



# THE STEWARD SIGNAL

MARCH 2022

## WHAT'S INSIDE

Classroom news from Kindergarten to 8th grade.

Meet the teachers this month:

- Mrs. Stroh (6-8 grade teacher)
- Mrs. Odle (6-8 grade teacher)
- Mrs. Loeffelholz (art teacher)
- Mrs. Aldridge (special ed. teacher)

Upcoming Events page 9



Sam and Derek receive awards for the American Legion essay contest.

## Spring Means Assessment Season for Illinois by Superintendent Steven Simpson

Each Spring, throughout Illinois, elementary students in 3rd-8th grades engage in a series of tests known as the **Illinois Assessment of Readiness (IAR)**. In addition, students in grades 5 and 8 will take the **Illinois Science Assessment (ISA)**. These academic measures are aligned with the Illinois Learning Standards in English/ Language Arts, Math, and Science. The assessments are designed to help schools and their students' families understand how well students are performing academically and see whether they are on track to succeed in college or post-secondary vocational training. According to the Illinois State Board of Education, the tests represent Illinois' commitment to preparing all students for college and careers, including the high-demands of the 21st century workplace regarding: math and science technologies, comprehension and expression of written communication, and problem-solving.

These rigorous assessments are carefully designed to reflect classroom experiences that our students have already had in their current grade level while also sampling their abilities on some items that are slightly above their current levels.

The state tests ask students to apply their knowledge when they give answers, but sometimes ask them to provide supporting text-based evidence or explain their reasoning and methodology involved in formulating their answers. Researchers who study test design believe a variety of question and answer types are essential for predicting their level of preparedness for higher education and career success.

**Steward Elementary will begin the series of Math and ELA testing with 3rd- 8th graders on Monday, April 11th, and will conclude the Science testing of 5th and 8th grades by Friday, April 29th.** We encourage you to talk with your child(ren) about the importance of doing their best on these, while communicating that the assessments yield only one piece of information about them and their progress in school. While student attendance is a powerful predictor of student success, it is crucial that students not miss testing days if at all possible. Please, communicate directly with your child's teacher to determine if any previously scheduled appointments may interfere with state assessments in their grade and/or require make-up testing. Additionally, making certain that students get ample sleep and eat nutritious breakfasts during our testing dates will be especially helpful in allowing them to do their best.

Ultimately, classroom work, homework, projects, performance on local tests, daily attendance, and participation in sports/ extracurricular activities are ways in which students can grow and learn as they contribute to our school's climate and culture. We thank you for your role in developing lifelong learners and successful citizens.

### **Steward Elementary Kindergarten Round Up Set for April 28th**

Steward Elementary is in search of all in-district students who will be **at least five years old on or before September 1, 2022.** If you have a family member, friend, or neighbor who will be eligible for next year's kindergarten class, please help spread the word and mark this date on your calendar. Kindergarten Round Up will be a valuable in-person learning experience for prospective members of next year's kindergarten. Our 2022 Kindergarten Round-Up will be held on Thursday, April 28th, **from 1 PM - 3:05 PM.** Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be asked to drop off their child at 1 PM and allow them to join Mrs. Esposito and the current kindergarten for the remainder of the day. This will allow the children to experience some independent learning time away from their parents while familiarizing themselves with the kindergarten room and its immediate surroundings. If you have or know of a child who will be attending, please contact our office at (815) 396-2413. We are looking forward to getting to know the next group to become Steward Elementary Eagles!

## **Is your child up to date on the immunizations they need for school?**

**Don't wait until back to school time when appointments are limited. We have appointments available now. Give us a call today!**



**815-284-3371**  
**Ext. 2124**



# Art News

by Mrs. Loeffelholz



March treated us well as we created more amazing art! In **Kindergarten**, Steward's smallest friends & I read Target's *Wondershop Side by Side* (a unicorn book about realizing how good it feels to accept others.) Practicing patterns & quilling paper "hair" had Kindergarten unicorns looking fabulous!



**1st & 2nd graders** studied artist Faith Ringgold & finished paper quilts in her unique style.



Our **3rd & 4th graders** took a look at Australian Aborigine art & painted dotted style artwork that might have a story waiting for you!



Glass artist Dale Chihuly made sculptures that **6th grade** & I referenced for our coffee filter "macchia." This Italian term means "spotted" or "stained" & indicated the spotted print style on Chihuly's work.



In **5th grade**, we discovered why henna was first used in middle eastern countries (originally applied to bottoms of feet & palms of hands to keep cool in the hot sun!) 5th grade drew henna compositions & were lucky enough to have 8th grade help apply the henna plant paste to their hands!



