



# FARMINGTON RIVER ELEMENTARY FAMILY NEWS

03/13/2025

**Dear Farmington River Elementary Families,**

Happy Mid-March! Today, students brought home their standards-based report cards, which provide a detailed look at their progress in meeting grade-level expectations. Our report cards use a 1-5 scale, with 1 indicating the student is making minimal progress toward the grade level standard and 5 representing the student is consistently and independently exceeding the grade level standard. This system focuses on growth and achievement rather than traditional letter grades. When reviewing your child's report card, look for areas of strength and opportunities for improvement, and use it as a guide for setting goals. If you have any questions, please reach out to your child's teacher.

We are excited to share that on Tuesday, March 18, our students will enjoy a special marionette performance of *The Dragon King*, presented by the Tanglewood Marionettes from Ware, MA. This incredible assembly is made possible by the generosity of our PTA and the many families who tirelessly fundraise to support enrichment opportunities for our students. A huge thank you also goes to Miss Jeri, our fabulous music teacher, who discovered this program and wrote the grant to make it happen!

As we approach the first day of spring, we encourage families to take advantage of the longer daylight hours to enjoy reading together. Whether it's a bedtime story, a shared chapter book, or a favorite magazine, time spent reading helps strengthen comprehension skills and fosters a lifelong love of learning. Be sure to ask your child about our March Madness program and what events, activities, and incentives their Music, Art, Computer, and PE/Health teachers are using to encourage reading and a growth mindset! Throughout the month, students are being reminded to never give up, encourage others, and always do their best. We love seeing their excitement for learning grow!

Sincerely,  
Laurie Flower, *Principal*

**“The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go.”**  
– Dr. Seuss

## UPCOMING EVENTS:

### REPORT CARDS GO HOME

THURS., MARCH 13

### 1/2 DAY OF SCHOOL

Professional Develop. for Staff

FRI., MARCH 14

### MARIONETTES ASSEMBLY

"The Dragon King"

TUES., MARCH 18

### MAHAWE FIELD TRIP

GRADES 1 & 2

WEDS., MARCH 19

### MARCH MADNESS

### CLOSING CEREMONY

TUES., APRIL 1

### WELLNESS NIGHT

FREE & OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

THURS., APRIL 3

### PUBLIC HEARING ON FY26 BUDGET

MON., MARCH 31st @ 6:00 PM



# MARCH MADNESS: A CELEBRATION OF READING AND SCHOOL SPIRIT!

At our March Madness Kick-Off Assembly, the special area teachers introduced an exciting, school-wide unit connecting the NCAA Basketball Tournament to learning and education! This year, we are focusing on the Women's Tournament and using this opportunity to promote a love for reading, teamwork, and perseverance—key themes from the NED program. Students will engage in activities such as researching colleges, designing uniforms and sneakers, and learning about basketball rules and fight songs. Reading is at the heart of the challenge, with students earning foul shots based on their Accelerated Reader (AR) points or reading logs. The top free-throw shooters and the highest-reading class will compete in fun basketball contests at our final assembly, where prizes like medals and basketballs will be awarded. We are excited for a month filled with learning, goal-setting, and friendly competition!



# EXPLORING THE UNIVERSE WITH SKYDOME PLANETARIUM

A huge thank you to our amazing PTA for funding the SkyDome Planetarium event! Students had an unforgettable experience exploring the wonders of space inside the inflatable dome, where they learned about constellations, planets, and the universe through an engaging, interactive presentation. The realistic night sky projection sparked curiosity and excitement about astronomy and space exploration. This hands-on learning opportunity truly brought science to life for our students. We appreciate the PTA's generosity in making this incredible experience possible! Their support helps create memorable and enriching educational opportunities for all our students.



**THANK YOU TO THE PTA FOR READ ACROSS AMERICA THEMED GOODIE BAGS FOR ALL FRES STUDENTS!**

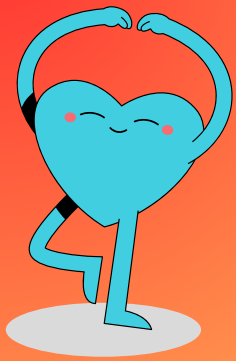


**SAVE THE DATE!**  
FARMINGTON RIVER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PRESENTS

# WELLNESS NIGHT

**APRIL 3RD, 2025  
4:30 - 6:30 PM**

DROP IN FOR SOME HEALTHY SNACKS AND TO LEARN ABOUT HEALTH, WELLNESS, YOGA, LOCAL HIKES AND MORE!



