



Altoona Intermediate School

Altoona, Wisconsin



February 2022 Newsletter

From the Principal, Andrea Steffen:

It's hard to believe that the first half of the school year has passed... but it has! As noted in our email communication to families early last week, your child's report card was sent home in his/her backpack.

We are seeing a lot of student growth both academically and behaviorally when compared to the fall. Academically, the overall number of students proficient has increased in both reading and math. Of the students not quite at benchmark expectation yet, many are growing at a greater than average rate which means that if they continue on this trajectory, they will close this gap. Hats off to our students and our staff! What an accomplishment!

In regard to student behavior, as noted in a previous newsletter, our students reported "Sense of Belonging" as an area of strength for our school and reported needing support in "Emotional Regulation" and "Grit". Between these two, emotional regulation was the greater need, so we started there by setting a school wide goal (see the January PBIS article later in this newsletter) and teaching strategies throughout the months of December and January using our Second Steps curriculum. Students met their goal and are almost done with the lessons that provide these strategies. We will soon turn our attention to "Grit." What is grit? It is the ability to keep trying even when something is difficult. Our February school wide goal will focus on this and students will learn strategies to persevere. Please be sure to ask your child what he/she has learned.

Finally, you may have noted a communication entitled "Redefining Ready" along with the communication about report cards. Within this communication, information regarding research on indicators for future success is provided. Having three sons myself, two of which are now 18 and over, I think about their journey as children. While they may not have met every indicator when in 4th and 5th grades, that's ok. Having this information is/was helpful as I considered areas that I might foster to help them stretch and grow. For one, it was a greater focus on grades, for another, it was getting out and trying new interests and activities, and for the other, they all fell into place. Our children are all different :). I hope that this information is a resource you find helpful as they continue through middle and high school. Several parents have reached out asking about co-curriculars available for students while in 4th and 5th grades. This information is provided in our Student Handbook, linked [here](#). I have also just become aware of a volleyball camp that is going to be available to kids at this age level. If interested in learning more, please contact our Athletic Director, Elissa Upward at eupward@altoonak12.wis.us.

Welcome February, and we hope to see all of you at Family Conferences in a few weeks!



What are 4th Graders Studying?

Cue

Students in the 4th grade have been studying geometry, specifically angles, lines, and polygons. Many students were given the opportunity to work with small Cue robots.

"We were making 'Yoda' go on the maze. We used a piece of paper. We put an 'X' at the start and an 'X' at the end. We had to try to code him to go from the start to the end using 3 different angles and at least 3 lines. Whenever we tried to make him go, he'd go the wrong way. We tried to turn the paper, but he turned the other way. We never really got him through the whole maze."

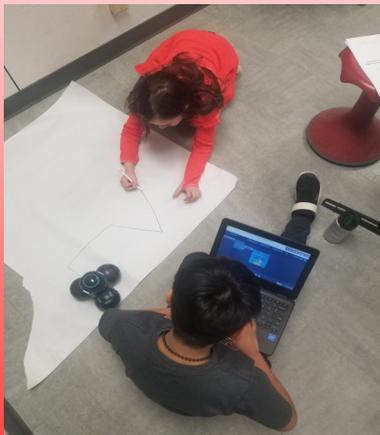
Easton

"We worked with 'Q-T'. So first, we did it part by part. First, we made a line and tried a few things. And when we found the thing that worked best, we kept it there. Then, we kept adding onto it. I think it was pretty cool!"

Brenton

"We had to do certain angles that our teacher told us to. We had to try to put the robot on the maze to do those angles. We had buttons to press to do things like a full right angle. Braylon and I were able to move 'Raven' through the first angle."

Jessica



American Revolution

Students in 4th grade classes have been studying the American Revolution. One of the activities was a simulation to mirror what "Taxation Without Representation" might have been like.

"The candy we used was like the Colonist's money. The King gave the order and the tax collectors collected our candy (money)."

