

# Union East Elementary School

## February 2023

Dear Union East Warriors and Families,

Happy February! We have officially entered the second half of the 2022-2023 school year. We know that our students continue to work hard as it is seen throughout the school building each and every day.

In January, our first students had the opportunity to use our new book vending machine. In February, students will be working to earn Class Dojo points for being responsible. These points can be turned in for different incentives, including Golden Tokens for a book!

We are looking forward to holding our mid year Awards assemblies for all grade levels on February 13th and 14th. This will be a great opportunity to recognize students for achievement, effort and improvement in different areas. Families of students being recognized will be invited to attend as well.

National Read Across America Day is celebrated on Thursday, March 2nd this year. We will be celebrating with a reading themed Spirit Week February 27-March 3. This week, planned in conjunction with our Project Positive committee, will be reading themed and include a lot of fun! We hope to see all of our students participate! In addition to in school activities, we are encouraging our students to read for at least 15 minutes a day. Students who are reading regularly and return the tickets will be entered into a drawing!

Finally, March will bring our Spring Open House. This will be held on Thursday, March 16, 2023 from 4:30-6:00. In addition, March 16th is an early release day with a 12:00 dismissal for Union East for a Teacher Record Keeping Day. Friday, March 17th is a day off of school for students for a teacher professional learning day!

Have a great month!

*Mrs. Mitchell, Mrs. Hamels & Mrs. Anderson*

**UPCOMING REMINDERS**  
**MARCH 16**  
**UE EARLY RELEASE DISMISSAL**  
**12:00**

**SPRING OPEN HOUSE**  
**4:30-6:00**

**MARCH 17**   
**NO SCHOOL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING DAY**

UNION EAST ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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Cheektowaga, NY 14225

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# Union East SCEP 2022-2023 (School Comprehensive Education Plan)

In June 2022, a committee of Union East stakeholders gathered to develop the School Comprehensive Education Plan (SCEP) for the 2022-2023 school year. Two commitments were agreed upon along with action steps for each.

The 2022-2023 plan was collaboratively developed by:

- Masuma Akther - Parent
- Stephanie Anderson - Assistant Principal
- Shai Arnold - Parent
- Julia Hamels - Assistant Principal
- Melissa Mitchell - Principal
- Melissa Rogers - Teacher
- Shannon Stroh - Teacher
- Sarah Swiatek - Parent

## Commitment 1

Union East Elementary School commits to ensuring that every child feels safe, respected, and represented in our school community and has intentional opportunities to practice and build social-emotional and cognitive skills.

Action Steps:

- Continue implementing Project Positive
  - Include parent representation on Project Positive Team
- Kindness Connection
  - Provide families with additional resources and workshop opportunities
- Mentoring Program
  - Continue mentoring partnership with the High School
  - Explore outside mentor partnerships
  - Increase the number of mentorships to meet the needs of UE students
- Attendance Program
  - Implement a tiered system to identify and support students and families
  - Recognize attendance on a regular basis

## Commitment 2

Union East Elementary School commits to ensure that every child has the opportunity and authority to drive and shape their own learning by engaging in meaningful learning that is relevant to them, whereby they can see themselves reflected in teachers, leaders and curriculum and learning material.

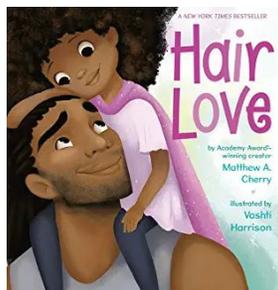
Action Steps:

