



Obama Magnet School Special Subject Newsletter

February 2022
Unit 4

Inside This Issue

- 1 Library
- 2 Music
- 2 Spanish
- 3 Counseling

Save the Date

March 14-18
Spring Break

March 29
80% Day

April 15 & April 18
Easter Break

Is your student an International Student?

International students follow the essential agreements and display learner profile attributes in all special subjects. Our goal is for each student to be named an International Student each week. International Students are recognized during the announcements on Monday mornings and earn points for their International Star Club calendars.

Library, Kacy Hellings

Unit 4 was GREAT in the library! Not only did the students work hard in this unit, but the Scholastic Book Fair was the most successful in school history! Thank you all so much for your support! Students had so much fun shopping and buying books. Teachers shopped at the book fair for their classrooms thanks to many of you donating to their eWallets. This fundraiser for our school library will allow the purchase of many new books.

In library classes, students in kindergarten worked in centers throughout their how the world works unit. They explored patterns and organization of library books through alphabetizing and using books and computers in the library to complete research. First grade students learned how authors use their communication skills to write. They used the pattern from the story Miss Mary Mack to write their own verses. They also improved at using shelf markers when perusing books and finding the library books they want to read. Second grade explored how to be better library patrons by taking time to become familiar with finding books using call numbers. They are quite good at finding fiction and easy fiction books. Using the non-fiction call numbers is up next.

The third graders used their time in the library to research information related to their IB unit, where we are in place and time. They used atlases, encyclopedias, books, and online resources like the World Book Online encyclopedia. They displayed what they learned on project boards; this was an extension of a classroom project. The fourth graders explored the nonfiction section in search of books related to their unit where we are in place in time. After becoming familiar with these books, many fourth graders checked out books on and read more about the civil rights movement and biographies of different leaders. Seeing how their unit inspired them to gain knowledgeable has been exciting. The fifth graders learned to use Google Sites as a tool to prepare them for their IB exhibition project. Students created practice websites about a topic of personal interest in preparation to build websites for the final project of their PYP tenure.

I have been so proud of the students who have not only been working to meet their AR goals but also set new goals for themselves. Students excitedly reported reaching 150% of their AR point goal and keeping their average above 85%. Several students set goals for themselves to reach 200% of their goal! I love seeing that commitment to their reading.

Happy Reading Everyone!



Third graders worked in groups to create display board showcasing geography and culture knowledge gained about a selected country.

Music, Larry Weems

First grade students perform hip hop dances to songs connected to Black History Month. During the fourth unit of inquiry, all grade levels increased their knowledge of foundational music skills and made connections to key concepts, approaches to learning skills, math, and literature.

The kindergarten students concentrated on the instrument families and learning which instruments belong to each family. They focused on the form of the four families of string, woodwind, percussion, and brass instruments. The first graders explored different songs in connection with Black History Month and really loved singing about Dr. King. The second grade students were introduced to note duration and connected music and math by using a clock to see how long 60 seconds really was. They worked to stay on beat by counting ticks. They also learned songs related to Black History month, which connected with their classroom literacy focus on learning about the civil rights movement.

In third grade, the students learned about accent marks and dynamics markings in music; the students explored how these markings communicate the volume and tempo for playing a piece of music. Fourth grade students focused on learning how to become a band. They played drum, piano, and other percussion instruments to collaboratively perform "Before I Let Go" by Maze. The fifth graders began to prepare for the All City Music Festival, learning the songs and performance techniques needed for that experience.



First grade students performed hip hop dances to songs connected to Black History Month.

Spanish, Naomi Mays

During the fourth unit of inquiry, the scholars combined many reading, language, and social studies skills with their acquisition of Spanish language skills. This transdisciplinary approach helps them see the connectedness of their school-based knowledge with the world around them.



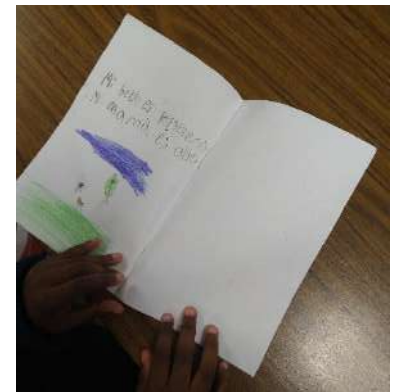
Kindergarten scholars played a game to identify animals and explained their reasoning.