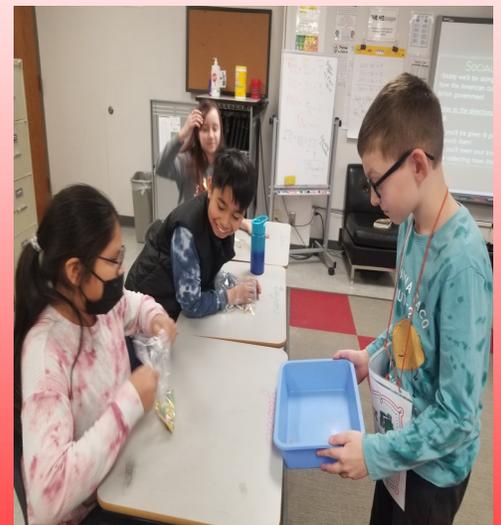
Bayron, a Colonist

"I had to read cards and say things like, "If you have shoelaces, give 2 pieces of candy." I had two tax collectors. They would collect candy from both sides of the room. They put it on a big pile in front of me. It was kind of fun because the Colonists were really angry."

Ella, the King

"My job was technically to take the candy away from the people. They seemed to be all honest. But, their reaction was that they got mad at me because it was their candy. Sometimes, everyone had to give candy because of the rule, like, 'Anyone who ate lunch today.' At the end, the the King said that the tax collectors got a share of the candy. I felt happy!"

Jace, a Tax Collector



January PBIS

Our AIS January PBIS goal was set up to revisit on school-wide expectations. Here's what some students had to say about it!

"We talk about expectations. Like being safe, respectful, and responsible. We get points and for every degree Mrs. Steffen moves. When we get to 100 we get a class sledding party!" Brooklyn

"We've had to talk about safety and how to be respectful and helpful. We don't want to run in the hallways because we could hurt other people around us or ourselves. We have to be careful about our surroundings. The teacher submits the information and they move Mrs. Steffen."

Adrianna

"We've been reviewing expectations and Second Step lessons. Some of the expectations are hallway, Rule 2, and guests to AIS. In Second Steps we've been learning how to control our emotions."

Kharysma





Great job earning a sledding party AIS students!



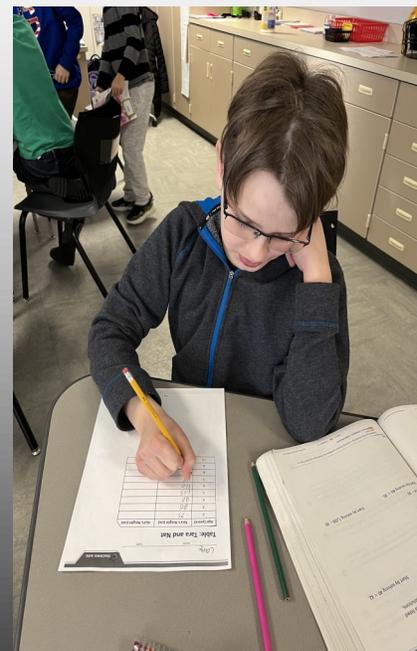


What have 5th Graders been up to?

Math in 5th Grade

Math in fifth-grade has been awesome and fun in January. We have been learning lots of things such as putting numbers on charts/graphs and we record order pairs on graphs. We were taught how to find the coordinates on graphs and then played Battleship! We have been learning about fictional animal growth stories and then graphing them on charts/graphs. We've also used graphs to compare two situations governed by rules.

ELA in fifth-grade has been amazing this month. We have been learning about immigrant kids and how they made it through Ellis Island. We have also been identifying the text structures like compare & contrast, description, problem & solution, sequence, cause & effect.



What are the 5th graders doing in science?

By Caysen and Oscar

Do you wonder what the first clocks were? Well the first clocks were called shadow clocks and we made them for a fun science project. We made them just with paper plates, sticky tack, a paper that says the months and hours and tooth-picks. Then we went outside and checked if they worked. They did!

We also found out that the sun does not spin, but earth does. We were the earth and we were spinning around the sun which was a piece of paper. Then the 5th graders had an earth on them like a sign on our shoulders that had the earth and we spun around the sun just like the earth orbiting the sun. Now you know what 5th graders are doing in science.