- Continue use of Readers & Writers Workshop
  - Provide professional learning opportunities for staff focused on conferring
- Multicultural Classroom Libraries
  - Expand collection of decodable books and determine gaps within grade levels for classroom libraries
  - Highlight books to celebrate Heritage Months throughout the school year, informing parents each month of the books students can read to celebrate different cultures
- Small Group Instruction/Intervention
  - Continue to incorporate WIN time daily in ELA and Math
- Data Protocol
  - Administer STAR assessment 5 times
  - Utilize the data to guide instruction
- Community Based Learning Projects
  - Implement at least one community project based learning through innovation, entrepreneurship, and education of food access or nutrition at each grade level
- Display Authentic Student Work
  - Explore avenues to display authentic student work
- Book Vending Machine
  - Utilize a book vending machine to support our Project Positive campaign

# Union East Celebrates Black History Month

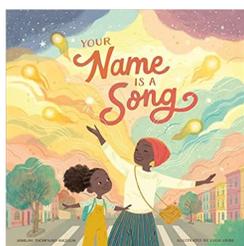
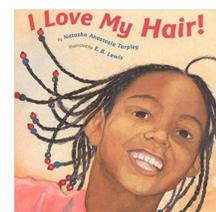
There are many great children's books that celebrate Black History Month. The following texts are just a sample of some of the texts that we will be using at Union East:

Dream Big, Little One by Vashti Harrison features 18 black women in American History. These women are heroes, role models and everyday women who did extraordinary things.



Hair Love by Matthew Cherry tells the story of the relationship of a Black father and daughter. Daddy will do anything to make Zuri, and her hair, happy. The book teaches the message to love your natural self, as well as celebrating the special relationship between daddies and daughters.

In I Love my Hair by Natasha Anastasia Tarpley, Keyana encourages black children to be proud of their heritage and build their self-confidence.



Your Name is a Song by Jamilah Thompkins-Bigelow is the story of a little girl who is frustrated after a day of her teachers and classmates mispronouncing her name. The girl's mother teaches her the beauty of her name and she is excited to return to school to share her understanding.

## Read Across America Spirit Week February 27-March 3

Monday, February 27

Team Up & Read!

Wear your favorite hat  
or sports team apparel!

Tuesday, February 28

Curl Up with a Good  
Book

Wear your coziest  
pajamas!

Wednesday, March 1

It's a Ton of Fun to Read  
with a Friend!

Dress like a friend OR bring  
your favorite stuffed  
friend!

Thursday, March 2  
Read Across America  
Day

Wear your Red, White &  
Blue Patriotic Pride!

Friday, March 3

Read My Shirt Day

Wear a shirt with a  
message!



# Project Positive

## “Mini” Celebrations

We recognized our student Warriors of the Month for Dec/Jan during the week of Jan. 30th! Our

**Dec/Jan Student’s of the Month are:**

- \*\*Madelyn C. (UPK)
- \*\*Riha A. (K)
- \*\*Ephraim O. (1st)
- \*\*Scarlett J. (2nd)
- \*\*Heidi S. (3rd)
- \*\*Jaela B. (3rd)
- \*\*Caiden L. (4th)

**Our Dec/Jan Staff members of the Month are:**

- \*\*Miss Hlavaty (4th grade)
- \*\*Mrs. Christmann (aide)

Pictures will be posted on the UE Facebook page. Please take a look if you can!

## Book Vending Machine

Union East had **172** students earn a golden token to use for the Book Vending Machine! These amazing Warriors met the 25 point goal for ‘Being Kind’ during the month of January!



## Feb/March Incentives

During the month of Feb/March, we will continue to focus on the following behavioral expectation(s):

1. Be **RESPONSIBLE**

Points are being tracked through Class Dojo. Once students & classes reach the point goal they will earn rewards for positive behavior!

3-tiered incentives:

- \*\*25 pts = brag tag (individual student)\*\*
- \*\*150 pts = popcorn (individual classes)\*\*
- \*\*2,000 = (whole building)

## Bus Incentive

Students have been receiving ‘WOW! You’re Awesome’ compliment cards from their bus drivers for following the bus safety rules. Students who receive WOW! Cards are entered into a raffle with prizes awarded at the end of each week!





