



GATE TALES

NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2026

A MESSAGE FROM THE VICE PRINCIPAL

Dear Families,

As we move deeper into the fourth quarter, we are proud to share how our school community continues to Empower, Embrace, and Excel—the three pillars of our school vision. Across classrooms and learning spaces, students are participating in meaningful experiences that connect learning to the real world while preparing them for continued academic success.

One of the highlights of this season has been the Harbor Branch Whale Hands-On Experience for students in grades 5–8. This authentic, inquiry-based opportunity brought science learning to life as students explored marine science concepts through real-world applications. Experiences like this strengthen student engagement and deepen understanding, reinforcing our commitment to high-quality science instruction.

As we begin to wind down grade-level field trips for the year, we celebrate the rich learning opportunities our students enjoyed across all grade levels:

- Kindergarten – LEGOLAND**
- Grade 1 – Brevard Zoo**
- Grade 2 – Hobe Sound Farms**
- Grade 3 – Animal Kingdom**
- Grade 4 – St. Augustine**
- Grade 5 – WonderWorks**
- Grade 6 – EPCOT**
- Grade 8 – Universal Studios**

Each experience supported curriculum connections, built background knowledge, and created lasting memories for our students.

Our K–5 students also demonstrated tremendous school spirit during Field Day and Grades 6-8 at the Mustang Melee, engaging in friendly competition that highlighted teamwork, sportsmanship, and collaboration. In addition, we are proud to celebrate our student artists whose work was showcased at the St. Lucie County Fair and displayed at the District Office, reflecting the creativity and talent thriving throughout our school.

As we look ahead to state assessments in May, our school has officially entered Academic Showcase Mode. Students are actively applying their learning across all subject areas as they move through the fourth quarter toward summer. Teachers continue to provide purposeful instruction, and students are rising to the challenge with confidence, perseverance, and pride in their growth.

Thank you for your continued partnership and support as we finish the school year strong together.

We look forward to celebrating our students as they continue to Empower, Embrace, and Excel

Sincerely,

Leslie Taylor

PTO

**ALL FIELD TRIP CHAPERONES, EVENT VOLUNTEERS, & PTO MEMBERS
MUST COMPLETE A VOLUNTEER APPLICATION**

Are you interested in getting involved with your child's school?

An approved volunteer application and badge will get you clearance to attend school field trips, field days, and other school wide events happening throughout the year. Visit the district website to learn more.

www.stlucie.k12.fl.us/our-district/volunteers

Did you know there are other benefits of having a volunteer badge? You can also attend upcoming PTO events! Pick and choose whichever events are convenient for you, no other commitments required.

- General Meetings every month at 10:00am on: 4/30, and 5/28.
Attendees need to sign-in at the front desk. The meeting is held in the cafeteria

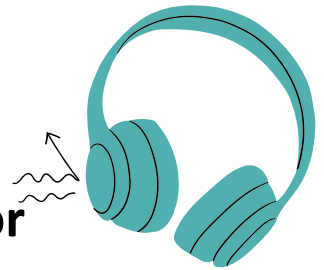
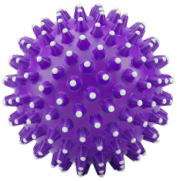
Want to help but don't have the extra time?

You can help in other ways. Reach out to us via email to see how: pslwestgatek8pto@gmail.com or find us on Facebook: West Gate K-8 Port St. Lucie- PTO

ESE Department



Coping skills are important tools that help kids with autism and other disabilities manage big feelings, changes in routine, and everyday challenges. These skills can include simple strategies like taking deep breaths, using a quiet space to calm down, or following a visual schedule to understand what comes next.



Sensory tools—such as fidget toys, headphones, or weighted blankets—can also help children feel more comfortable and focused. Teaching kids to recognize their emotions and express them through words, pictures, or gestures builds confidence and reduces frustration.



With patience, practice, and support from caregivers and teachers, children can develop coping skills that help them feel safe, understood, and more in control of their world.

Sensory Friendly Days

For families with children with special needs

\$1 Admission Fee Per Person

No registration required at this time. Monitor our website for changes.

