Dear Members of the Clark Schools Community,

These past two relatively mild winter months have been extremely active ones for our district. We are very grateful for the strong partnerships that our schools have with our larger community and the good, supportive work of these groups. For example, Columbia Bank was beyond generous to provide us with a $20,000 grant to help support our schools. In addition, a number of our local realtors gave their valuable time to visit with us and tour our schools on a morning at the end of February so that they would be even better equipped to educate perspective homebuyers on the greatness of our schools and school district. As a district, we also want to serve as a resource for the community in any and all possible ways. The opportunity to connect with our local businesspeople and hopefully strengthen our school and community partnerships that is provided through the monthly Chamber of Commerce meetings is one that we greatly value.

Our recent kindergarten registrations were exciting opportunities for us to initially welcome these new and eager students to our two elementary schools. We are now looking forward to our seventh-grade open house at ALJ on the evening of Tuesday, April 9. This event is being designed to give these students and their parents/guardians an early glimpse into the superiority of our high school. Our staff professional development sessions on the afternoon of February 15 proved to be good means for our teachers to gain further familiarity with, for instance, the I&RS process and the role of the child study team; Google Classroom; and Gizmos, i.e., a tool for middle school science and mathematics teachers. In addition, opportunities to plan for the upcoming wellness week and block scheduling study were provided. Our recent Parent University sessions included a tea focused on anxiety to wellness and a hands-on mindfulness session offered by Brandi and her team from Brassy Buddha Yoga Studio in Westfield. Upcoming events include Remembering T.J. on Monday, March 18 and a tea centered around what parents need to know regarding vaping on Tuesday, April 2.

Congratulations go to our juniors and seniors who were recently inducted into the National Honor Society. This is one of the most prestigious honors that a high school student can earn. We are also extremely proud of our six ALJ students who reached the state level of their DECA competitions. This extracurricular activity provides students with real-life simulations of the business concepts that they are studying in class. At the end of February, an elementary science fair was held as a means of our FKH and VRS students being able to display their good, creative work. CHK has been continuing with the new integration of arts program through Princeton University and, as you will see throughout this issue of Pride, our athletic teams displayed a level of greatness during these winter months of which we are very proud.

It seems as though this current school year just began. As a result, it is difficult to believe that we are already looking towards next year. For example, the ALJ 2019-2020 Program of Studies that contains a host of exciting offerings and highlights our high school as being a “School of Choice” was approved at the January 6 Board of Education meeting and is now posted on the ALJ website. Our high school students can all develop curricular programs that meet their unique needs and prepare them for the most competitive of universities and careers through close collaboration with their school counselors. We are thrilled to report that ALJ has been named as a State School of Character by Character.org based on the host of innovative character education programs that are offered. Our third through eleventh-grade students are preparing to take their New Jersey Student Learning Assessment (NJSLA) tests this spring and these assessment results, along with course performance and teacher recommendations, will help guide future placement decisions. Our eighth-graders have been registered for ALJ while our current high school students have also moved through their course selection process.

With only two inclement weather days having been used at the time that this letter is being written, we still have one additional full day to use if need be. If this day is not needed, the Board of Education will be closing school for students and teachers on April 22 for Easter Monday. With that being said, as we head into spring, I want to thank you again for the immense support of our schools. As always, I am looking forward to seeing you at our events and around town.

Yours sincerely,
Edward Grande
ALJ Alumni Performs at Hall of Fame Jam with Rock and Roll Greats!

On Thursday January 17th, Zack Sandler (Arthur L. Johnson Class of ’16) with Blue Hawk Records (Monmouth University’s student-run record label) produced the “Hall of Fame Jam,” a concert featuring Ricky Byrd (guitar for Joan Jett and the Blackhearts) and Vini Lopez (Original drummer for Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band) to benefit the Light of Day Foundation. This year’s event was held at Langosta Lounge in Asbury Park and featured many Monmouth University student/alumni talents, plus the two Rock and Roll Hall of Fame headliners.

