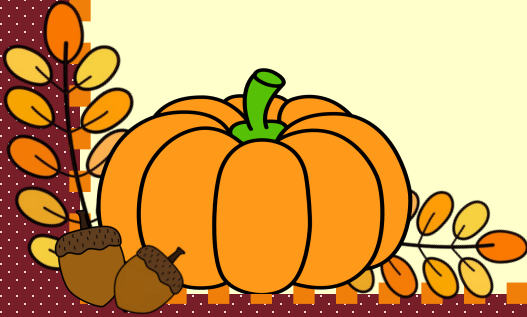


# Dexter Elementary

## Fall Newsletter

### 2023



Welcome Back Dexter Families!

Our school year has started out amazing and we are now in the full swing of things! It has been great getting into classrooms and meeting the students. As principal, my primary goals are to ensure student achievement and to promote a safe and positive learning environment for each child. Please help me reach these goals with your support and assistance at home.

Our district has once again partnered with PIVOT, to provide our students with a Character Education program called Second Step. Our students will learn skills for learning, along with other strategies to promote empathy and emotional management. In addition, students are taught problem solving skills and practice them to help get along with others well.

On **Monday, October 31st**, we will be having our Fall Harvest Celebration! This year we will be having a school-wide parade. The parade will begin at 9:30. If there is inclement weather the parade will be canceled. We do not have enough space in the gym to accommodate all parents. If that should happen there will be a Parent Square that will go out by 8:45. Please don't forget that *October 31st is also a half day* for students. Pre-K students will dismiss at 10:45, followed by all others beginning at 11:30.

Parent Conferences will be held in person on **November 20th and 21st**. Both days will be half days for students. AM Pre-K students should be picked up at 10:45 AM on these two days. Information about conferences will be sent out in the next couple of weeks.

Please feel free to contact me anytime with questions or concerns. Thank you for your continued support to make Dexter Elementary the best it can be!

Sincerely,  
Mrs. Dupee



# Pre-Kindergarten

Mrs. Hamilton, Mrs. Hennigan,

Mrs. Travers and Mrs. Zehr

Our year is off to a great start! We have done so many things in the past month. Here's just a few of the things we've had fun learning:

- \*Each other's names and making friends.
- \*The moves and words to songs like: Hello, Neighbor! and Wheels on the Bus.
- \*Dance moves to Shake Your Sillies Out, Get Your Body Mov'in and Milkshake.
- \*Games like jousting and indoor obstacle courses to make our bodies strong.
- \*Blue and yellow shaving cream makes green.
- \*Shapes are unique just like us and are everywhere when we play "I Spy".
- \*Playdough makes fun leaves and apple trees.
- \*There's so much you can do with Pete the Cat like FEET PAINTING!
- \*How to stay safe from fire during fire safety week.
- \*Having a quiet moment to ourselves is a good thing.
- \*Sometimes all you need is a HUG!





# Kindergarten

Our students continue to adjust to the routines and expectations of kindergarten. During the past six weeks, we have worked on several prewriting skills and phonemic awareness skills (rhyming, counting words in a sentence, blending). In math, we have been practicing counting by ones and tens. Although we will not expect every student to count to 100 at this time, we would like each child to be able to count to at least 25 or 30 for our first report card in November. We have also worked on mastering our 2D and 3D shapes. Please continue to reinforce all math and ELA skills taught so far.

We have practiced emergency preparedness in school so students are aware of our safety routines. We practiced walking to the fire hall in case of a need to evacuate the building. We completed all of our fall fire drills as well as a lockdown drill and a bus safety presentation. The students enjoyed viewing the fire trucks and learning all about fire safety both at home and at school.

