



Northvail Elementary School

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Website: nvs.pthsd.k12.nj.us T: 973-263-7070

Dear Northvail Families:

Welcome to the 2020-2021 Northvail Elementary fall edition newsletter. I hope you and your families spent some relaxing and quality time together this summer and fall. As an educator for 23 years in the Parsippany Troy-Hills School District, I appreciate the supportive and collaborative efforts of our educators and families to foster exceptional opportunities for our students to learn and grow with continued focus on the mind, body and heart. We are of course "Home of the Wise Owls". On behalf of my staff, we are committed to this partnership during these unique times.

Sincerely,

Natalie C. Betz, Ed.D

Principal, Northvail Elementary School

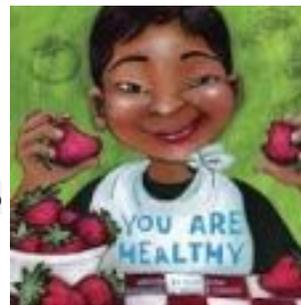


Kindergarten Science

In science, kindergarten students are learning about trees and weather. This ties in perfectly with our season, fall! Students discovered that trees have many different parts, including leaves. Students observed the properties of leaves, including size, shape, and color. They were then able to compare the different shapes and sizes of leaves! On our *Virtual Fridays*,

Nurse Mrs. Muraswki Visits Our Newest Wise Owls This Fall

I visited our kindergarten classes to introduce myself to our in person and remote students with the help of our very busy kindergarten teachers, Ms. DeCuba and Ms. Breslauer. I chose the book *You are Healthy* by Todd Snow to read to our students. In the book the author highlighted things to do to stay healthy like playing, eating good foods such as fruits and vegetables, drinking water throughout the day, getting enough sleep, spending time with loved ones and washing our hands. We could all take a lesson from this book for a lifetime of healthy habits. I guess it's true, "All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten".



students took a virtual field trip to an apple orchard and a pumpkin patch! They were able to explore how these plants grow. This tied in nicely with our science unit to investigate what plants and trees need to live. We look forward to continuing our fall investigation by observing the different weather patterns!

Focus Question: What can we observe about leaves?



Some leaves are heart shaped.

Focus Question: How are leaves different?

Choose 1 leaf to compare to the reference leaf. Tell how they are different. Record your voice or write to answer the question.



They are different in shape and size.





The First Grade classes have been working hard at being detectives... WORD DETECTIVES that is! Using the Parsippany curriculum, and the Lucy Calkins Units of Study for Teaching Reading Program, Mrs. Tangorra, Ms. Forte, Mrs. Penna, and Mrs. Carrasca, have been creating engaging missions for their classes to explore. The first grade readers have been using all the strategies they have learned to figure out tricky words and the meaning of text. Students have been practicing and applying different strategies to stop and solve any reading problems they may encounter. This unit also ties back to their previous learned skills: "Good Habits for Solving Hard Words".

SEL Activities in the Classes of Ms. Axt and Ms. Nelson

The students of Ms. Axt and Ms. Nelson have been developing their social emotional learning skills in unique and fun ways! Every morning, both classes start with a variety of "check ins" to share the kind of energy they are bringing to the day. Ms. Axt's children choose an emoji to identify what zone they are in then send a voice video to explain, while Mrs. Nelson's students use weather words such as, "Sunny," or "Cloudy with a chance of sun" etc...

Specific SEL skills are being developed in Ms. Axt's class through sharing personal videos on topics such as, "I wish my teacher knew this about me..." or by creating a "personal heart map" sharing three important people or things in their lives. The older students are using the "Growth Mindset" strategies by studying famous people such as Amelia Earhart, Malala Yousafzai, and even a 4th grader learning long division for the first time!