Maximum capacity of 75 guests on a first come first serve basis for our young guests with sensory needs and special needs.

Dates for 2025
Sundays 9:30 am to 11:00 am

March 9
April 13
May 11
June 8
July 13
August 10
September 14
October 12
November 9
December 14

Colorado Pawn & Jewelry

Autism Acceptance Spirit Week

Monday, April 6th - Friday, April 10th

Monday
4/6

Magnificent Mind Monday!

Celebrate how amazing it is that all our minds work in different, wonderful ways by wearing a fun hat!



Tuesday
4/7

Light Up Blue!

Wear blue to support autism acceptance!



Wednesday
4/8

Superhero Day!

Wear a shirt with your favorite superhero on it!



Thursday
4/9

Play Up Your Strengths!

Wear a jersey or shirt from your favorite sports team!



Friday
4/10

Sensory Friendly Friday!

Wear your most comfortable pajamas to school!





Kindergarten

Kindergarten takes over LEGOLAND! We are excited for our very first field trip on April 2nd.

We are officially in the homestretch of Kindergarten- the final nine weeks of the school year! We continue to learn and grow during this time, and the Kindergarten teachers are so proud of our growing littles and all their accomplishments!

Reading: We are learning quarter 4 high frequency words, continuing to sound out and write CVC words, distinguishing between long and short vowels orally and in text, and applying sounds of blends and digraphs.

Math: We are continuing addition and subtraction up to 20. We are also learning about 2D and 3D shapes, identifying longer or shorter in measurement, and place value (tens/ones)

Writing: We are learning narrative writing, using and identifying correct punctuation, and adding details to writing. We are continuing to write 3 complete sentences while using inventive spelling and finger spacing.

Content (Science/SS): Sound, Motion and Economics

As always, we thank you for your continued support!



First Grade



First grade is excited to welcome in the beautiful spring weather! We would like to begin this month by expressing our heartfelt gratitude to all our wonderful volunteers who joined us for an unforgettable day at the Brevard Zoo. Your time, care, and enthusiasm helped create meaningful memories that our students will cherish for a long time. The trip was filled with laughter, wonder, and discovery. Some of the students' favorite moments included feeding the animals, seeing kangaroos and goats up close, watching giraffes enjoy their lettuce, and even holding birds some of which perched on their friends' heads! They also loved riding the train, cooling off with snow cones and ice cream, and spending time together on the playground. Thank you again for helping make this experience so special.

In reading this month, students will practice reading and comparing selections about the sky to understand the difference between night and day in Unit 8. A continued focus will be placed on developing reading fluency. Families can support this at home by practicing high-frequency words daily, helping students recognize them automatically without needing to sound them out. This skill will take time and consistent practice but will build a strong foundation for reading success. For additional support, you may find Andrea Gardner's song on irregular words helpful during Quarter 4: <https://youtu.be/aJRZS8moCqY?si=hvYNWG5wigQWAgut>. In grammar, students will learn about pronouns and will practice forming and using the past tense of irregular verbs.

In math, students will focus on identifying and analyzing both two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes. For two-dimensional shapes, students will learn to identify the number of sides and vertices and understand that these shapes must be closed figures. When working with three-dimensional shapes, students will identify and describe the number of faces, vertices, edges, and flat surfaces. Please continue to practice basic addition and subtraction within 20 to build math fluency.

In science, first grade classes will understand and be able to sort observable properties of matter.





Second Grade

Happy April, families!



This month in reading, students will continue strengthening their comprehension skills by identifying the main idea, key details, and the author's purpose in both fiction and nonfiction texts. We will also compare and contrast stories and use text features—such as captions, diagrams, and headings—to better understand informational text. Students will keep working on reading fluency through repeated reading and partner practice.

In math, we are beginning our unit on geometry, where students will explore two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes, discuss their attributes, and classify shapes based on shared characteristics. Students will also apply their understanding of partitioning shapes into equal parts. We will continue to review measurement skills from March, including estimating, measuring in inches and centimeters, and comparing lengths.

We are excited for another month of learning and growth!