The Light of Day Foundation, Inc., utilizes the power of music to raise money and awareness in its continuing battle to defeat Parkinson’s disease and related illnesses such as PSP and ALS within our lifetime (http://www.lightofday.org/about). According to Sandler, “This foundation holds a special place in my heart because my grandmother suffered from and eventually lost her battle against Parkinson’s disease back in 2010.”

Sandler explained that he reached out to both of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame musicians back in September to get the ball rolling on this show. Both of them agreed happily to play and support the Light of Day cause.

ALJ Hosts Alumni Panel

On January 4th, the Arthur L. Johnson High School Guidance Department hosted an ALJ Alumni Panel where former Crusaders shared their college experience with current juniors and seniors. The panel, led by Erica Stasio, ALJ School Counselor, included a series of topics including choosing a school, living away from home, and extra-curricular involvement. The panel also discussed how ALJ prepared them for college. “I look forward to the Alumni Panel every year, not only to catch up with former students, but for them to share their experiences with our current juniors and seniors. The discussion is invaluable and relevant to the concerns of high school students. It helps to provide a unique perspective different from that of a parent, teacher, counselor, or coach,” stated Stasio.

First Row, left to right: Norberto Diaz ’18, Brandon Rapp ’18, Kayla Dias ’18, Danielle Hartzler ’18, Saga Elsekhely ’18

Back Row, left to right: William Shaughnessy ’18, Hart Tecson ’17, Greg Zukowski ’18, Brandon Fernandez ’16, Mr. Andrew Amendola, Supervisor of Pupil Personnel Services/Guidance
ALJ Senior Receives Humanitarian Award

ALJ senior Rachel Papa was one of nine students recognized as a recipient of the inaugural Joy Prescott Humanitarian Award for student leadership and dedication at the Student Leadership Conference at Kean University on Friday, November 16th. According to the application, the award is presented to a student leader “committed to human rights and the pursuit of social justice.” There were over forty nominees from partner schools throughout New Jersey. Rachel was recognized for her contributions to “Community Safety and Inclusion.”

According to ALJ Holocaust/Genocide studies teacher Frank Stebbins, “Knowing Rachel, community safety and inclusion is something I feel she will focus on long after her senior year at ALJ.”

The award is named for Joy Prescott, an educator at Kean University for four decades, who dedicated most of the latter part of her career to the Holocaust Resource Center and educators around New Jersey.

C.A.L.C. Visits First Children’s School

On Wednesday, March 06, 2019, members of the Crusader Athletic Leadership Council participated in a visit to the First Children’s School, located in Fanwood, New Jersey. The First Children’s School in Fanwood is a stepping off point for children who need highly specialized educational services for some period of time in their lives. First Children’s services extend into the home districts of students with special needs where they are invited to work with faculty and administration to assure that children with special needs get cutting-edge services in their home schools. The dedicated staff, including teachers, aides, and therapists, are prepared to deliver their services in the schools and homes of the children they serve.

First Children partners with districts and other providers like Children’s Specialized Hospital and Eden Autism Services to make sure that the children receive the very best services possible. C.A.L.C. members went into various classrooms and participated in a multitude of activities relating to the school’s curriculum. C.A.L.C. members Matthew Alongi, Max Carmino, Lia D’Angelo, Nicalina DelRosario, Joshua Hill, Emma Hilton, Brandon Hund, Sebastian Iakouchevitch, Nicole Randazza, Ally Renda, Daniela Thompson, Natalya Torres, Taylor Turek, Jenna Wiese and Kylee Zawacki all participated in the visit to the First Children’s School. According to Athletic Director Gus Kalikas, “The C.A.L.C. was thrilled to be able to assist with the daily routines of the First Children’s School. It was fun watching the High School Student Athletes as they interacted with the children, and I think both groups not only enjoyed the experience, but learned a lot while doing it.”
Learning Through the Arts at Carl H. Kumpf Middle School

Teachers at Carl H. Kumpf Middle School integrated visual and performing arts in their lessons to enhance learning this year. Eighth grade language arts teachers had their students design covers for their independent reading books which had to include symbolism and various aspects of the stories. Graphic design concepts were used to help the students design covers that were simple, clear, and interesting. Sixth grade math teachers used grids and fractions for designing the layout of farm fields. Social Studies teachers had their students analyze and illustrate political cartoons as well as drawing and coloring images related to the ten plagues.