Additionally, both classes are developing their bank of calming strategies for this different kind of year. In Ms. Axt's class, morning stretches with Dr. Jean with calming music is one of the favorite activities. The older class is mastering yoga techniques with students leading a variety of poses. Check-ins, precise teaching of strategies, and a variety of brain breaks are enabling the students to be successful during this challenging school year!



Happiness Journals-Grade 2

Throughout the entire month of October, second grade students completed happiness journals! This social emotional activity had students think about what they are thankful for,

expressed their feelings, and thought about inspirational quotes!

Happiness Journal

3 things I am thankful for...
Be as specific as possible and write in complete sentences. You can write about events in your life, memories, people in your life, or things in your life that you are thankful for.

1. I'm thankful for my mother because she makes food for my family and she takes care of me.
2. I'm thankful for my father because he always makes me happy and he takes care of me.
3. I'm thankful for my sister because she always makes me giggle and she takes care of me.

I Feel (Make a box based on how you are feeling today!)

Green	Happy
Blue	Cool
Red	Nervous
Yellow	Excited
Pink	Peaceful
Orange	Playful
Purple	Beautiful

You can place in the colors if you feel two emotions.

Find a PICTURE of what makes you happy!



Quote of the day.
Find a picture to go with the quote.

If you have good thoughts they will shine out of your face like sunbeams and you will always look lovely.
Rosalind Wiseman



JOT IT!
How do you relax?
Jot down ideas!

1. By eating cookies.
2. Somewhere quiet.
3. Being in a pool.
4. Sitting on a rocking chair.
5. Drink something cold.

Happiness Journal

3 things I am thankful for...
Be as specific as possible and write in complete sentences. You can write about events in your life, memories, people in your life, or things in your life that you are thankful for.

1. I am thankful for books to read. You can have fun with fiction books and with nonfiction books you can learn some facts that makes you smart.
2. I am thankful for airplanes because it makes people go to the place they want and you can visit a new place that you have never been to before.
3. I am thankful for snow it makes me happy and I can play with it and it is a fun thing to do if you are bored.

I Feel (Make a box based on how you are feeling today!)

Green	Happy
Blue	Cool
Red	Nervous
Yellow	Excited
Pink	Peaceful
Orange	Playful
Purple	Beautiful

You can place in the colors if you feel two emotions.

Find a PICTURE of what makes you happy!



Quote of the day.
Find a picture to go with the quote.

We grow great by dreams.
Woodrow Wilson



JOT IT!
What are your favorite winter activities?
Jot down ideas!

Build snowmans
Make footsteps
Snuggle in blankets.



Northvail Third Grade Wise Owls STEAM Design Challenges

The third grade owls have been very busy learning about the engineering process. The students mastered the *ask, imagine, plan, create, improve and present* stages of the Design Process with several hands on STEAM activities. The first activity required the students to solve Cinderella's problem. In order to go to the ball her stepmother said she must clean the house first. The students were challenged with the task to design a cleaning tool that would help Cinderella complete her job faster. The students had to make sure that their design met the criteria and constraints. The criteria was that the tool had to help Cinderella clean the house faster. The constraint was that they could only use materials that they found around their house. The students had to first define the problem. Then they had to imagine and plan the design. They created their designs and tested them. Afterwards they redesigned their prototype as needed. Finally, the students presented their prototype to the class.

The second STEAM activity was "The Cup Stacking Challenge". The students had 24 cups and a time limit to stack the tallest freestanding tower. The students worked together to collaborate and discuss their plan for building the tower. The students discovered challenges as they worked to create a free standing tower. They took their findings and discussed how to improve their design. We were amazed how their determination paid off and how tall some of their towers stood! We are so proud of the efforts that the students put forth during our Engineering Process Unit. We can't wait to see what our engineers will accomplish in the future!



Northvail Fourth Graders SEL-Journaling

In 4th grade we have been focusing on SEL, Social Emotional Learning since the beginning of the school year. We understand the importance of the social emotional component both in school and at home. Each class has utilized small groups, meet up/buddy up, and whole group sharing time throughout our days together. We have seen that the students are really enjoying this time together...sharing, laughing, and getting to know each other. Their smiles are contagious! We offer them questions to prompt discussion as well as strategies to solve problems throughout their day both at home and in school.

