



The Lions' Roar

From the Principal's Pen 



**Lothian Elementary
School Newsletter
March 2024**

Volume 16 Issue 6

Happy March! This year continues to fly by, and we are so busy in this third marking period. The Maryland Integrated Science Assessment (MISA) began this week for our 5th grade students. On a similar content strand, the Science Fair is also this week with the Science Awards Ceremony at Lothian on March 7.

Representatives from MSDE will visit PreKindergarten this month for our Accreditation visit. As shared earlier this year, as a result of Maryland's Blueprint legislation, the AACPS preK classrooms are participating in the Maryland Accreditation process; a process of demonstrating and verifying program effectiveness and continuous improvement using the Maryland Accreditation Standards.

We saw great gains in our students' iReady performance during the mid-year diagnostic. Our data division research tells us that iReady progress is a good indicator of students' performance on state assessments. We were looking for students on or above grade level to meet 50% of their expected growth, and students below grade level to make at least 50% of their stretch growth. Information was sent home regarding student scores, please contact your child's teacher for questions. Thank you for supporting at home by ensuring your children are engaging in iReady when possible. We want to keep up this progress, the goal for all is 100% of the growth targets at the end of the year, so that we move ALL students to grade level or beyond!

When we return from spring break in April, the 3rd quarter will be ending. Over the next few weeks, the students will be assessed on what they have learned during this marking period. Please work with us to ensure well children are in school, and students in grades 3-5 come with a charged Chromebook.

I am looking forward to spring at Lothian, with upcoming field trips, special events, and our last marking period to get ready for the next grade level! Thank you for your partnership and support.

~Mary Beth Gormley, Principal

March 7 Science Awards
2:45-3:45 (Lothian Media)

March 10: Daylight Savings
Time returns. Move clocks
forward 1 hour!

March 19—Project Unity Day

March 19—2 Hour Early Dis-
missal-no PM ECI

March 19- PTA Night at Ledo
Pizza (Lothian)

March 22- Grade Level PBIS
celebrations

March 25- April 1-School
Closed-Spring Break

April 3- Kindergarten Enroll-
ment opens

April 4th & 5th Two hour early
dismissal, end of marking period

Spirit Days

March 15th GREEN day

March 22 Maryland Day

Friday, April 5 Navy Cruisers
perform

Lothian Elementary School's Mission and Values

Mission Statement

All staff will use culturally responsive practices to prepare every student with the academic and social-emotional skills needed to guarantee success in the next grade level.

Values

- ◇ We always choose to participate in solution-focused problem-solving in order for our students to grow
- ◇ We always choose to seek and use feedback in our professional and behavioral practices.
- ◇ We always choose to build positive relationships through our words and actions with all stakeholders for student-focused success.

In This Issue

Guidance News	2
School News	3
PTA News	4
Reading Corner	5-6

GUIDANCE NEWS

News from the School Counselor
Kimberly T. Pletcher

Hello Parents/Guardians,

I hope that you all are well and ready to start enjoying our upcoming spring season. Please visit my Google School Counseling site for both parent/student resources. I regularly update the site and it includes food/benefit resources, helpful fliers, mental health resources, and parenting support information. You must be signed into google to access the site.

<https://sites.google.com/aacps.org/lothiancounseling/student-resources>

Please do not hesitate to reach out to me if I can be of any assistance to you or your children. You can reach me at 410-867-3900 (the school number) or e-mail me at kpletcher@aacps.org. I am happy to help.

Internet Safety

The internet is a wonderful resource for students, a valuable educational tool, and a great way to communicate and socialize with others. Unfortunately, there are also risks that go along with internet use such as cyberbullying; exposure to inappropriate material; online predators; and revealing too much personal information. There are some wonderful websites that are dedicated to internet safety, parent awareness, and educating children and teens to make safe and responsible decisions online.

One such website: www.netsmartz.org by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children offers these basic internet safety tips for parents:

- *Keep the computer in a high-traffic area of your home.
- *Establish limits for which online sites children may visit and for how long.
- *Remember that Internet technology can be mobile so make sure to monitor cell phones, gaming devices, and laptops.
- *Surf the internet with your children and let them show you what they like to do online.
- *Know who is connecting with your children online and set rules for social networking, instant messaging, e-mailing, online gaming, and using webcams.
- *Continually dialogue with your children about online safety.

The website also provides parents with these discussion starters to use when talking with children about internet use:

- *What are your favorite things to do online?
- *What is personal information? Why should I keep it private?
- *What could you do to be safer online?
- *What would you do if anyone asked to meet you face-to-face?
- *Besides me, who do you feel that you can talk to if you are in a scary or uncomfortable situation?

Please visit the website for additional information on what to do if children are getting cyberbullied; how to be safe when e-mailing, instant messaging, and using chat rooms; and much, much more.

Hopefully, you were also able to attend the "Be Internet Awesome Workshop" sponsored by our wonderful PTA. The workshop provided a wealth of information and resources to help parents support their children in building healthy digital habits. Also, students at all the grade levels were provided with internet safety lessons during their guidance time. Please ask your students about what they learned to do to be safe on the internet.