Sixth grade science teacher, Joe Rodriguez, had his students create nursery rhymes about the characteristics of Life and Cell Theory. He stated, “I’ve taken the students out of their normal comfort zones and helped them to learn what is typically dry material and gave it some life.”

Danielle Bihuniak, seventh grade science teacher, is currently teaching chemical reactions at the atomic level. Her students used stop motion animation with Legos to demonstrate how atoms interact during a chemical reaction. Bihuniak stated, “It has given students a very concrete, visual understanding of the abstract idea of the Law of Conservation of Matter.”

Cristina Romao-Carrano taught character development in storytelling to her sixth grade language arts classes using performing arts. She remarked, “Incorporating the arts in the lesson gave it a multi-sensory approach to teaching direct and indirect characterization.” These are just a few examples of the many arts integration lessons taught at Kumpf School that day.

These lessons are part of Kumpf’s initiative to integrate arts throughout the curriculum. A goal of incorporating the arts is to help the students learn non-arts subject material in a variety of ways that will increase student interest. Another goal is to help the teachers become more comfortable with using visual and performing arts in their lessons. Principal Richard Delmonaco states, “We are hoping that the arts become a part of the daily routines of teachers in various subject areas, not for something that is special, but something that is meaningful.”

Arts Integration helps students to use critical and creative thinking to gain a better understanding of the content being taught. According to EducationCloset.com, “Arts Integration is a research-based approach to teaching and learning that has proven results for the past 30 years. For schools that commit to using arts integration with integrity, the results are astounding. Schools that intentionally use arts integration find student achievement rises by 10% OR MORE across the board.”

ALJ Student Named a Coca-Cola Scholar Semifinalist

Arthur L. Johnson High School Student Chosen for Next Level in Prestigious Scholarship Program

Local high school senior Jianna Nieves has been named a Semifinalist for the 2019 class of the Coca-Cola Scholars Program, moving to the next round of the selection process to become a Coca-Cola Scholar and receive a $20,000 college scholarship. A joint effort of Coca-Cola bottlers across the United States and The Coca-Cola Company, the Coca-Cola Scholars Program is one of the largest corporate-sponsored, achievement-based scholarship programs of its kind. With the addition of the 2019 class, the Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation will have provided more than 6,150 Coke Scholars nationwide with over $69 million in scholarships over the course of 31 years. According to ALJ Principal Jennifer Feeley, “We are so proud of Jianna Nieves being named as a semifinalist for the Coca-Cola scholarship. She is a wonderful example of an ALJ student giving back to others. We look forward to her future successes.”
Students at Valley Road School kicked off Red Ribbon Week with a presentation from the Union County Sheriff’s Office Canine Unit. The assembly began with Detective Gialanella, Officer Aquuto, and Officer Yasinski speaking to the students and staff about the role of the Canine Unit and the training the dogs go through. Detective Gialanella and Canine Marco then demonstrated Marco’s area of expertise, which is narcotics. Canine Marco started to paw excessively at the floor and was then rewarded with his towel. The presentation ended with questions from students and staff members.

“The Red Ribbon Week Committee wanted to kick off the week in an informative, interactive way. This presentation will be something the students remember because it is not every day that they have a 100-plus pound dog come into their school to show how he responds when illegal drugs are around,” stated school counselor, Mrs. Badillo.

On January 10th, Carl H. Kumpf Middle School held a film screening of Classroom Close-up NJ, a sixteen-time Emmy® award-winning show, that recently shot a segment at the school about its “One School, One Book” program. The community gathered to celebrate the program and watch the segment together in the school’s library.