**Mrs. Bellinger, Mrs. Dillabough, Mrs. Jones,  
Mrs. Parker, Mrs. Thomas, Mrs. Yodice  
and Mrs. Youngs**



# First Grade

A B C D E F G

**First Grade is the place to be!!**

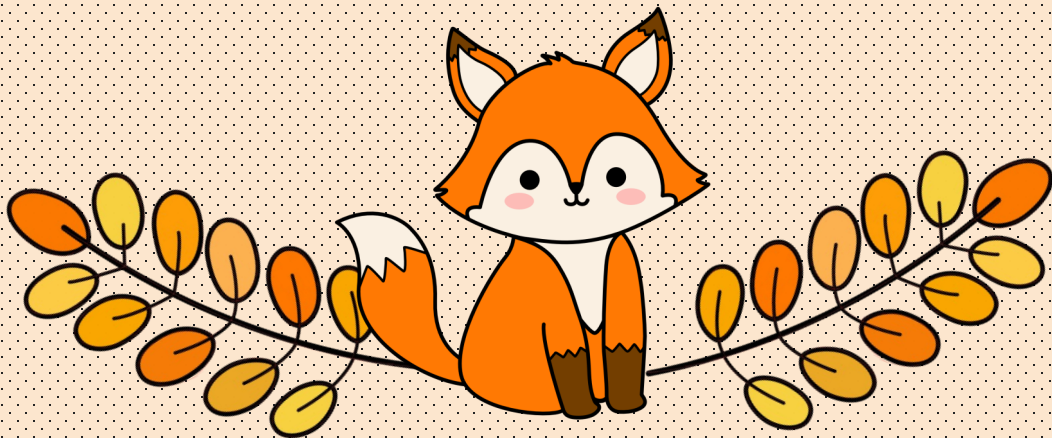
**October is an exciting month with fire safety and fall fun.**

**In math we have been learning about  
2-dimensional and 3- dimensional  
shapes. We will soon begin working  
on addition.**

**We have a new reading series. The high frequency  
words that we are working on will be coming home  
in our end of the week notes.**

**We look forward to seeing you at parent  
conferences in November. More information will  
be coming home as we get closer to the date.**

**Mrs. Bamann, Mrs. Devine, Mrs. Dupee,  
Mrs. Henderson, Mrs. Keenan, Mrs. Skipper  
and Mrs. Tyo**





# 2nd Grade

We're off to a wonderful start in second grade this year! Students spent September getting to know one another, learning classroom routines, classroom expectations and building a classroom community. In math we just finished our first chapter on addition and subtraction concepts and will begin chapter two. Chapter two focuses on number patterns. Please practice counting by 2s, 5s, and 10s. In ELA, we have started our new reading program Benchmark Advanced. We are learning about Plant and Animal habitats and how different animals and plants survive in those habitats. We are also learning how to use pictures and other text features to help us better understand the informational texts we are reading.

Since the days are getting cooler, please make sure your child wears a sweatshirt or jacket for outside recess. We will continue to have recess outside, as long as the weather allows.

Finally, we would like to say, "Thank You", to the volunteer firemen that came to school to teach our students about fire Safety.

**Thank you for your help and support.**

**Mrs. Bucher**

**Ms. Fennell**

**Miss Martin**

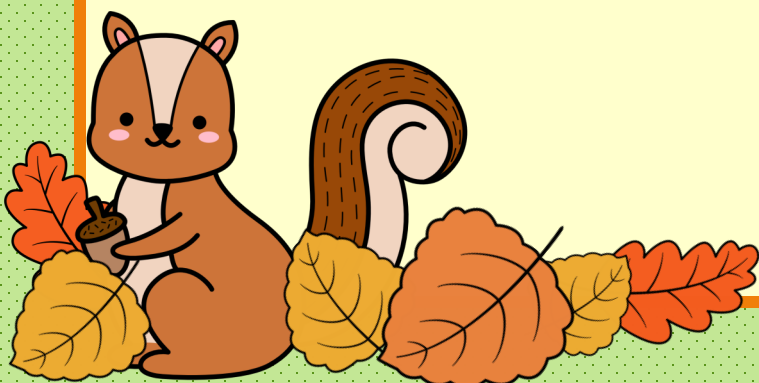
**Mrs. McDermott**

**Mrs. Mehaffy**

**Mrs. Pacini**

**Mrs. Schweitzer**

We recently had a visit from the Jefferson County Historical Society. Mrs. Widrick brought in many toys from the past. Look at the pictures with your child, see if they can tell you what some of those toys are and what they're made out of.