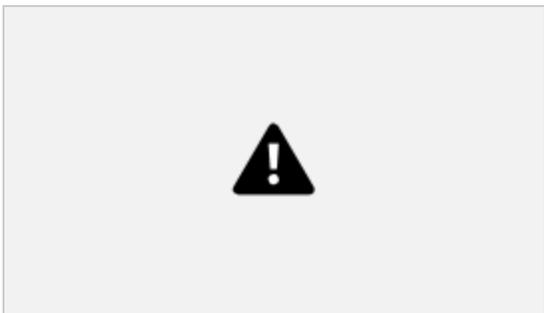
One way to continue this at home is to encourage your child to practice the art of journaling. 4th grade is a perfect age to write in a diary, which can be as simple as a notebook or something special purchased from the store. Giving your child a comfortable place in the house to journal, or fun writing tools will help encourage this technique. Journaling is a great way to turn off the computer, but still have your child practicing their writing and communication skills.

We have attached two separate links to help in understanding the benefits of journaling as well as journal prompts to get your child started!

How Journaling Benefits Your Child

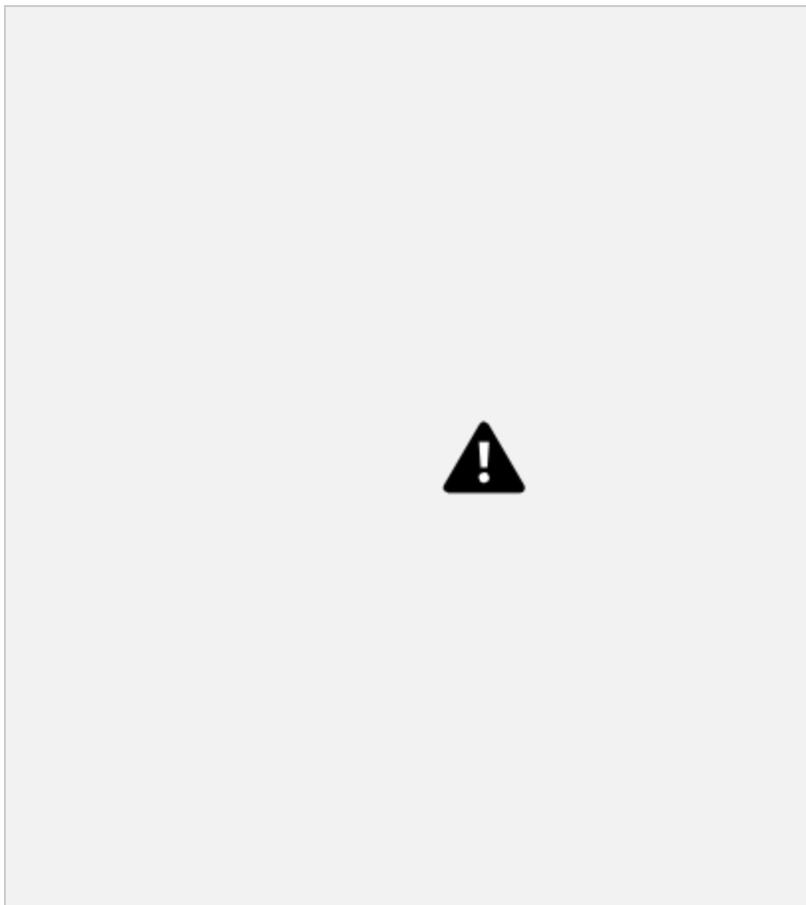
<https://www.scholastic.com/parents/books-and-reading/raise-a-reader-blog/how-journaling-benefits-your-child.html>

Journal Prompts for Kids



Extra, Extra! - Fifth Graders

Fifth grade has been working hard on their Journalism unit in writing this month. Students learned how to be reporters and address the who, what, where, when, why, and how of a news story by analyzing article samples. They also learned how to report without bias, and about other feature stories included in a newspaper. They then put on their reporter hats and created their own news articles. Students had the option of reporting on something currently happening in the world or making up their own plausible story. Many students chose to report on a Halloween event! Articles were then compiled into a class newspaper. We are so proud of our reporters and the important work they did during this unit!



