

South Fayette Elementary School

Board Report

September 2022

Kindergarten

Finally part of the pride! The Kindergarten children are adjusting after their first few weeks of school. They have been reviewing classroom rules and procedures and are ready to learn!

We have finished our first two weeks of Language Arts using our new Houghton Mifflin Harcourt reading series. The students are excited because they have already learned their first two sight words!

In math, we are working on reviewing 2D shapes: circle, square, triangle, rectangle and hexagon.

The children have enjoyed the beautiful weather during recess time for Explore each day.

We are so excited to kick off the new school year...Go Lions!!

Submitted by: Mrs. Angela Simms

First Grade

It was an exciting start to another school year at South Fayette Elementary! We greeted students and parents at "Meet the Teacher!" The excitement was palpable as the students explored their new classrooms and anticipated a full day of learning. First grade can be a big transition for students, but it also offers students many exciting firsts; lunch in the cafeteria, recess on the playground, and a chance to experience our unified arts classes!

The first week of school was filled with stories and activities that taught students about our routines and goals for the year. Students were quickly recalling classroom rules and kindergarten skills in preparation for the new skills we will learn in first grade. We emphasize the importance of kindness and respect to create warm and welcoming classroom environments. We completed "All About Me" activities to encourage students to share their unique qualities and make connections with their peers. Making new friends and developing social skills is an important part of first grade.

The first grade teachers have been busy planning and implementing the new language arts series. We are reviewing letter sounds and starting the word building process. Word building teaches students to blend letter sounds and decode words. Students are also learning new sight words through the use of interactive games, such as: Thumbs Up, Clap it Out, and Blast Off. The new series offers a wide variety of stories. Our students can easily relate and make connections to the engaging stories. Our first lesson focused on author's purpose and story sequence. We will revisit these important concepts throughout the year. Our first grammar lessons are centered on nouns. Students are learning to name and identify nouns in a sentence as well as discriminate between common and proper nouns. We are also taking time to review handwriting and proper letter formation in conjunction with complete sentence writing practice.

As we prepare to start our formal math lessons, we are reviewing number sense skills with students. They are practicing numbers 1-20 in many forms. Students must identify the number in word form and represent the number using a variety of forms including tallies, ten frames, and different combinations to make each number. We are also practicing calendar math daily. Our classes enjoy singing songs to learn the days of the week and months of the year. We are also reviewing the types of weather and the four seasons daily. Calendar is a great time for us to introduce new math skills before they encounter them in our math lessons. We include many math concepts in our calendar math lessons. Fact families, time, and money are a few examples of concepts we practice. The repetition helps students to master these skills.

Students were excited to start our science lessons. We begin by teaching our students the basics of science. What is science? What do scientists do? Students will learn to ask questions, make predictions and observations, record their findings, and then analyze the data. Our weather unit offers students the opportunity to engage in hands-on science and put their scientific skills into action. Our first graders were also excited to visit the Learning Lab and learn about all the exciting "challenges" they will solve together.

We are looking forward to a great year filled with learning and fun in all of the first grade classrooms!

Submitted by: Mrs. Jocelyn Blystone

Second Grade

Welcome Back!

We have had a busy few weeks in second grade. Second graders were so excited to get back to school to see their friends, teachers, principals, support staff, cafeteria workers, and most importantly, begin to learn. We have had a great time learning bus and playground rules as well as classroom rules. Getting to know our new classmates has been a blast too. We

are all looking forward to a wonderful school year.

In Language Arts, we have been reviewing short vowel sounds from first grade. We are learning how to read and spell the short vowel sounds, as we apply them to our decodable readers and manipulate them with word building. We are also learning how to identify and write complete sentences with subjects and predicates.

In math, we have been reviewing place value for two-digit numbers as we discuss each digit's place and value. We also compared numbers to see which one is greater or less than. Learning number words has been challenging, but we are getting the hang of it. Second graders are also beginning to learn addition strategies to help us master those basic facts.