The “One School, One Book” summer reading program required all students to read the same book. This year’s book, Eleven, by Tom Rogers tells the story of a boy turning 11 on September 11th. Students learned about the history of September 11th. Teachers then incorporated the book’s lessons into their classrooms with a focus on character education. The filming included a skype conversation with the author as well as the creation of towers out of index cards with each grade level represented by a different color.

“The Classroom Close-up segment on Kumpf School’s ‘One School, One Book’ program was a terrific example of the wonderful things that happen at the school. It was so exciting to see the students enjoying the learning process, and being able to let people outside the school see these positive interactions. Mrs. Sasso did a great job along with all the other Kumpf staff members to make this event happen,” stated Rick Delmonaco, CHK Principal.

Classroom Close-up NJ, a co-production of the New Jersey Education Association and NJTV, features innovative programs occurring in public school classrooms. Each half-hour program shows how caring school professionals inspire and motivate students. Every week, the excitement of learning comes alive as teachers, education support professionals, children, and parents work together for success.

To view CHK’s segment “Books and Beyond,” visit this link: Books and Beyond.
Crusader Athletes Commit to the Next Level

On Thursday, November 15, 2018, various staff members and administration at Arthur L. Johnson High School participated in a signing day ceremony to honor Amanda Zambrana (Field Hockey), Colleen Sullivan (Soccer), Brandon Hund (Lacrosse), and Victoria Zatko (Softball) and their years of service to Crusader Athletics and commemorate their signing of Nation Letters of Intent to play NCAA Collegiate Athletics. Athletic Director at Arthur L. Johnson High School Gus Kalikas commented, “Amanda, Colleen, Brandon, and Victoria have been integral parts of the success of our athletic programs while attending Arthur L. Johnson High School. More importantly, they have been model student athletes that did things the right way both on the fields, in the classroom, and throughout our community. Although it will be sad to see them leave, the Crusader’s loss is their University’s gain, and we look forward to following their successful collegiate athletic careers over the next four years.” Crusader Athletics would like to wish the best of luck to Amanda, Colleen, Brandon and Veronica as they culminate wonderful careers for the Crusaders and continue their academic and athletic successes as collegiate student athletes.

FKH Celebrates Read Across America

Frank K. Hehnly-Hehnly students welcomed special guest readers to celebrate Read Across America and a love of reading. Our honored guests included, Superintendent Mr. Grande, Board members Lorraine J. Aklonis, Henry Varriano, Steve Donkersloot, and Dino Bencivenga. They were also joined by members of the Kumpf Junior National Honor Society, retired teacher, Carol Iden and Clark Public Librarian Deidre Morley. All of our guests shared their favorite books and spoke with students about the importance and joy of reading. The students also participated in a day of DROP EVERYTHING AND READ. Our students carried books with them all day and whenever an announcement was made the children stopped what they were doing and read. All classes also read with their buddies and received Dr. Seuss pencils from our special friends, Thing 1 and Thing 2. Happy Birthday Dr. Seuss!
Crusader Athletes Stand out in Fall and Winter Seasons

The Arthur L. Johnson Athletic Department celebrated both fall and winter athletes at their respective awards nights. Over 220 varsity athletic letters were handed out in the fall and 188 were awarded for the winter season. Participation in athletics at Arthur L. Johnson High School continues to grow.

The 2018 Fall Student Athlete award recipient was Kaylee Parkhill, with a 4.4791 G.P.A. The 2018-2019 Winter Student Athlete award recipient was Matthew Alongi.

The Crusader G.P.A. Challenge is awarded to the team that finishes with the highest overall G.P.A. amongst athletic teams. The Field Hockey Team, with a G.P.A. of 4.0198, was the 2018 Fall G.P.A. Challenge winner. Members of the Field Hockey Team include: Alyssa Colicchio, Nina Couzzi, Sabrina Diwane, Victoria Marano, Kaylee Parkhill, Alley Renda, Amanda Zambrana, Heidi Compton, Emma Hilton, Nicole Randazza, Tara Starita, Taylor Turek, Jordyn Walsh, Devyn Calas, Gianna Caldiero, Gia Colicchio, Michelle Kukan, Courtney Marano, Victoria Venezio, Peyton Collings and Tatum Dobbins. The Crusader Girls’ Track and Field Team, with a G.P.A. of 3.852, were the winners for the winter season. The following are members of the Girls’ Track and Field Team: Paige Kelly, Natalya Torres, Katherine Fitzharris, Julia Kalynchuk, Nicole Randazza, America Renteria, Megan Tingfer, Gianna Caldiero, Carly Tarentino, Jasmine Ocasio and Sarah Scepkowski.