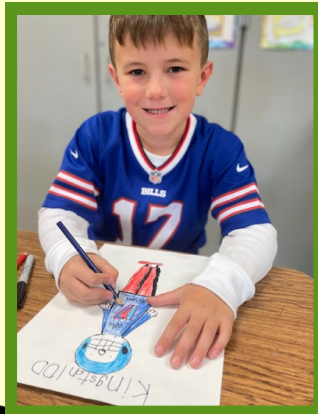




Welcome back to **Art** Class!

As your child's art teacher, my main goal is to give each student a studio experience that is similar to how artists work in the real world. Students are encouraged to enter the art room with their own ideas. They set up their own work space and are responsible for cleaning up that space when complete. As a group, we work together to learn new techniques with a variety of materials. We share our work, reflect on it, and grow from our mistakes. Please talk to your children about what they are creating in art class by asking them open-ended questions. (*How did you create this? Tell me about your drawing?*) Children are complex beings and their artwork will help you get to know them better. Creating art gives children a voice and the courage to make mistakes and explore new things. Making art with your children brings me so much joy! Thank you for sharing them with me.

Keep creating!  
Mrs. Majo







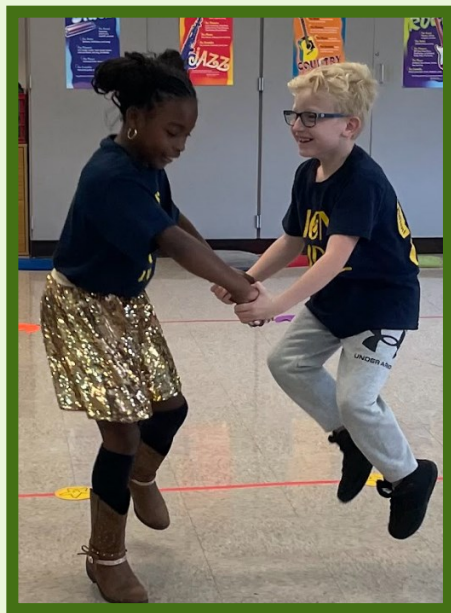
# Music

**With Miss Davis**

**Kindergarten** is learning lots of songs and dances!

**1st Grade** is working on solfege and singing skills.

**2nd Grade** is learning about the four instrument families.



# Library

**With Mrs. Doldo**

The library is alive with excitement! The kids are doing a fabulous job checking out books, returning books, practicing ELA skills, and figuring out that pigeons should not drive buses! We have lots of new books in the library this year and more to come. As the new librarian my goal is to create a passionate learning environment and encourage students to read, read, read!

Within the pages of a book, the possibilities are endless!!



# Physical Education

Students are off to a great start in physical education class for this school year. As always, our first couple of weeks of class was spent on the introduction to class rules and expectations. During this time, we also did some large group games and activities to become assimilated with each other. On September 19th we started our bike unit with the students. We have balance bikes and helmets that we use to teach students about balance, core strength, and riding a bike. The bike program lasted until October 5th. After the bike unit we will be moving into our ball skills unit where students will learn to step, throw, catch and share. We please ask that students wear shoes and socks on days that they have physical education. Try to refrain from wearing boots, flip flops, crocs and sandals. Work with your children on planning out the day they have physical education each week so they may know what days to wear sneakers. We appreciate your help in keeping your child safe and healthy.

