Grade

In fifth grade we are studying Salem Witch Trials in Social Studies and wrapping up unit 1 in Math covering area and volume. We continue to work on reading comprehension skills and are working toward adding S to our RACE(S) responses as avid readers and writers. We are excited to begin research based writing and look forward to the holiday season. Grade 5 is heading into the new year getting ready to learn about colonial America, decimal operations, and opinion writing. Let's have a great 2024!

Music- Mrs. Sauer

The students are preparing for their holiday performances! The first is the small choir who will be performing at the Winter Festival on Saturday, November 25. Then on December 13th the entire 5th grade class choir, small choir and band will present their Holiday Concert at ALJ! Hope to see you there!

The band and choir had a successful Winter Concert in December. Thank you to everyone that came out and supported the students. Future concert dates are as follows:

Band Bonanza on April 17th

Spring Concert on May 29th

Recorder Concert on June 5th

STEAM Mrs. Salvatore

Grades K-5 : We continue to work and think like Engineers.

Grades 1,2 and 5 are wrapping up their existing challenges

Grade 3 and 4 are just about done gathering pertinent information and experiences to aid the start of their building.

Grade K is working on seasonal engineering projects

Grade K - Designing/building a Turkey retreat to help our turkey friends escape their fate of being the star of Thanksgiving dinner.

Grade 1 - Rapunzel Escape Challenge (Finishing building and testing our escape routes) It took a few weeks but the Children learned to work as a team and they all did a GREAT job with this project!

Grade 2 - Billy Goats Gruff Challenge (Testing, improving and redesigning our boats to meet the challenge). Children are learning that it is ok to fail but not ok to give up!

Grade 3 - Mouse Trap Challenge - Wrapping up our simple machines exploration: We explored the benefits of inclined planes and created a screw out of paper and a pencil. We've created a catapult and launched them to explore how levers work. Moving onto our wheel and axle and pulley explorations soon.

Grade 4 - Roller Coaster Challenge - investigating Newton 1st Law of motion by conducting 5 different explorations that demonstrate inertia.

Grade 5 - Parachute Challenge - Students worked together to create/pretest and improve their own parachutes from scratch using an array of materials of their choice with the goal to have the longest hang time. We are getting ready to test and compare results.

All grades will start computer programming (coding) at some point during the month of January. Please make sure your child fully charges their ChromeBook the night before STEAM and brings it to school on their STEAM day.

Grades K, 1, 2 and 5 : Have started computer science (coding) lessons. K/1: Introduction to beginning skills: dragging, clicking, reading and writing algorithms, and running code.

They will practice these skills with both plugged and unplugged lessons. 5th grade will start with reviewing 4th grade topics like creating and coding sprites, assigning behaviors and setting up events. They will move into more advanced topics as the month goes on.

Grades 3 & 4 continue to work on building/testing/improving their mouse traps and roller coasters. We will be moving on to coding within the next few weeks.