## February 2023 Wellness: Heart Health Month

### **Goals: How to Keep my Heart Healthy**

- I can exercise daily ~ walk, ride a bike, swim, play games outside.
- I can eat a healthy diet ~ Protein, fruits, vegetables, whole grains, & low fat dairy products.
- I can drink more water - limit sugary drinks.
- I can get a good night's sleep.

**\*\*We encourage you to participate with your child in the weekly goals this month!\*\***

### **Heart Healthy Foods:**

- Leafy green vegetables like spinach, kale, and collard greens are well known for their wealth of vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants.
- Berries like strawberries, blueberries, blackberries, and raspberries are also rich in antioxidants, which protect against stress and inflammation that contribute to the development of heart disease.
- Avocados are an excellent source of heart-healthy monounsaturated fats, which have been linked to reduced levels of cholesterol and a lower risk of heart disease

### **Fun Facts:**

**Week #1:** The average heart is the size of a fist in an adult.

**Week #2:** Your heart will beat about 115,000 times each day.

**Week #3:** Your heart pumps about 2,000 gallons of blood every day.

**Week #4:** Laughing is good for your heart. It reduces stress and gives a boost to your immune system

### **Resources:**

[The Human Heart for Kids | Educational video to learn all about how the heart works](#)

[Tips and Tricks for a Healthy Heart!](#)

[How to Feel Your Heartbeat](#)

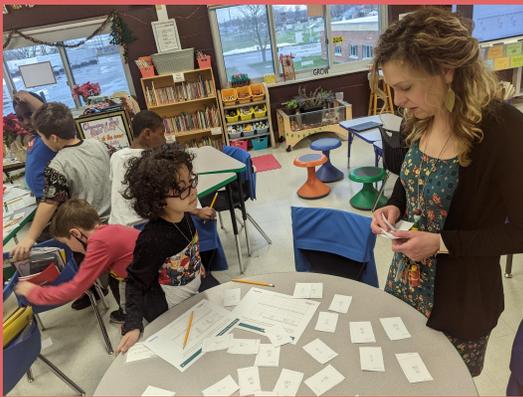
**\*\*Please watch the video links with your child/family to learn more about heart health this month!\*\***

**Don't forget your  
Wellness calendar!**

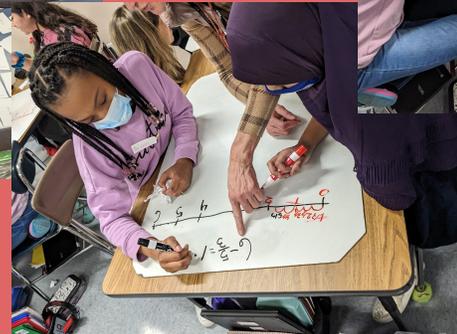
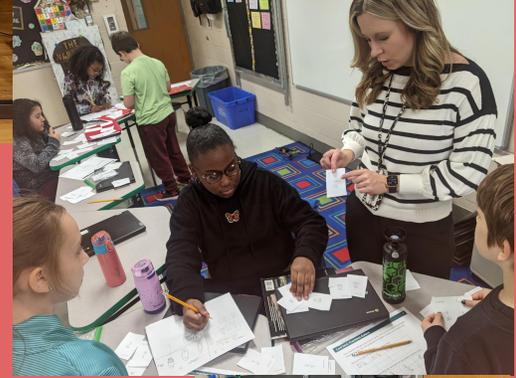
# Grade 4 News



4th Graders had the opportunity to attend a Canisius Women's Basketball game. The students had a great time cheering the Griffs on to the win!