Third Grade

The unit we are covering this month has the children multiplying greater numbers. They will need to multiply one-digit by multi-digit numbers using strategies we are teaching. Toward the end of the month, we will be reviewing third grade math skills for the upcoming PM3 in May.



3rd Grade Continued...



In third grade reading, we are excited to begin Unit 8, where students will explore the topic of weather through texts, activities and poetry.

Throughout this unit, students will dive into poetry and learn how authors use figurative language. We will be practicing identifying and explaining similes, metaphors, and creating mental images. We encourage families to support learning at home by reading together.

We look forward to seeing our students grow as creative readers!

Fourth Grade



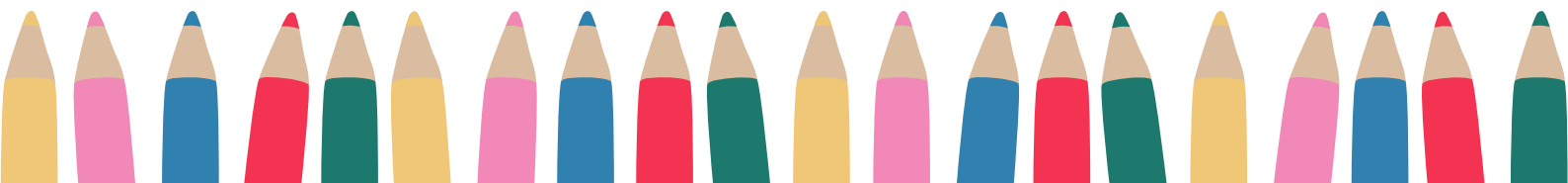
Fourth Quarter Is Here!



We are officially beginning our final quarter of the school year! This is an important time for students to stay focused, work hard each day, come to school prepared, and continue practicing their skills at home. Before we know it, students will be taking the FAST PM3 assessment.

Our goal is for this end-of-year test to reflect how much they have learned throughout the year and their ability to apply those skills independently.

In Math, students will complete two remaining units: measuring angles and geometric figures, and converting measurements. In Reading, students will continue strengthening the skills they have learned by applying them daily as they read longer, more detailed texts and answer questions based on those articles and stories. Thank you for your continued support as we finish the year strong!





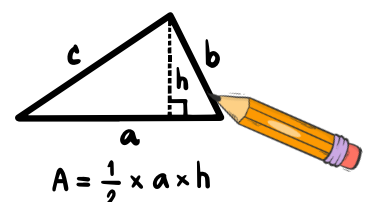
Fifth Grade

After the state writing test, there will be a shift to Narrative writing and Poetry. April showers will bring Young Author Books! Students will have the opportunity to write and illustrate their very own book. The guidelines and rubrics will be provided to all students as they work through the book making process. Then, students will be diving into the many different types of poetry. Afterwards, they will be required to write some original poetry to show that they understand the types of poetry that were taught.



In reading, we will continue with a review of all reading standards. This focused review will help students strengthen key skills and prepare for our FAST-reading assessment which will be on May 5th/6th. Please continue to encourage consistent attendance during this time. You may also go to the FDOE website to take a closer look at the 5th grade level FAST assessments. Thank you for your continued support as we prepare our 5th graders for middle school.

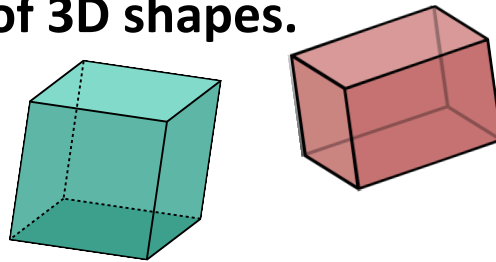
In math we are finishing up Geometric Shapes. We have 3 more units before preparing for PM3 in May. Look for information regarding the upcoming math units.



Sixth Grade



In Math, students will work on Modeling and Solving Problems involving Geometry. Students will represent rational numbers on the coordinate plane and solve problems on the coordinate plane. We will derive and apply formulas for triangle and quadrilaterals. Students will decompose polygons into triangles and rectangles and learn how to find area of a composite figure. We will also represent solid figures using nets and learn how to find surface areas of prisms and pyramids. The final lesson will be on finding volume of 3D shapes.