The fall MVPs were: Cross Country – Steven Kehrle, Field Hockey – Amanda Zambrana, Football – Sebastian Iakouchevitch, Gymnastics – Emi Budnik, Boys’ Soccer – Andrew Kehrle, Girls’ Soccer – Cecelia Puentes, Girls’ Tennis – Alexandra Bowen, Volleyball – Erin Heaning, and Cheerleading – Julianna Rizzuto.

The winter MVPs were: Boys’ Basketball – Brandon Hund, Girls Basketball – Bailey Rosemeier, Wrestling – Sebastian Iakouchevitch, Ice Hockey – Tyler Mekovitch, Boys’ Winter Track & Field – Jack Delaney, Girls’ Winter Track & Field – Carly Tarentino, Swimming – Andrew Jobson (Boys) & Anna Stolarczyk (Girls), Bowling – Andrew Beach, and Cheerleading – Julianna Rizzuto.

ALJ Hosts Elementary Science Fair

Both Valley Road and Hehnly Schools participated in the Elementary Science Fair held on February 28th at Arthur L. Johnson High School. At this event, students displayed their science fair projects, which ranged from the “Bubble Snake” to “Potato Power.” For each project, students had to create a question to guide their experiment as well as generate a hypothesis and draw conclusions based on their results. The event was attended by parents, teachers, board members, and elementary administrators.

According to Assistant Principal of the Elementary Schools Mallory Applebaum, “The Elementary Science Fair was a great success! We had 112 projects, which is the highest turnout we’ve ever had. The students showed creativity, and had a wonderful time presenting their findings.”
Fifth Grade G&T Students Attend the UCGTA Environment Convocation

On January 11th, the fifth grade students in the Gifted and Talented Program from Valley Road School and Hehnly School attended the Union County Gifted and Talented Association Convocation. The convocation was titled, “Kids Saving Earth Today For a Better Earth Tomorrow” and took place at the Rahway Recreation Center. In addition to Clark, students from Berkeley Heights, Elizabeth Schools #7 and #22, Kenilworth, and Roselle attended the Environmental Convocation.

The goal of “Kids Saving Earth Today For a Better Earth Tomorrow” is to promote environmental awareness in the surrounding community by setting good examples and providing activities that demonstrate environmentally friendly ideals. Cindy Tarello who directed convocation and is also the Gifted and Talented Teacher from Clark Elementary Schools explained, “The workshops are designed to foster cooperation among students from the participating districts while gaining a better understanding of important environmental issues. It’s an excellent opportunity for the students to interact with one another in a challenging atmosphere.”

Students rotated through four different modules: The Earth Dome, Clean It Up, Landfill, and Hydrophobic Sand. The Earth Dome is a gigantic inflatable earth balloon made of photographs shot from satellites of the surface of the world. The Dome was brought in by Mobile Ed. Productions and was used to educate students about geography as well as other environmental issues. In the Clean It Up workshop, students learned how a community negatively and positively impacts its environment by using given materials to clean polluted water. In the Landfill station, students built model landfills using materials similar to those used by engineers. The goal was to create landfills that hold the most garbage, minimize costs to build and keep trash and contaminated water inside the landfill to prevent it from causing environmental damage. The Hydrophobic Sand lesson was developed through Camp Invention. In this station, students explored the science behind hydrophobic materials while discovering how they can be used to soak up pollution out of water and soil.