Sample of a student newspaper.



Our Northvail Community Nest

PTA Information:

Northvail PTA President Mrs. Cindy Collins. Email: NorthvailPTA@gmail.com

PTA Info: located on NV school webpage

Northvail Communication:

School Messenger- Please make sure your parent information is up to date.

Twitter: Please follow NBetz on Twitter: @NO_OWL_PRIN

School Newsletter: Our school newsletter will be sent via school messenger and located on our school webpage: www.nvs.pthsd.k12.nj.us



[Physical Education-Northvail](#)

It has been an educational and enjoyable first few months for our physical education program here at Northvail Elementary School! Even though we have had physical education class virtually, students have both learned about healthy and active habits, as well as performed several exciting movement exercises. Throughout all grade levels, our students have participated in several activities, and have learned various movements to help develop their social, emotional, physical, and mental well-being.

Most of our lessons start with a stationary warm-up activity, in which students strengthen their physical attributes, primary flexibility. The second part of most of our virtual lessons focuses on the teaching of a skill or health aspect, with detailed demonstrations.

The third and final part of most virtual lessons focus on students performing individual activities, focusing on fitness levels, cardiovascular endurance, muscular strength, muscular endurance, and flexibility.

At the upper grade levels (grades 2 to 5), students have learned about soccer skills, including dribbling, passing, kicking, trapping, heading, and throw-ins. Over the next few months, students at the upper grade levels will continue to learn about individual and team sports skills, including football (throwing, catching, and running), and bowling (stationary and moving rolls). Students in grades 3, 4, and 5 learned about pedometers, and how to track the amount of steps they take, as well as their total exercise time. Students in grades 3, 4, and 5 will also learn how to use hand held heart rate monitors,

focusing on their heart beat as it relates to their activity level. Students at the upper levels have used Google Classroom as their primary platform, and have turned in their assignments, as well as an exit ticket, for their completion credit.

At the primary level (grades kindergarten and first), students have focused on spatial awareness, movements in directions and levels, and dances, both live and pre-recorded. They have also performed one of their favorite dances, the "Cha Cha Slide"! Students at the primary level will perform two more live dances before the holiday break, as well as several pre-recorded dances. Students at the

additional dates and times are:

December 8th 3:30-5:30 pm

December 14th -9:30-12:30 pm

(A Table will be located outside the main entrance.)

Thank you for your kindness and generosity.

their motor skills and use of several months.

Student Council Food Drive-

Wise Owls donation to the Parsippany Food Pantry

- o Donations for the Northvail Food Drive

Begin on 12/8-12/14

for *in seat* students.

- o *Remote Only* and

Parent drop off

Students at the primary level have used See Saw as their primary platform, and have recorded their assignments on a physical education log, as well as through See Saw, including the handing in of videos and pictures.

Make sure to have your children stay active and healthy, especially throughout the cold winter months. We are looking forward to an energetic and educational virtual winter in our physical education classes- Mr. Hromoko

Guidance Corner



Hello Northvail Families! I just wanted to say how proud I am of all of the students and the effort they are putting forth whether learning in class or remote. I know that there are many challenges this year, but the commitment of Northvail Students and families is evident. To that point, if your child needs any assistance whether academically, socially, or emotionally, please feel free to contact me. I can meet with your child in person, if he or she is in school, or I can set up a google meet and talk to them virtually.