Submitted by: Mrs. Lauren Dornish

Learning Lab

Learning Lab is off to a great start this year! Our young scientists are working on exciting projects to help them develop a sense of teamwork that will carry them throughout the school year.

In second grade, students are learning about the science of roller coasters as they explore ways to create their own tracks with twists, turns, and loops that will allow a marble to move from the top to the bottom. This project gives students a chance to explore the Engineering Design Process as they first make a plan, test it out, and improve on their designs.

Meanwhile, first grade students are having fun exploring the different ways that building techniques can help them create strong, sturdy structures. After reading *The Three Little Pigs*, students were tasked with creating a house that not even the Big, Bad Wolf can blow down....

Kindergarten students will have their first opportunity to visit the Learning Lab on the upcoming 2-hour delay day, where they will be making their own playdoh!

Submitted by: Ms. Melissa Unger

Unified Arts

Art

We are excited to kick off the 2022-23 school year in the art room! The beginning of the year is all about learning studio rules/expectations and practicing them while making art. Both grades are creating collaborative art to make our room and hallways colorful and inspiring. Since September 15th is International Dot Day, both grades' collaborative projects are inspired by the book *The Dot* by Peter H. Reynolds.

First grade artists are creating an abstract mural inspired by painter Wassily Kandinsky. Like the artist, each student is encouraged to explore the effects of different color combinations in their work. Their individual art is combined to make a large abstract art piece in the art room. Second grade students are learning about the folk artist Heather Galler, and creating a mural for the hall inspired by her colorful landscape paintings. Students are learning how to work together and take pride in their work by creating these collaborative pieces.

Arts Alive

Using the song and dance, “Yankee Doodle Dandy,” students in second grade discover how musical traditions are influenced by events in history, as well as how people talk about musical works. In addition, second graders will become callers and responders using the “Welcome Back to School” song by Linda Alstedt.

First grade students are discovering their head voices and sharing the “Welcome Song” with the help of some of our puppet friends. Students are also beginning to use instruments to play multiple ostinati, or short repeated patterns, as they focus on how music is arranged.

Library

Students in first and second grade have so much fun during the month of September in library class. We start off spending the first class learning the rules and routines of the library. Then, students start to borrow books from the library and learn the procedures for borrowing and returning the exciting library books. Students in second grade learn about strategies to find books that are just right for them in our library. Students in first grade discuss the parts of a book and proper book care. We wrap up the month by beginning to explore the eBook apps available from our library. In the last week of September, all classes explore the eBook app that is typically the “crowd favorite” - Epic. Epic is a free app that provides students with reading incentives such as “leveling up,” badges, new avatars, and much more. The students love Epic because it is just that - epic!

Music

Music students in second grade are currently reviewing the pitches of sol, la, and mi, as well as the rhythm notes of quarter notes, eighth notes, and quarter rests. As students review the

rhythms, they are also learning about the percussion family of instruments, and the form of musical pieces.

First grade students are safely learning how to travel to the steady beat, sing matching pitch, and proper Orff Instrument playing techniques.

Physical Education

For the start of the 2022-2023 school year, students will be focusing on how to be kind, respectful, and safe. During the month of September, all students will be reviewing and implementing expectations and procedures of the learning space. We will use these expectations to create an environment that promotes respect, fun, and safety. Physically the students will be doing a variety of invasion tag games. These activities will introduce personal space and moving in open space safely. We also will be doing cooperative activities, including using the parachute. Our goal will be to work as a team while following the classroom expectations. The last thing we plan to tackle during September is beginning to learn how to tie shoes! Not only is this a skill that will help with fine motor skills, but it is also useful in everyday life. All of the activities and information presented during the month of September will set the tone for the school year. Everything will be built upon and used in some type of capacity during every single lesson.

Submitted by: Ms. Spangler, Ms. Cribbs, Ms. Deyarmin, and Mrs. Falosk