In **7th & 8th grade**, Dadaism was introduced & we determined this art movement questions the very idea of what may qualify as "art!" Dadaists used nonsense & humor to lighten things up in a world that can feel quite heavy at times. Last, everyone in K-8 participated in our collaborative Post-It mascot mural in the hallway that proudly demonstrates teamwork! Fantastic job!



# Kindergarten News

by Mrs. Esposito



Kindergarten has tried very hard to catch that tricky leprechaun in our traps we made. Even though we found a lot of evidence that he came in the classroom, we were unsuccessful at trapping him. Who knows, maybe next year!



## Social Studies

In social studies, the students will be learning about our country and everything from science, to history, and even how inventions have evolved from the early settler years. I love how they look at me in shock when they see what was once used as transportation and how much things have changed.

Recently, we researched an animal that lives in the wild. We had to find out about what they eat, their habitat, where they live, and some interesting facts about our animals. The children loved doing the research and getting to present to the class. What a fun way to watch their love for learning come to life!

## MATH

Math we are going to work with prepositions and adjectives to compare objects with one another. Since we have already focused on those topics in language arts, we should be able to apply this same skill in math.

## Science

In science, we have so many fun things coming our way. We are starting our plant unit. On April 20th we will receive our chicken eggs that we will watch hatch. Finally we will work on the life cycle of the butterfly. All of the kindergarteners are so excited for what is to come with our science units.

**The spring is looking bright in our kindergarten classroom and we just can't wait to see what the future holds for our creativity.**

# 1st-2nd Grade News

by Mrs. Hayes



## Science

In science they are beginning a new unit about how the Earth changes through both quick and slow ways. They especially loved doing a lab showing how a landslide occurs. They also made a model of a volcano erupting out of clay and glue. Hands on learning is always a big hit.



SIGHT WORDS 101-200				
over	name	boy	such	change
new	good	follow	because	off
sound	sentence	came	turn	play
take	man	want	here	spell
only	think	show	why	air
little	say	also	ask	away
work	great	around	went	animal
know	where	form	men	house
place	help	three	read	point
years	through	small	need	page
live	much	set	land	letter
me	before	put	different	mother
back	line	end	home	answer
give	right	does	us	found
most	too	another	move	study
very	means	well	try	still
after	old	large	kind	learn
things	any	must	hand	should
our	same	big	picture	America
just	tell	even	again	world

Our students keep learning and growing as the year continues to fly by. The first and second graders just finished a two-week unit on **genres**. They learned about and read examples of biographies, fairy tales, and poetry. Both groups are really coming along nicely with their sight words. **7 out of all 1,000 sight words** already!

## MATH

The first graders just finished up a math unit about solving **word problems** involving comparisons and they just started exploring **measurement and data**.

The students always enjoy using rulers, yardsticks, metersticks, and everyday objects to measure items in the room.

## MATH

The second graders just finished their unit on measurement. They just started diving into **time and money**. The students have loved using real money and their knowledge of skip counting to figure out the amount of money in a problem. They have also really enjoyed using the play money to figure out math problems.



### Upcoming Events:

**\*Ag Day at RTHS:**  
April 22nd, 2022

**\*Brookfield Zoo Trip:**  
May 2022  
*(if there is still availability)*



### PALS: Peer Assisted Learning Strategies.

The students have been enjoying partner reading with older students.



# 3rd-4th Grade News

by Mrs. Swartz

Mrs. Swartz's class has been learning about dinosaurs. Each student picked a dinosaur to research. The students then worked with a partner to imagine what would happen in a battle between the two animals. Using what they had learned about the dinosaurs' strengths, weaknesses, and defenses the students wrote the story of the fight.



Students display the dinosaurs they researched

We then traveled to the Burpee Museum of Natural History in Rockford. We were given a guided tour of some of the museum's exhibits. We saw and held fossils from different time periods. We then got to make our own "fossils" by using shells to make an imprint in clay. Then plaster was poured over the clay. When we separated the clay and plaster, each student had a unique "fossil" they had created.

Students use shells to make depressions in the clays.



# 3rd-4th Grade News

continued



Finished fossils



We were reminded of our study of the Sauk and Meskawaki Native Americans from earlier this year.



We also got to talk with a real paleontologist who was preparing real dinosaur fossils in the Burpee Museum's Paleo Laboratory.

After lunch we had time to explore the other exhibits in the museum.



Eight Steward Eagles fit in this dug-out canoe.



# 5th Grade News

by Ms. Kalata



Our trip to the **Burpee Museum** was a blast! We learned about Illinois' aquatic, woodland, prairie, and urban habitats. Students met several turtles that are native to Illinois, and we learned about physical features that help these animals survive in their environment. Afterwards, we dissected owl pellets and were able to identify bones from various animals.