## SNOWSHOEING IN PE WITH 1ST & 2ND

During PE last week, 1st and 2nd grade took advantage of the sunshine and the remaining snow to venture out and go snowshoeing! They were able to enjoy some of the trails in the woods around the school and enjoyed the snow, sun, and beautiful back field!



**SAVE THE DATE**  
**PUBLIC HEARING ON THE FY26 BUDGET**  
**MARCH 31ST, 2025 @ 6:00 PM**

## CREATIVITY & EARLY LITERACY WITH PK

Creativity is flourishing in preschool as students explore new ways to express themselves! For Read Across America week, we spent lots of time reading and engaged in a special art project where students used forks instead of paint brushes to create unique paintings. This hands-on activity encouraged them to think outside the box and experiment with different textures of techniques.



**SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**APRIL 7TH, 2025 @ 7:00 PM**

Zoom links, agendas, and resources for both meetings can be found on our website:  
[www.frrsd.org](http://www.frrsd.org)



# BUDDY READING WITH 1ST & 4TH GRADERS

Each Friday afternoon Mrs. Martin's first grade students, as well as Ms. Mather's 4th grade students gather in the library to enjoy some Buddy Reading together. This time helps foster a sense of school community as different age groups work together and form supportive relationships. Benefits to this time together include:

**Improved Reading Skills:** 1st graders can improve their reading fluency, comprehension, and confidence by getting personalized attention from their reading buddy. Practicing with an older student can also boost their excitement about reading.

**Leadership Development:** 4th graders have the opportunity to develop leadership and mentoring skills. They also reinforce their own reading skills by explaining and assisting others.

**Emotional and Social Growth:** The program builds positive relationships between younger and older students. The younger ones look up to the older ones, while the older ones get a sense of responsibility and the joy of helping others.

**Fostering a Love for Reading:** This one-one interaction helps to make reading fun and engaging, building a love for books that will hopefully last a lifetime.

Reading Buddies is a fun and effective way to promote literacy, confidence, and peer relationships. It's a win-win for both the younger and older students and they look forward to it each week!



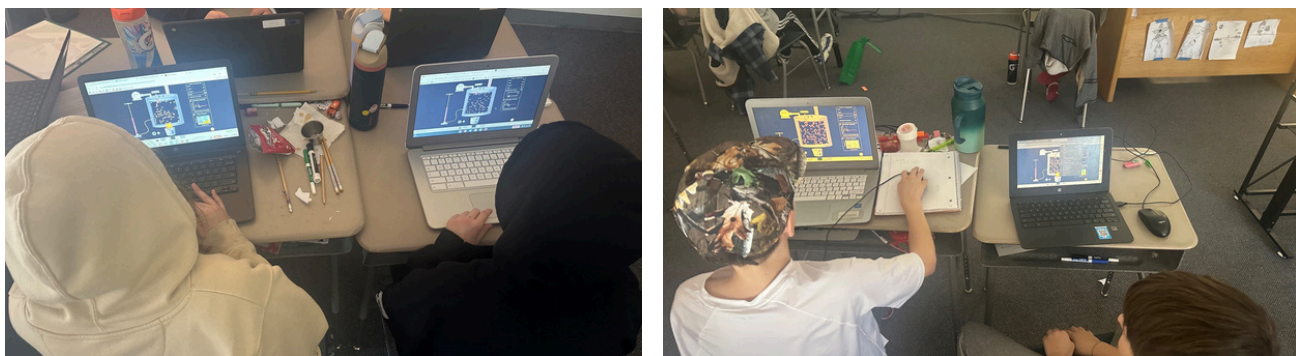
# 5TH GRADERS MASTER THE STATES OF MATTER!

Our 5th-grade scientists have been hard at work exploring the fascinating world of matter! Over the past few weeks, students have been investigating the three main states of matter—solids, liquids, and gases—and how they interact and change through processes like melting, freezing, condensation, and evaporation. Through engaging lessons, discussions, and observations, they explored the properties of different materials and how matter behaves in the world around them.

Throughout the unit, students learned how temperature and pressure affect matter and how these changes occur in everyday life. They explored examples such as water turning into steam, ice melting into liquid, and even the effects of condensation on a cold surface. The unit challenged them to think critically about the science behind these changes and how they apply to real-world situations.

To wrap up the unit in a fun and engaging way, students participated in a variety of "States of Matter" games designed to test their knowledge. They played interactive games where they had to quickly identify different states of matter and their properties. In another activity, students could manipulate the movement of molecules—moving them closer together as a solid, flowing around as a liquid, and spreading out as a gas. These games not only reinforced what they had learned but also encouraged teamwork and critical thinking.