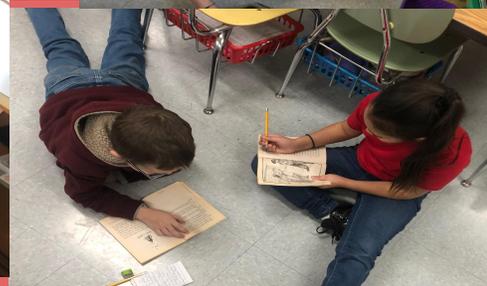
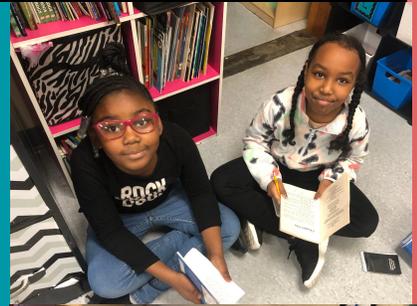
Students are working hard in math and science!



# Grade 3 News

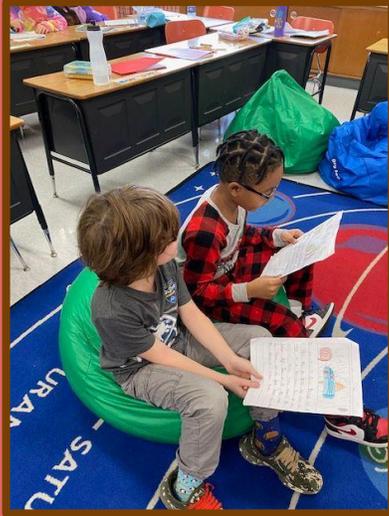


Students in Miss Jacobson's class are reading their favorite mystery book to their partner.



Students in Mrs. Corcoran's class are reading mysteries during Reader's Workshop. Students kept track of clues in *The Absent Author*, and made posters about their favorite part of the book!

# Grade 2 News



**Second Graders have been busy learning and working hard in all subject areas this month!**



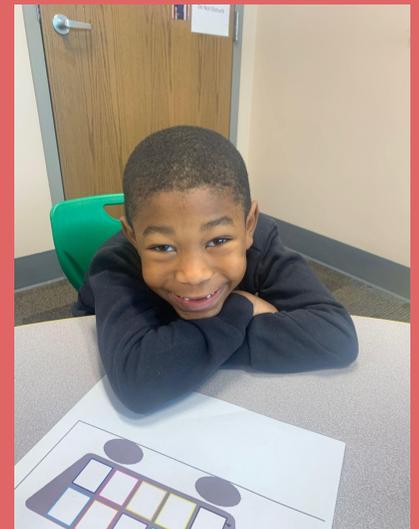
# Grade 1 News



**Our fabulous 1st graders are back in action after winter break. We're learning about word endings in phonics, reading nonfiction text in reader's workshop, researching polar animals and exploring numbers to 20 on the double decker bus. Check us out in action!**



# Kindergarten News



Our kindergarteners are learning so much! In January we learned about shapes and started learning about addition. We also began writing CVC words and using our “superpowers” to help us read! We started going to library and are excited to check out books!

# UPK News



Mrs. McDonough's class is so excited about beginning our Wheels Study. We have already made roads and became mechanics to create and fix cars. Soon we will be racing cars, measuring the distance car travels, and making a large car from a box.



Mr. Quigley's Little Learners



# Related Services News

## Physical Therapy



### Core Stability with a Playground Ball

Cut out shapes or letters and place them all over a vertical surface such as a wall or door. Position the child an arm's length away from the wall.

Place a playground ball on the wall and have the child place her hands on the ball to maintain its position.

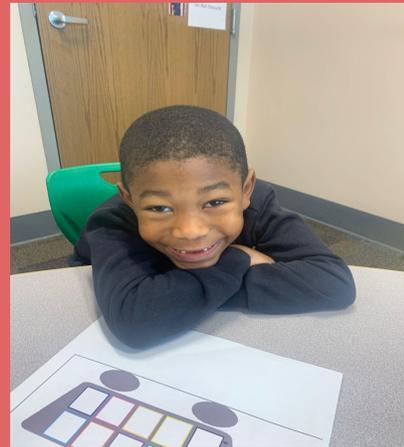
Then, call out shapes or letters and have the child roll the ball to touch each one as it is called. The child must use their core muscles to stabilize the rest of their body so that nothing moves but their arms to roll the ball.