Valley Road Fifth Graders Remember Colonial Times

On February 22nd, fifth grade students at Valley Road School participated in a Colonial Job Fair organized by fifth grade teachers Bryan Lowe, Nicole Reagan, Diane Spagnoli, and Kelly Williamson. Parents, teachers, and administrators were invited into the gym for the job fair where students shared what they learned from the perspective of someone in their profession. Professions included Blacksmith, Apothecary, and Print Shop owner among many others.

Prior to the event, in class, students were assigned a profession to research including the job’s importance, qualifications, responsibilities, and location. Students then created their final projects reflecting this information, dressed in clothing from the time period, brought in items reflective of the period, and even learned a Colonial dance with the help of Ms. Sauer, the school’s music teacher. Principal Joe Beltramba stated, “Colonial Day provided students an opportunity to immerse themselves in history truly bringing it to life. The work the teachers and students put into this day was beyond impressive creating a memorable learning experience.”
Kumpf Sixth Graders Honor Black History Month

Students in Mrs. Sasso’s sixth grade language arts classes at Carl H. Kumpf Middle School completed a biography project in celebration of Black History Month. They began by researching and taking notes about an influential African-American. After drafting, revising and editing, each student copied their work onto Google’s Book Creator and added graphics. Some students even created bitmojis, avatars, and timelines about their person. Sasso stated, “The work ethic and creativity they showed during this project was beyond impressive, and the final product, a digital book of all the students’ work, is evidence of that.”

The Press of Atlantic City’s Chief Meteorologist Visits Frank K. Hehnly School

Head Chief Meteorologist of the Press of Atlantic City, Joe Martucci, came in to speak to Ms. Martucci’s third, fourth, and fifth grade students at Frank K. Hehnly School. Martucci taught the students about severe weather including hurricanes, tornados, tsunamis, and snowstorms. The class also played a little bit of weather trivia. Martucci answered all of the students’ detailed questions. According to Ms. Martucci, “Since the beginning of our weather unit in science, I always told the students that there would be a special guest meteorologist that would be coming in to talk about the weather. The never guessed that it would be my brother!” She continued, “The class was very engaged and ready to learn! It was an eventful afternoon!”

NAGWS Press Release 2018-2019

On February 04, 2019, Bailey Rosenmeier, of Arthur L. Johnson High School, joined together with over 140 female student-athletes from New Jersey’s high schools, colleges, and universities at Seton Hall University in celebration for National Girls and Women in Sports Day (NAGWS). NAGWS is one of the largest events in the state that recognizes women’s athletics. Bailey was nominated by her coaches for her accomplishments as an outstanding high school female athlete in basketball and softball. NAGWS is recognized in all 50 states to honor the success of female athletes and recognize the struggle for equality for women in sports. The Outstanding Athlete Awards were presented to one individual from each high school, junior college, and college in attendance.

Bailey Rosenmeier was Arthur L. Johnson High Schools 2018-2019 NAGWS recipient.
Parent University Art Night

The Clark Public School District held a Parent University Community Education Session, “Art Night with Mr. Terhune” on December 6. The event, open to parents and students in the district, was held in the ALJ Cafeteria. Led by Arthur L. Johnson’s Mr. Terhune and his student assistants, attendees created a 2-dimensional mixed media winter scene. Terhune stated, “I chose to do this project for two reasons: first, I felt that people of all ages could feel successful and creative. From the youngest to the oldest, we had participants adapt it to their own skill level and think outside the box a bit. Secondly, I love mixed media work, and although there was a lot of materials and ‘switching gears’, mixing media is a great way to add depth and creativity to a work of art.”

Christine Casale Broski, Supervisor of Educational Initiatives and organizer of the event, stated, “I would like to thank the parents and students who attended Art Night. I would also like to thank Mr. Terhune for sharing his talent. Thanks to his efforts, Art Night served as a wonderful opportunity for the school community to come together to enjoy the arts!”

Art Night is part of the district’s Parent University program, which includes other community education nights in addition to parent teas and two larger assembly-type programs. The program also includes virtual sessions that can be found on the district’s website under Parent University as well as on the district’s Facebook and Twitter pages.