Sixth-grade ELA is focused on strengthening writing skills as we approach the state writing assessment, with an emphasis on practicing planning, organizing, revising, and responding effectively to prompts.

Immediately following the assessment, we will transition into reading “crunch time,” where students will practice key comprehension, annotation, and test-taking strategies in preparation for FAST Reading PM3.



6th Grade Continued...

In World History, students will be learning about Ancient Greece and its impact on western civilization. They will develop an understanding of democratic concepts developed by the ancient Greek's that served as a foundation for American democracy.



They will explore their use of mythology and fables and the social structure in ancient Greece. Students will also compare life in Athens and Sparta (government and the status of citizens, women, children and, foreigners).



Our 6th grade scientists have launched into an exciting new unit on classifying and exploring living things! Students are learning how scientists organize the incredible diversity of life using observable characteristics, classification systems, and scientific tools. Through hands-on investigations, collaborative activities, and close observation, students are discovering what makes something “alive,” how organisms are grouped, and why classification helps us better understand the natural world. We’re off to a fantastic start, and our young scientists are already asking thoughtful questions and making meaningful connections!





Seventh Grade



We wanted to share an update on what students will be learning in their core classes over the next several weeks.

English Language Arts:



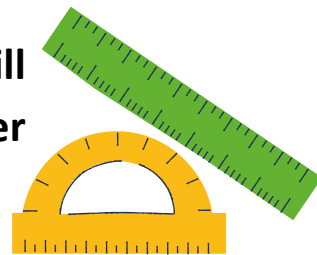
In English Language Arts, students will be starting Unit 4 in the myPerspectives textbook, which focuses on the relationship between people and nature. Students will continue working on narrative writing, with an emphasis on structuring their writing and revising their work. Students will take the state Writing FAST exam on April 1st, and the ELA FAST assessment will be administered during the first full week of May. Please continue to check your student's grades on Skyward and encourage them to read for at least 20 minutes each evening.



Mathematics:

For 7th Grade Advanced Math, students will be working on Units 9 and 10.

- Unit 9 focuses on congruence and similarity, including transformations such as translation, reflection, rotation, and dilation, as well as similar triangles.
- Unit 10 focuses on data and probability, where students will create and interpret graphs, including circle graphs, scatter plots, and line graphs, and analyze linear models.



For On-Level 7th Grade Math, students will continue working on their final unit of the year, which focuses on geometry concepts. Students will decompose shapes to find area, calculate the circumference and area of circles, and determine the surface area and volume of cylinders.

The district math test will be administered between April 22nd and April 29th.



7th grade continued....

Civics:

In Civics, students are continuing to build their understanding of the structure and function of government, with a focus on key constitutional principles and how they apply in real-world situations. We are working on strengthening students' ability to analyze scenarios, apply civic concepts, and prepare for the End-of-Course (EOC) exam.

Students will take the Unit 11 Test on April 15th, which will be our final unit assessment before transitioning into full EOC review. After this test, we will begin reviewing all major concepts from throughout the year using a variety of strategies, including practice questions, discussion, and review activities to help students feel confident and prepared.

Please continue to encourage your student to review vocabulary and class materials regularly, as consistent practice will be key to success on the EOC.

Science:

In Science, students are beginning an exciting unit on Dynamic Ecosystems and Human Impact. Students will explore how living and nonliving components interact within ecosystems, how energy flows through food webs, and how both natural and human-caused changes can impact environmental balance.

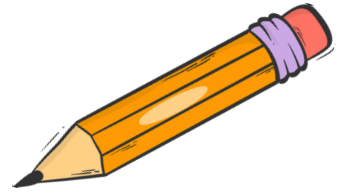
Through hands-on investigations, data analysis, and real-world case studies, students will examine issues such as pollution, deforestation, and resource use. They will also explore ways to make positive environmental impacts through conservation, restoration, and sustainable practices.