Even though the circumstances are changing the way in which we are doing things, we are trying to keep a sense of normalcy for the students. Fortunately, Mrs. Vento and I are chairing Student Council once again this year. The students have been coming up with great ideas to keep us all connected and creating a feeling of togetherness. Throughout the year we will be in contact with your child to ask for his or her involvement in some activities and fundraisers.

In the past, Northvail has been very generous in donating food to the Parsippany Food bank, and this year will be no different. I have been in contact with someone at the food bank, and they are extremely thankful that we will be continuing this tradition. Shortly, the Northvail Student Council will be sharing with you additional information about when the fundraiser will take place, what items we will be collected and how we will be collecting them, stay tuned.

Please make sure your child is part of my Google Classroom, "Northvail's Counselor Corner." The students will find updates on what is going on at school and some fun things to do. Also for parents, check out Northvail's Homepage and click on the counseling tab. There you will find useful parent resources and services I offer at school. I am looking forward to the remainder of this school year and working with you and your child.

Rick Breiten
rbreiten@pthsd.net
973 263 7070 ext. 4



Northvail Wise Owls: Shout-outs or Hoot-outs



2020 NJ School Bus Safety Poster Contest Winners

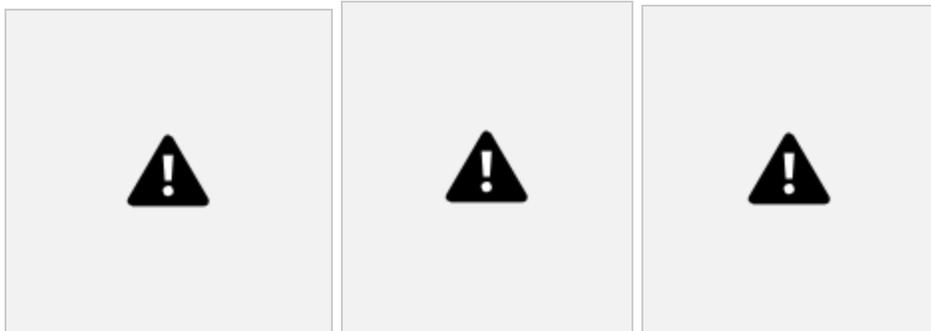
Congratulations to several students at Northvail elementary school for receiving an award for the 2020 NJ Bus Safety Poster Contest sponsored by the School Transportation Supervisors of New Jersey. Students drew posters highlighting the contest theme "Be Safe-Know the Danger Zone" or "Can't Touch This-The Danger Zone".

Northvail Recipients:

Nilan Arulanand- 2nd Place, Division 1

Chandhana Muhilan- 2nd Place, in Division 2

Arham Sheth-3rd Place in Division 1



PTA Reflections Program

Congratulations to our Northvail students for their participation in the PTA Reflections Program. Northvail had 17 entrants showcase their work in several categories including: *Visual Arts*, *Photography*, *Music*, *Dance* and *Literature*. Additionally, Northvail has 13 out of 17 entrants moving to the next level of the PTA Reflections Program. Congratulations and we wish them good luck!

Visual Arts (PK-2) *Arjun Arora & Arham Sheth*

Photography (PK-2) *Rishi Shah*

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Northvail Wise Owls: Shout-outs or Hoot-outs



PTA Reflections Program Continued:

Visual Arts (PK-2) *Nilan Arul Anand*

Dance (3-5) *Prisha Dhake*

Literature (3-5) *Jyestha Kansal, Sanvi Narendra & Tanish*

Samal Music (3-5) *Clay Fitzgerald & Rayhan Mohammed*

Visual Arts (3-5) *Vigyaant Jain, Chandhana Lingam Muhilan & Trisha Thoutreddy*

Our Media Specialist, Mrs. Montesano sharing several books to read this

season... Book Picks for 2020

Picture Books

- *Jabari Jumps & Jabari Tries* by Gaia Cornwell  
- *High Five* by Adam Rubin 
- *How to Read a Story* by Kate Messner 
- *President Jungle* by Andre Rodguies 
- *Going Up* by Sherry Lee 