**Yours in Physical Education,**

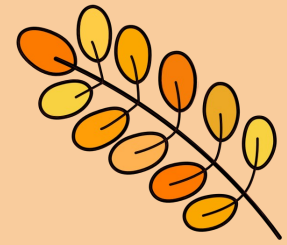
**Mr. Knowlton**

**and Mrs. Worden**





## **Social Emotional Learning Corner with Mrs. Eberle**



We are well under way into our Second Step program lessons that teach vital Social Emotional Learning skills. Students in grades Kindergarten through 2nd grade receive these lessons on a weekly basis. Our first unit focuses on skills students need to be successful learners. Students have been learning how to be good listeners, focus their attention, use Self-Talk to follow directions and ignore distractions, and how to ask for help appropriately when they need it. Why are these lessons important? Because students who can effectively use these skills are set on a path for academic and social success. Ask your student to tell you the listening rules or show you their attent-o-scope!



# Speech Therapy

**SPEECH THERAPY FUN FACT** – Did you know that SLPs who work in schools, clinics, and hospitals all have the same degree?

The year is off to a great start at Dexter. We have the pleasure of having a graduate student clinician joining us in the speech room until December 8<sup>th</sup>. She is completing her Master's Degree through Baylor University and will be studying under Ms. Gregory. Mrs. Wisner has developed a Speech Improvement program for our Kindergartners who need a little more exposure to some speech sounds. We have our schedules all set and therapy is under-way. All of the kids have been meeting some new friends and working with some familiar faces. They are learning the rules and expectations of the therapy room and how to take turns using good social skills. Fall and everything October is happening while we work on articulation sounds and great language skills.

**You can help by practicing vocabulary terms by having your child define each word**

- Scare, fog, candy, trick, costume, wizard, pumpkin

**Some language ideas**

- Read a Halloween book and ask questions about the pictures
- Have your child describe their costume
- Play a guessing game by describing a piece of candy



**Rachel Wisner, MA, CCC-SLP**

**[rwisner@gblions.org](mailto:rwisner@gblions.org)**

**Shannon Gregory, MS, CCC-SLP**

**[sgregory@gblions.org](mailto:sgregory@gblions.org)**



# FROM THE DESK OF THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST

What a great start to the year! Mrs. Bedard, PT, has had fun catching up with her former students and getting to know her new students.

During our first month of PT sessions, students have worked on fundamental gross motor skills that are essential in the school setting. Students participated in exercises and activities that challenge their strength, balance and coordination.

This month we have worked a lot on single leg exercises because some students have a difficult time with locomotor tasks that require adequate strength and coordination in only one leg, such as skipping and traveling up and down stairs with alternating feet (i.e. one foot on each step). Skipping and walking up and down stairs is a target skill on standardized testing and a benchmark skill in PE class. Skipping and alternating feet up and down stairs are often mastered by the age of 5 as body awareness and bilateral coordination are developed.

*If your child has difficulty with these types of activities then try these ideas:*

- *Knowing how to hop on one foot is KEY. If your child can't hop on one foot yet, then stand on one foot.*
- *Cross crawls, ski jumps, and hopping on one foot work on leg separation and coordination both sides of the body*
- *Provide a verbal reminder like "step-hop, step-hop" while skipping, or sing a song!*



If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me.

**Ann C. Bedard, PT, DPT**

**[abedard@gblions.org](mailto:abedard@gblions.org)**

# Occupational Therapy

We are off to a great start this year in OT. It has been a pleasure to meet and get to know the students and staff at Dexter Elementary. Mrs. Stevenson is so happy to be part of this great group!

This month in OT we have worked on a variety of skills to help students be successful in the classroom including fine motor skills, bilateral coordination skills, sensory processing skills, upper extremity strengthening, and of course... handwriting and grasp skills!

Children have the main occupation of PLAY. Here is a fun list of fall play activities to assist with multiple aspects of OT:

- Sensory- Go for a sensory walk, play in the leaves, or finger paint on a pumpkin
- Fine motor- Create pumpkin shapes out of play-doh, practice writing fall themed words on paper or whiteboard, trace leaves, sort candy, cut out shapes and make a Halloween pumpkin or ghost
- Gross motor- Create a spooky obstacle course, go to the pumpkin patch, help rake the leaves
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**Please feel free to contact me with any questions.**

**Kristin Stevenson OTR/L**  
**[kstevenson@gblions.org](mailto:kstevenson@gblions.org)**