We are excited to see students deepen their understanding of the environment and their role as responsible citizens.





Eighth Grade



GRADVENTURE

All students in Gradventure should avoid any discipline issues to finish out the school year to attend this field trip on Thursday, May 21st, 2026. No Refunds will be given if the field trip is revoked due to Discipline.

ELA

This quarter is going to fly by. In 8th grade ELA we will be focusing on hitting the pavement strong by reviewing all of our reading standards in preparation for state testing in May. We will be placing a focus on small group remediation as needed and practicing our taught skills. Students will collaborate in well-designed groups through weekly station rotations starting April 6th. The FAST ELA exam is scheduled for May 7th.

MATH

Geometry is finishing up their last unit, Unit 10: Two- and Three- Dimensional Models. Students are learning how to solve problems that involve area, surface area, and volume. Afterwards, we will begin an End Of Course review to help students confidently approach the test on May 14th. Tutoring for Geometry and Algebra begins in April on Wednesdays and Fridays.

Algebra is completing Unit 9, which extends students' knowledge of functions to include radical functions, such as square root and cube root functions. Students identify the key features of the graphs of radical and cubic functions. Next, Unit 10 analyzes data in graphs, word problems, and statistics. Afterwards, we will review for the EOC on May 14th.

Pre-Algebra's last two units involve Data & Statistics and Laws of Exponents & Scientific Notation. PM3 will be Thursday, May 14th.

SPANISH

Spanish classes are spending the last quarter focusing on vocabulary, listening and grammar.



7th grade continued....

SCIENCE

We are just over a week into our last 2 science units before gearing up for the end-of-year Statewide Science Assessment.

Unit 8: Photosynthesis and Cellular Respiration

Chapter Big Idea: Photosynthesis and cellular respiration are the two essential processes by which plants make their food and convert it into energy required for their survival. Plants respond differently to environmental stimuli and chemical stimuli for secondary growth and survival in various conditions.

Unit 9: Cycling of Matter and Energy

Chapter Big Idea: Ecosystems are dependent upon the cycling of matter and the flow of energy.

Important dates:

April 9th - Unit 8/9 Test

April 10th - Make-up Test

April 16 & 17 - SCA2 (2nd practice tests ahead of the SSA). This will be used as a way to prepare for our review of 6th, 7th, and 8th grade science standards students will see on the Science State Assessment.

May 19th - SSA!

SOCIAL STUDIES

This week, students will be exploring the changing American identity in the years leading up to the Civil War. We will examine how differences in economics, culture, and beliefs between the North and South contributed to a deeply divided—and ultimately “broken”—nation. Through discussion and analysis, students will begin to understand how these tensions set the stage for one of the most significant conflicts in U.S. history.

Reminder: Please ensure your child is completing all Xello lessons. These lessons are a requirement for promotion, and staying on track is essential. Encourage your student to check their progress and complete any missing assignments as soon as possible.



Middle School Band



The West Gate K-8 Band Program has been putting in LOTS of work these last few weeks. Our Symphonic Band received an overall excellent rating at District 13's Music Performance Assessment at Fort Pierce Central High School on March 10th. We also received one superior from our stage judges, making this one of our BEST ratings that our band program has received since 2007. Please congratulate these students on their hard work and tireless efforts to make our band sound EXCELLENT!

Please make room in your calendars for our Spring Concert on Thursday, May 14th, at 6:30PM. It will be hosted here in our Cafeteria and displays all of our ensembles that West Gate has to offer, such as our Beginning, Concert, Symphonic, and Jazz Bands. The event will be free of charge, but we will be asking for donations to help support our band program and the students within it.

As always, please feel free to reach out to Mr. Halle at tanner.halle@stlucieschools.org if you have any questions or regards about this event. We are looking forward to having you all support our musicians at West Gate!



Media Center

Books

The West Gate library is also proud to announce improvements being made using Book Fair dollars! The media center has two new comfy reading chairs! Students can be found cozying up, enjoying books recently purchased. Our new titles include recently released graphic novels, hockey, and car books, as well as additions to our favorite series, such as Grumpy Monkey, Paws, and Unico.