Dear Parents and Friends,

While it is always fun to celebrate a special event or birthday, we have to be mindful that there are often food allergies, and there are requirements from AACPS Food and Nutrition Services. In order to prevent unintended allergic reactions or a stray from the nutritional guidelines, we request that students' birthdays are not celebrated with food or goodie bags for classmates. If the child wants to celebrate, items such as stickers or pencils are acceptable. For other whole class celebrations, we follow these guidelines:

Foods sold to students as cafeteria a la carte items, in school stores, as part of a classroom celebrations, or fundraisers must have one of the following components:

- Be whole grain-rich
- The first ingredient must be a fruit, vegetable, dairy product, or protein food
- Be a combination of food that consists of more than $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of fruit and/or vegetable
- Contain at least 10% of the Daily Value of one of the following nutrients: calcium, potassium, vitamin D, or dietary fiber



PTA NEWS

2023-2024 Yearbook Sales: It's time to order a yearbook if you would like one. Yearbooks are only available if you order in advance! You can send in the yearbook order form with \$10 for each yearbook (checks payable to Lothian Elementary PTA) or order online. You can order online <https://lothian.memberhub.com/store?limit=21&live=true>. Please also consider supporting the PTA by purchasing an ad or sentiment. Ads range from \$20-\$100 and a "Love Note" personal sentiment is \$5. The sponsor/personal ad/sentiment form is available on the back of the order form. You may combine ad/sentiment payment & yearbook payment in the same check. **Please order no later than March 15th.** Yearbooks will be delivered at the end of the school year.

Ledo Pizza Nights are going to continue! Stay tuned for more information!





Parent tips for raising strong readers and writers

Growing readers!

Graphic Novels for Young Kids

Similar to comic books, graphic novels weave rich, lively visuals with a limited amount of text to drive the narrative. Graphic novels can be especially appealing to young readers who are reluctant to pick up a more traditional book. Graphic novels are a great way to help struggling readers strengthen vocabulary, build reading confidence and stamina, and develop a deeper appreciation of storytelling. And, they are fun!

What are graphic novels?

Graphic novels are stories written and illustrated in the style of a comic:

- Vivid illustrations combine with short bursts of text, often presented in a series of rectangular panels
 - The story unfolds in a clear sequence, and is often action-packed (and funny)
- Graphic novels can be fiction (for example: historical fiction, fantasy, science fiction, fairytales) or nonfiction (for example: history, biography, informational)

The main characters don't have to be superheroes!

Are graphic novels “real books”?

Yes! Graphic novels are widely accepted by youth librarians and teachers as books worth reading by kids of all ages and reading levels. Top children's publishers now offer graphic novels that are high quality (with strong characters, vocabulary, and storylines) and appropriate for young readers.

Popular authors who have published graphic novel series include: Jennifer Holm and Matt Holm (Babymouse and Squish series), Shannon Hale (*Rapunzel's Revenge*), Jarrett Krosoczka (Lunch Lady series), Raina Telgemeier (*Ghosts*), Gene Yang (Secret Coders series), James Burks (Bird and Squirrel series), Jeff Smith (Bone series), and Scott Morse (Magic Pickle series).

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How graphic novels help build children's literacy skills

Reading motivation. Graphic novels are very popular, and especially appealing to readers who may not pick up a more traditional book on their own. They can be a “welcoming door” for reluctant or struggling readers (especially boys) who are drawn to the lively storylines and illustrations, and the smart but limited text. Quick, fun reads build confidence!

Visual literacy. The pictures in graphic novels are expressive, simple, and rich all at the same time. The images provide big clues about character and plot and encourage readers to look closely. Some graphic novels (such as *Owlly* and *The Adventures of Polo*) are wordless, so the pictures must carry the full story.

Story structure. Most graphic novels for young readers have easy-to-follow plots. This can help children learn about how a story is stitched together. After sharing a graphic novel together, ask your child to tell you the basic plot of the story: “First this happened, then this ... and at the end ...”

Word learning for struggling readers and English language learners. Although individual words in a graphic novel can be sophisticated, the side-by-side illustrations and text provide strong clues to their meaning.

Don't forget to share graphic novels together — they make great read alouds!

Where to find great graphic novels for kids

See our booklist, [Graphic Novels: Read the Pictures](#), for recommended reads. Or, browse these [lists from the American Library Association](#) — and ask the children's librarian at your local library for more suggestions.

Expose your kids to the world of graphic novels through different genres. Here are some of our favorites:

Biography and Memoir

- *El Deafo* by Cece Bell
- *Smile and Sisters* by Raina Telgemeier
- *Elizabeth Cady Stanton: Women's Rights Pioneer* by Connie Colwell Miller
- *March Trilogy* by John Lewis and Andrew Aydin (for older readers or to read together)

Historical Fiction

- *One Dead Spy (Nathan Hale's Hazardous Tales series)* by Nathan Hale

Mystery

- *Secret Coders* by Gene Yang

Folktales, Fairy Tales and Myths

- *Rapunzel's Revenge* by Shannon Hale
- *The Lightning Thief: The Graphic Novel (Percy Jackson & the Olympians series)* by Rick Riordan

Fantasy and Science Fiction

- *The Stonekeeper (Amulet series)* by Kazu Kibuishi
- *Sardine in Outer Space* by Emmanuel Guibert

Classic Literature

- *The Odyssey* by Gareth Hinds (for older readers or to read together)