## Speech Language Therapy

Learning how to navigate a communication device.



Controlling fluency & working on categorization.



OT: Do you want to build a snowman?

- Stack marshmallows and use toothpicks for arms and mini chocolate chips for eyes, nose, mouth
- Draw circles, Tear paper and glue
- Draw circles, glue cotton balls



# Art, Music, Library & Physical Education



**In PE, students participate in a variety of activities as seen here. (Cross the River, Team Rock Paper Scissors, Cardio Drumming, Gymnastics and Swimming)!**



**Library Books will be coming home soon!  
Keep your eyes out for a flyer coming home!**



K-2 art students are working on Primary and Secondary colors this month. They will be learning about color mixing along with various artists Like Chris Uphues, Joan Miro, and Piet Mondrian.



4th Graders are learning about Snow Owls and using different painting techniques to design a winter artwork.



3rd graders are learning about Polar Bears, collage, and printing to design a Polar Bear Winter artwork.

**Stay tuned for information about the 4th grade musical!!!**



3rd and 4th graders are African drumming solo and with partners.



# Pupil Personnel Services News

We have been teaching both staff and students self regulation and using mindfulness strategies to help us stay regulated. Students learn about Flipping Our Lids and not having a Lizard Brain, which means not thinking about our actions. We talk about how we have an upstairs and downstairs brain and when we flip our lids they cannot talk to each other so we cannot use our strategies. We discuss how we need to recognize when we are feeling a certain way. We talk about recognizing when our body is giving us a clue that we are upset and than knowing to use a strategy before we flip our lids. We are also finishing up with our first (Anxiety) Worry Groups at the different grade levels. This group helps students recognize that we all worry, that worry can come in different sizes, and there are a number of strategies we can use to calm ourselves and finds ways to cope with things that we're concerned about now or in the future. We continue have the Backpack program, providing a weekend meal source for families who may need an extra boost. We also had a parent night discussion about Erin's Law and how parents and other adults can help their children. We also will be presenting our K-4th graders on Erin's Law. The students will learn how to let people know when they are feeling uncomfortable and to look to who their trusted supports are. We also discuss with them about secrets and lies. Finally, we continue to assist parents and caregiver in accessing outside supports in any area where a student and family feels there is a need. If you have any questions or need help with outside referrals just let us know.

Maria Kocialski, LMSW  
School Social Worker  
716-686-3671

Bernie Huber, LCSW-R  
School Social Worker  
716-686-3679

This month we have been talking and learning about having a positive "Growth Mindset." We have read, [The Magical Yet](#), [The Girl Who Never Made Mistakes](#), and have watched inspirational videos on what growth mindset is and how important it is to each student's life and thought process. My objective for each lesson is for students to learn that it's ok to make mistakes, and that it's important to have a goal to strive for. In order to achieve our goals, one must have a positive attitude along with effort in order to achieve the goals. I stressed to the students that the word and concept of "Yet" is very powerful. They need to set a goal, stay motivated, put in effort, and have a "can do" attitude to be successful!