In Kindergarten, scholars explored opposite words in Spanish. They practiced writing sentences about family members' traits. These sentences were then used to create a book entitled "Las comparaciones." Kindergarten scholars also studied types of animals and investigated the traits making these animals unique. Additionally, they engaged in an interactive game in which they identified animals by picture and justified their answer choice.

During this unit, first graders learned to retell stories using Spanish transition words. They also explored the history of the Tainos, a group of people indigenous to the Caribbean, and the way their culture retold stories. Scholars used knowledge about the Tainos' writing form, called petroglyphs, to create their own stories using both petroglyphs and the Spanish transition words.

In second grade, scholars learned more about different types of communities. They discussed and explored maps and created their own maps of both rural and urban communities. This information was then used to practice giving and using directions in Spanish. Additionally, scholars practiced navigating through each other's maps in Spanish. Scholars compared national anthems from different nations and explored how cultures can become fused when people move to a new place.

Third grade scholars learned words for landforms in Spanish. Scholars then practiced observing landforms in the outdoor classroom. They also explored and practiced conjugating verbs in the present tense that end in -ar in Spanish. Additionally, scholars practiced giving and using directions and explored telling time in Spanish.



A "Las comparaciones" book written by a kindergarten scholar.

In fourth grade, scholars practiced conjugating the to be verbs "ser and estar" in Spanish. Scholars became more knowledgeable on when to use each verb. Scholars also delved into the Spanish influence on the early colonization of the Gulf Coast and explored the history of people indigenous to that region.

The fifth grade scholars practiced presentation skills in preparation for Exhibition. Scholars practiced Spanish pronunciation when they memorized and recited Spanish poems. Scholars also created and presented bilingual presentations about different topics.

Counseling, Jennifer Tanner

During this unit, all scholars were challenged to unplug from screen time with digital devices for 12 hours. This Unplugged Challenge, sponsored by the No Place for Hate Council, gave participants a respite from some of the daily stresses of a connected life and helped them gain perspective on which digital activities are affirming and which may be draining. All participants in the Unplugged Challenge completed a reflection about their experience and were invited to a celebration for engaging in the experience. In addition to reflecting on their digital activities, all scholars explored digital citizenship through literature, including the titles *Social Media and the Internet* and *The Technology Tail*.

In connection with their how we express ourselves unit, counseling lessons for the kindergartners focused on expressing their own feelings appropriately. They practiced managing their frustration while remembering and applying strategies to calm down strong emotions. Scholars also learned how to manage feelings related to waiting their turn. Discussions related to doing things on accident and what to do and say when accidents occur.

First grade scholars also connected to their how we express ourselves unit through a focus on identifying their own feelings and emotions. They continued practicing how to identify feelings in others and respecting people's differences and perspectives. In the coming weeks, the first graders will spend a great deal of time practicing their calm down steps while using positive self-talk to guide their decision making.

Second grade scholars explored the following topics within their sharing the planet unit: handling mistakes, managing anxious feelings as well as anger. These topics connected with the unit key concept of responsibility and the related concept of cooperation. Second graders also began their who we are counseling standalone unit focused on exploring different careers with Katie Kangaroo. Students created wishing wands to highlight their dreams and aspiration. Ms. Handy, one of our 5th grade teachers and a counseling intern, did a great job supporting the scholars with these learning experiences.

Both the third and fourth grades were working on their where we are in place and time units during this period. Learning about digital citizenship was significant focus and connected to their units of inquiry through the key concepts of causation, connection, and perspective. Scholars learned about their digital footprint, phishing, hacking, appropriate usage, things not to post on social media, and how easy it can be to be deceived online. Age limits on social media were discussed and all scholars were encouraged to link their accounts with their parents' accounts. Cyberbullying and the specific consequences outlined in the JPS Student Code of Conduct were also addressed. Scholars were asked to update passwords to make them stronger. In addition, the fourth graders explored developing tolerance while taking an in-depth look in understanding prejudices and discrimination.

The fifth graders were engaged in their sharing the planet which is also their exhibition unit. The learning experiences in this unit are loaded with opportunities to apply social-emotional skills that lead to successful exhibition projects. These skills include accepting responsibility, respecting others, resolving conflict, taking on a variety of group roles, cooperating, and group-decision making. All special subject teachers serve as exhibition mentors, and I worked with the group exploring the topic of gun violence. Digital citizenship was also addressed during classroom counseling lessons, addressing all the same topics as the third and fourth grade scholars.