Arthur L. Johnson High School Recognized as State School of Character

Arthur L. Johnson High School in Clark was recently recognized as a State School of Character by Character.org. The school completed a comprehensive application that demonstrated A Framework for School Success: Eleven Principles of Effective Character Education. Activities mentioned included the creation of the 9th Grade Character Academy, PEER leadership, the creation of the “Blue Cru”, the school’s Unified Sports Program, Heroes & Cool Kids program, and the school’s Shave Off Cancer Fundraiser.

ALJ Assistant Principal Ed Bucior stated, “We are extremely proud to announce that Arthur L. Johnson High School has been selected and awarded the title of State School of Character! We would like to thank our students and staff for all of their hard work and dedication to our school and community! And thank you to the community for all of your continued support.”

“At Arthur L. Johnson, we want every child to “Reach Their F.O.C.U.S.” (Future, Opportunity, Character, Unity, Success). We strive to have our students work towards a brighter future for all, take advantage of opportunities offered to them at our school, treat each other with respect and compassion, and work together to build a stronger community. Collectively, we work towards producing well-rounded young adults as they graduate from ALJ. This is why we decided to pursue not only character education, but also character building opportunities,” continued Bucior.

According to Character.org, a national advocate for character in communities, “Each year, Character.org certifies schools and districts at the state level that demonstrate a dedicated focus on character development, which has a positive effect on academic achievement, student behavior and school climate.” For more information on the recognition visit, https://www.character.org/.
What's New at the Preschool

In January, the new Clark Public Library Children’s Librarian Associate, Stephanie Azzaro, visited for story time and a brief talk about the library. The children were delighted with Ms. Stephanie's book selection and her animated story telling. The Preschool also welcomed Jammin Jenn, music therapy, sessions twice a month through April. Jammin Jenn is a practice that utilizes music as a tool to engage special needs students. The therapy is a powerful, non-threatening tool used to build upon a child’s innate strengths, while gently guiding the child/group to an enjoyable and productive experience resulting in progress.

The month of February was packed with activities at the Preschool. The staff and the children of the preschool believe that Valentine’s Day is something everyone should look forward to. At the Clark seniors monthly meeting on February 7th, the children presented their handcrafted Valentine cards to each senior.

The Westfield Pediatric Dental Group visited for Dental Awareness Month, demonstrating proper teeth brushing. She taught the children about the importance of flossing teeth daily and visiting the dentist regularly. She also talked about proper nutrition, and nutrition labeling on foods.

Spring awakens at the preschool with the study of the lifecycle of insects. For the first District-wide Wellness week in March, the teachers presented a “My Plate” unit daily to develop better eating habits and expose the preschoolers to foods they may not experience in their daily diets. In addition, a variety of yoga and meditation segments were introduced daily.

The ALJ Crusader Athletic Leadership Council students visited in celebration of Dr. Seuss’ Birthday and Read Across America. The C.A.L.C. members read multiple children’s books to each classroom. Throughout the month, special guest readers will visit for story time.
Valley Road Variety Show

Valley Road Elementary School in Clark held a variety show in March. Students from grades K-5 presented 2-5 minute acts to showcase their talents. Acts ranged from singing to dancing to comedy. Family members and other students were in attendance.

“There were a variety of acts. It was great to see the students perform on stage, some for the first time. Students were very supportive of each other,” stated Valley Road Principal Joe Beltramba.

Beltramba continued, “I would like to thank the directors Jenna Schiro, Jennifer Guenther, both VRS teachers, and Kim Baglieri, a parent, for all their hard work which made the show a success.”

Watershed

Hehnly School fifth graders took part in a program offered by the NJ Department of Environmental Protection. EPA Ambassador Jennifer Helmsinski explained how pesticides, fertilizer, weed killer, animal waste, and litter affect the watershed. Using a 3D model of land and waterways, students used different colored markers to represent pollutants. Water was sprayed onto the model causing all the marker colors to run together into the water stream and finally into various water sources. This presentation made students more aware of how to protect our water sources from pollutants and toxins.