SPRING BOOKFAIR!



West Gate's spring book fair will run from April 13-21st. Students will shop during their media or STEM resource. Middle schoolers are welcome to visit anytime throughout the day with a pass from their teacher. The link for the class wallet could be found in the Scholastic flyer, as well as on social media, and made available the week prior to the sale.

Thank you for supporting our library!



The library is proud to announce that Ms. Bowman and Ms. Skurnick have opened a Little Free Library outside of the STEM lab in honor of a lost West Gate student, Elice Sena. Students will be able to leave or take a book for free!



In honor of Elice Sena and the joy she has inspired, the Little Library is a perfect tribute to her and her love for reading. It represents everything her book club stands for—the simple act of sharing books with others. The Little Library will continue Elice's legacy, one book at a time. —Ms. Kristi Bowman



Empower Embrace Excel

FAMILY FUN FAIR

Thursday, April 16th, 2026

5:30-7:00PM



Free Family
Activities



Shop for
Books!



Community
Resources



Food Trucks



Family
Resources

Get ready for an evening of bonding, making memories, and enjoying a wide range of fun-filled activities. Here's what you can expect:

- Free admission!
- Free community and parent resources.
- Free family activities such as games, yoga, dancing, etc.
- Food trucks will be available. (Pricing will vary by vendor)
- Scholastic Book Fair open for families to purchase books.

All students **MUST** be accompanied by an adult. No student drop offs will be permitted.



Dress Code



2025-2026

We encourage students to take pride in their attire as it relates to the school setting. Students are to dress in a manner that, in addition to the following guidelines, takes into consideration the safety, health, and welfare of self and others, and does not disrupt the learning environment. **Appropriateness of dress shall be determined by the school administration** per Governing Board Policy. If there is a dress code violation, the student will be allowed to change clothing to correct the dress code violation

Permitted	Not Permitted
<p>Tops - Shirts and Blouses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must have sleeves, reach hips, & have school appropriate logos, images, and phrases. <p>Bottoms - Pants, Joggers, Jeans, Capris, Shorts, Skirts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be worn at the waist and be fingertip-length or longer. • Any clothing with frays or distressed material must <u>not</u> reveal skin. <p>Dresses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must have sleeves and be loosely fitted. • Must be fingertip-length or longer. <p>Sweaters, hoodies and Jackets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be worn with a school appropriate shirt underneath. • Hoods must remain down while on school grounds. <p>Shoes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All footwear must be closed-toed and have a back or strap. <p>Head Attire/Jewelry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headbands (non-distracting) must be worn on top of the head and not on the forehead. 	<p>Clothing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No spandex, tight fitting, see-through. • No leggings, pajama pants, jeggings, onesies, yoga pants, biking/compression shorts. *Leggings/bike shorts may be worn only when under a dress/skirt or shorts of appropriate length* • No clothing with alcohol, drugs or weapons references or anything profane, obscene or indicating gang or criminal association. No visible undergarments. No clothing with holes, rips, frays or tears that expose skin. <p>Shoes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No flip flops, house slippers or slides. • No shoes with wheels <p>Head Attire/Jewelry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No kerchiefs, caps, hats, sunglasses, bandanas, doo-rags, sweatbands, and combs on hair or similar items are permitted. • No spiked jewelry. • No headphones, Air Pods, earbuds • Shower caps

****State Law – Each student is prohibited from, while on school grounds during the regular school day, wearing clothing that exposes underwear or body parts in an indecent or vulgar manner or in a manner that disrupts the orderly learning environment. A student who violates this dress policy will be subject to progressive disciplinary actions as outlined by the Code of Conduct.**

Disciplinary Action/Consequences

- Verbal warning and opportunity to correct dress code
- Parent Contact
- Conference with administration AND Lunch detention
- Saturday school/In School Suspension
- Violations may result in a modified dress code determined by administration (examples include but are not limited to the requirement of wearing belts, clear backpacks, zippered jackets, etc.)

Due to rapid changes in our society, it may become necessary to modify the dress code or to include additional items at the judgement of administration.