The enthusiasm and curiosity shown by our 5th graders throughout this unit have been truly inspiring! They have gained a deeper understanding of the world around them and are now able to recognize and explain how matter is constantly changing. We are so proud of their hard work and can't wait to see what they discover next in science! Keep up the great work, young scientists!



## ACCELERATED READER AWARD WINNERS!

as of noon on 3/12/2025

### DRAGON (5 PTS):

- Lotus S. (1st)
- Clementine G. (1st)
- Ryan R. (1st)
- Isla M. (1st)
- Mila A. (2nd)
- Hazel G. (2nd)
- Mackenzie (2nd)
- Ryan B. (2nd)
- Charlie C. (3rd)
- Declan (3rd)
- Thaila F. (3rd)
- Indica S. (3rd)
- Mason T. (3rd)
- Caden D. (3rd)
- Leah F. (3rd)
- Sparrow K. (3rd)
- Ronan S. (3rd)
- Madison T. (3rd)
- Maewen W. (3rd)
- Lucas W. (3rd)
- Alyssa C. (3rd)
- Saul W. (4th)
- Griffin S. (4th)
- Jackson (5th)
- Thalia C. (5th)
- Lilianna N. (5th)
- Ava S. (5th)
- Pip C. (6th)
- Alex G. (6th)
- Satpal G. (6th)
- Olivia L. (6th)

### SPIRIT (15 PTS):

- Logan W. (1st)
- Mila A. (2nd)
- Ryan B. (2nd)
- Travis R. (4th)
- Shawn C. (5th)
- Thalia C. (5th)
- Alex G. (6th)

### HYDRA (30 PTS):

- Beatrice (3rd)
- John B. (5th)
- Ryder S. (6th)

### FIRE (75 PTS):

- Harlan (5th)

### BEAST (225 PTS):

- Tori R. (6th)

## HAPPY READING!

# READ ACROSS AMERICA WEEK

Our school had a fantastic week celebrating Read Across America from March 3-7, with fun activities that encouraged a love for reading! Each day featured a special theme, from bright colors and animal prints to comfy clothes, sports gear, and funky hats. Students participated in buddy reading, received new books, and enjoyed guest readers, including mystery and community members. The week was filled with excitement, creativity, and opportunities to explore the joy of books. Thank you to everyone who helped make this celebration a success!



# 3RD & 4TH GR. MUSIC

Third and Fourth grade students have been learning how to read notes and play the recorder and xylophone. They have been practicing "The Spiderman Theme" song while learning how to identify the notes on the treble staff. They are also getting ready for our March Madness Assembly by singing the FRRSD school song and a variety of sports songs to cheer on the basketball event in March.



## REMINDER: APPROPRIATE RECESS ATTIRE

Students will have outdoor recess if temperatures **feel like 20 degrees** or above.

Please ensure they arrive at school dressed appropriately with coats, hats, and gloves.

**Younger students (grades PK-3)** eager to explore the snow beyond the cleared blacktop will need snow boots and pants.

Boots and snow pants are recommended for students in **grades 4-6**; however, we trust our older students to make responsible choices, ensuring they stay warm and dry while enjoying their time outside.



# FARMINGTON RIVER CELEBRATES 100TH DAY OF SCHOOL!

The 100th day of school is always a fun and exciting milestone! This special day allows us to reflect on all the learning and growth that has taken place so far. From counting to 100 to exploring the concept of a century, there are endless ways to mark this occasion.

Throughout the day, students participated in a variety of engaging activities that helped bring the number 100 to life. 1st Grade participated in a variety of activities that included stringing 100 fruit loops, 100th Day Crowns, Roll to 100, Journal Writing "When I am 100," and a scavenger hunt where we found the numbers 1-100 hidden around the classroom and we filled them in on a 100's chart. Ms. Flower kicked off the day by giving students fun pencils and erasers to reward their hard work getting to the 100th day!

The 100th day is a time to reflect on the progress made so far and to look ahead at all the exciting learning yet to come. It's a day that brings our school community together and reminds everyone of the joy of learning and growing.



## SUPERINTENDENT'S CORNER:

# THE 2025-2026 BUDGET AND REVISIONS TO THE REGIONAL DISTRICT AGREEMENT

The FRRSD school committee, our school business manager and I have spent the last few months carefully estimating costs and revenues to create a sound financial plan for next year. This year's budget process has been somewhat more complex because the Regional District Agreement (RDA) is in the final stages of revision and two potential assessment scenarios needed to be prepared for our budget planning.