Books for 2nd & 3rd Grade

- *The Year of Billy Miller* by Kevin Henkes  • *Pompeii ...*
- Buried Alive!* By Edith Kunhardt  • *Only a Dog* by Bertha
- Whitridge Smith*  • *Upstairs Mouse, Downstairs Mole* by



Wong Herbert Yee



• *Hill of Fire by Thomas P. Lewis*



Red and Lulu by Matt Tavares

Books for 4th & 5th Grade



• *New Kid by Jerry Craft*



• *The One and Only Ivan by Katherine Applegate*



• *The Front Desk by Kelly Yang*



• *Frindle by Andrew Clements*

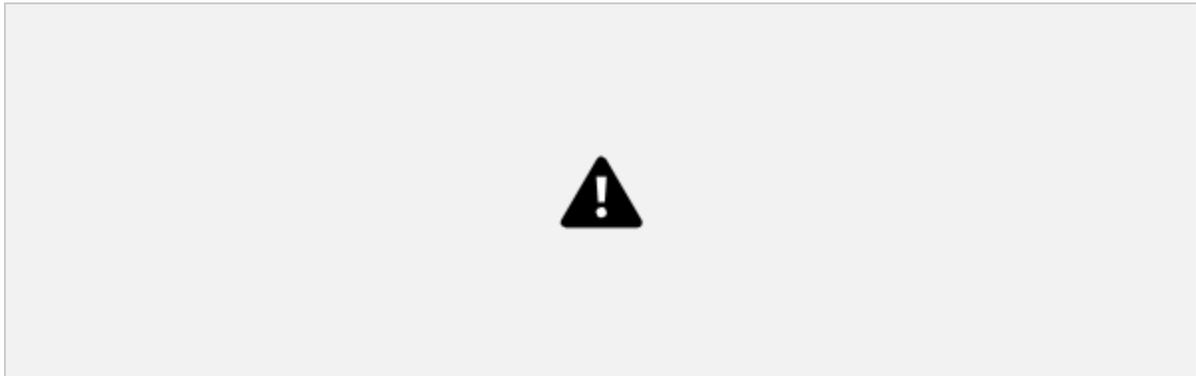


• *Artemis Fowl* by Eoin Colfer



December 2020

Supporting Your Personal Wellness



Parenting has its challenges even during the best of times. During a pandemic? With hybrid instruction? And limited opportunities to venture out of your home? Now, that's really increasing the parental stress load.

As we move into the winter months, let's remember that we will be best equipped to handle the needs of our children and family if we are taking care of ourselves also. A recent article by Micera Keels in *Educational Leadership* (October 2020) highlights six categories of self-care:

Physical Self-Care: Taking care of your body by getting enough sleep, eating healthy foods, exercising, and seeing a health care provider regularly.

Emotional Self-Care: Surrounding yourself with positive supports, journaling, talking about your feelings to manage your emotions in a healthy way.

Social Self-Care: Engaging with the world around you through friendships, celebrating milestones, and belonging to groups and communities.

Cognitive Self-Care: Improving your mind through reading, writing, and learning new things.

Financial Self-Care: Responsibly saving and spending money, establishing plans for the financial future.

Spiritual Self-Care: Taking part in activities that bring perspective to your life, such as prayer, meditation, interacting with nature, or attending a house of worship.

Most of us work so hard to take care of others that we wear ourselves out. We burn our candle at both ends. Honor your own personal needs to attending to these critical categories of self-care. You cannot be your best self, best parent, best employee if personal wellness is not a priority.

Need special assistance? Our school guidance counselors are able to share resources with you. Additionally, <https://www.performcarenj.org/index.aspx> is the link to PerformCare, NJ Children's System of Care and contains supports for parents and caregivers.