Kristin Dudas  
School Counselor

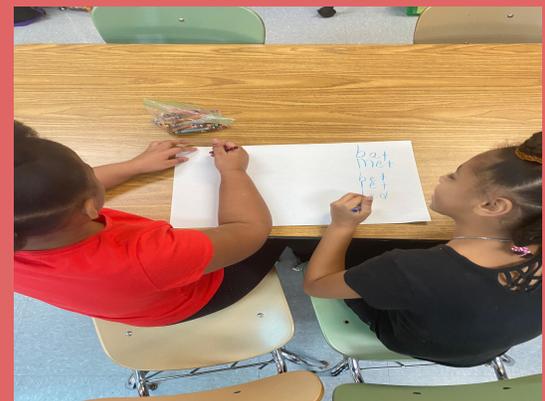
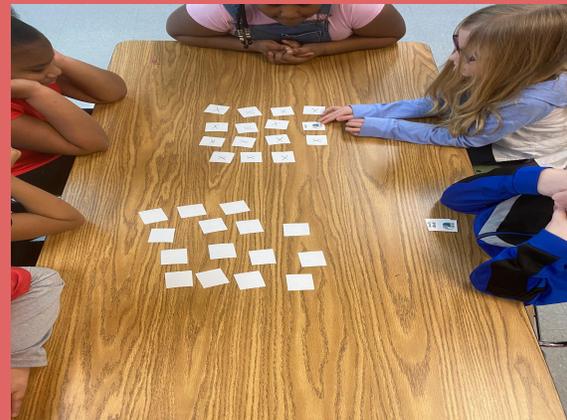
# Academic Intervention Services News

## Math WIN

- Grade 1 - Composing and decomposing teen numbers  
Understanding that  $8+6=14$  can also be  $10+4=14$   
Word problem solving
- Grade 2 - Measuring with centimeters and inches  
Word problem solving
- Grade 3 - Determining the area of a given space  
Word problem solving
- Grade 4 - Multiplying fractions  
Word problem solving



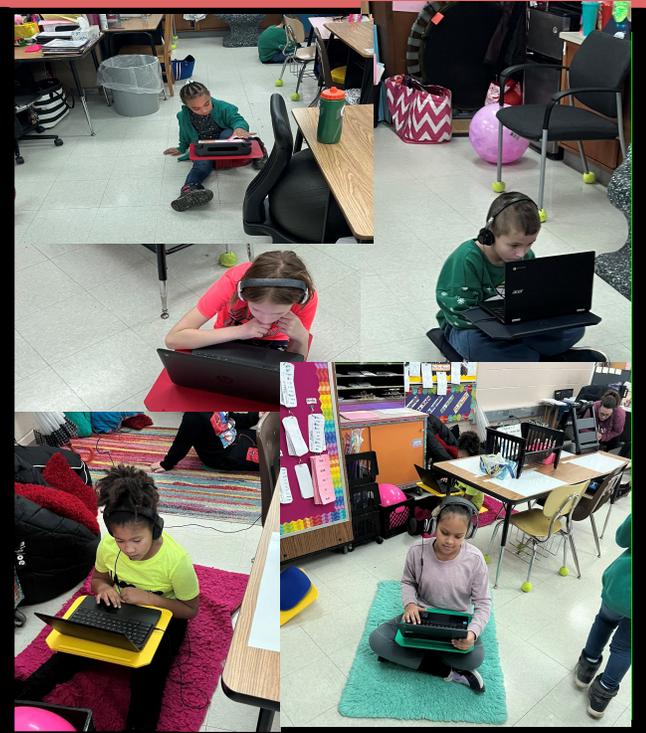
AIS  
Reading  
Students  
enjoy  
reviewing  
red words  
(high  
frequency  
words)  
and short  
vowels  
with some  
engaging  
games!



# Special Education News

## MRS. HUTTENLOCKER CLASS

THE STUDENTS ARE  
UTILIZING EDUCATIONAL  
WEBSITES TO  
ENHANCE THEIR  
PREVIOUS LEARNED SKILLS  
USING  
FLEXIBLE SEATING.



## Mrs. Wieszczecinski / Ms. Heide Class

Mekhi, Isaiah, and Alex meeting  
Lucky from Paws for Love.



# English as a New Language News

Kindergarten and First grade students working on sight words, sentence writing, and reading non-fiction books by breaking up words part by part.

Third graders working in teams to solve sentence puzzles using conjunctions, and completing independent work during literacy centers.