As many are aware, the school committee and other community members took on the work of updating the Regional Agreement about two years ago. This work was intended to update the 30-year old document. The revision was also a response to concerns related to financial sustainability expressed by the town of Sandisfield. The school committee completed its revisions in September of 2024 and in January of 2025 the document cleared the content and legal reviews required by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

The assessment impacts of the proposed RDA amendments would shift the cost split from about 60% Otis / 40% Sandisfield to about 66% Otis / 34% Sandisfield for the 2025-2026 school year (FY26). The amended RDA was approved by Sandisfield voters in a special town meeting of February 28. Otis residents will have the opportunity to vote on the amended RDA in a special town meeting on March 25.

Last week on Monday, community members from both towns attended a RDA public information session where FY26 budget impacts were reviewed in detail. To view the recording of this information session and learn more about what the RDA amendments could mean for the school district budget, please use [this link](#). If you'd like to simply review the presentation document from March 3, please click [here](#).

On Monday, March 31 at 6:00 pm, there will be a public hearing of the 2025-2026 budget following the outcome of the Otis in the library of FRES. All are invited to attend. Until that time I invite any and all questions from parents and community members about the RDA or the 2025-2026 school year budget. Please email me at [tlee@frrsd.org](mailto:tlee@frrsd.org).

Timothy Lee, Superintendent



## JOIN OUR TEAM AS A SUBSTITUTE TEACHER!

Are you looking for a rewarding opportunity to make a difference in our school community? Farmington River Elementary is seeking enthusiastic and dedicated substitute teachers to support our students and staff. Whether you're a retired teacher, a recent graduate, or someone who loves working with children, we'd love to hear from you!

Substitute teaching offers flexibility and the chance to be part of our vibrant school community. If you or someone you know is interested, please contact us at [frontoffice@frrsd.org](mailto:frontoffice@frrsd.org) for more details.

## LOCAL EVENTS

### GREAT BARRINGTON

### SOFTBALL SPRING 2025

Juniors: Grades 2/3/4/5 Seniors: Grades 6/7/8

Both divisions will play games against teams from Great Barrington, Lee, Sheffield and Canaan.

1 - 2 practices a week, 1 - 2 games a week, starting ~ April 28<sup>th</sup>  
No Games Saturday or Sunday

Please register your softball player(s) using this online jotform link.



<https://form.jotform.com/250645994674169>

Please complete and submit the JotForm for each player separately.

Registration Deadline: April 5<sup>th</sup>

Single Player: \$65.00

Family Max: \$100.00

#### CHECKS PAYABLE/MAIL TO:

Great Barrington Girls Softball  
c/o Ellyn Dupont  
355 North Plain Rd  
Housatonic, MA 01230

Coaches, Assistants and Volunteers always needed.

Sherie Ross

[sheries12@gmail.com](mailto:sheries12@gmail.com)

#### REGISTRATION QUESTIONS:

[gbyouthsoftball@gmail.com](mailto:gbyouthsoftball@gmail.com)

Ellyn Dupont

413-446-8567

VENMO: @ellyndupont

April Hoskeer

[ashoskeer@gmail.com](mailto:ashoskeer@gmail.com)

### OTIS BOOK SALE & MORE! MAY 3RD, 2025

The Friends of the Otis Library will be hosting our BOOK SALE and MORE! event at the Otis Ridge Ski Lodge on Saturday, May 3, 2025, from 9am - 3pm. All donations of gently used books, adult or children's games and puzzles, CDs and DVDs can be dropped off at the Otis Library during regular hours through the month of April (Wed & Fri 11-5, Thurs 12-6, Sat 9-1).

Please no moldy or musty books, no textbooks or encyclopedia sets, or games and puzzles with missing parts!

For questions please call the library  
413-269-0109 or email  
[FriendsOtisLibrary@gmail.com](mailto:FriendsOtisLibrary@gmail.com).

SANIDISFIELD RECREATION COMMITTEE PRESENTS:

## Hop INTO SPRING

WITH BERKSHIRE BUNNIES

- LIVE BUNNIES
- TERRARIUM MAKING
- LIGHT REFRESHMENTS

SATURDAY, APRIL 5TH | 10AM-12PM

OLD TOWN HALL

3 SILVERBROOK RD, SANDISFIELD, MA

PLEASE RSVP BY 3/22/25 TO

[SANDISFIELDEVENTS@RECREATIONCOMMITTEE.INFO](mailto:SANDISFIELDEVENTS@RECREATIONCOMMITTEE.INFO)