## MATH

In math students are learning about the **addition and subtraction of fractions with unlike denominators.**

We spend the first day of our lesson learning the skill, and the second day we review the concept by making corrections on homework, playing a game using the skill, and completing a worksheet that extends our thinking of the concept.



Today, students are beginning their research project for **"Genius Hour."** The idea comes from Google's 20% rule where employees are able to spend 20% of their time each week working on a project of their choice. Students will be able to explore their interests and learn how to successfully research and present information to their peers. The opportunities of this project are endless, and I encourage students to think of unique ways to present their findings. Some examples include building a website, writing a blog, creating a book, writing and acting out a skit, creating a short film or commercial, building a STEM related product, creating a podcast, etc. In addition to the presentation, students will write a short informative essay about their findings.

## SCIENCE

This week we began our science unit on **Earth's Natural Hazards.** We've learned about the shifting of tectonic plates, and students watched a documentary about the San Andreas Fault in California. Next week our class will complete a lab that will have students build a hill and simulate a landslide. We'll be able to observe the importance of having trees in our landscape because it helps to keep soil in place, thus, preventing erosion. We will also explore hurricanes, tornadoes, tsunamis, volcanoes, avalanches, and landslides in the next few weeks.



# 6th-8th Math/Science News

by Mrs. Odle

## 7th Grade Math

With our latest chapter, we began to look into **Geometry**. We've been focusing on the relationships of angles and how we can use that information to help us solve algebraic equations. We've also explored three dimensional shapes and their cross-sections. Our final lesson of this chapter applied this knowledge to scale drawings and maps.

## 8th Grade Math

We are finishing up our first chapter in **geometric transformations**. The students are learning about graphs and how they can move and change with translations, reflections, rotations, and dilations. They will complete this chapter with a two day project showing their skills and creativity by creating an image and "moving" it around their graphs.

## 6th-8th Grade Science

We have been elaborating on the genetic differences in species and where those **genetic differences** come from. Our discussions have centered around the pros and cons of mutations and variations. We've also explored how these concepts are applied in the real world of GMOs, genetic fingerprinting, and species survival throughout the world.

## 6th Grade Math

We started to dive deeper into **Algebra** concepts with this chapter. The students are learning to identify independent and dependent variables and the relationship between them. They are learning four ways to represent these relationships (real-world situations, equations, tables, and graphs) and how to translate among these representations.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

April 8: **Yearbook orders due.**

April 8: Sport Picture Day

April 12: IAR testing begins (3rd-8th)

April 13: **Chess Tournament** at Eswood

April 15: Good Friday (no school)

April 20: School Board Meeting 6:15

April 22: Progress Reports go out

April 25: ISA testing begins (5th-8th)

April 28: **Kindergarten Round Up**  
1:00-3:05

May 5: **Track Meet** at RTHS

May 17: **Spring Concert** 6:30pm

May 19: **Graduation** 6:30pm

May 20: Last Day of School

# 6th-8th L.A./S.S. News



## READING

In reading we have continued our **short story unit** this month. We have spent a lot of time on the essential question of: **Does Every Conflict Have a Winner?** The discussion surrounding that question has been interesting as we try to connect it to the stories we are currently reading. Students have enjoyed reading **"The Third Wish"** by Joan Aikens and **"Zoo"** by Edward Hoch. We also spent time comparing idioms in stories and the effect it has on the reader. Students wrote a short compare and contrast essay on idioms. We are also working on reading through our class novel **"Tuck Everlasting"** by Natalie Babbitt every Monday and Friday.

by Mrs. Stroh

## LANGUAGE ARTS

In language arts, students have been working hard on **free writing** for an extended period of time. We finished our last round of **speeches** in class, with many students opting to join the speech team at school. In our grammar portion of class, students are working on identifying and using adjectives, adverbs, and pronouns. We are looking forward to using IXL this quarter to individualize writing and grammar. This last quarter holds a lot more in depth writing projects that students are looking forward to.

## Social Studies

**8th grade social studies** has wrapped up their chapters on the **Great Depression and World War II**. Students completed WPA murals and spent time researching one aspect of the New Deal. Students also engaged in a great discussion of World War II, the Holocaust, and the legacy of the war. 8th graders also got the opportunity to participate in the Kishwaukee Education Consortium career fair. They were able to use technology and listen to the many programs that KEC offers. Students loved learning about the firefighter, EMT, culinary, and criminal justice classes.

## Social Studies

For **6th and 7th grade social studies**, students have completed their **memorization of countries in Europe**. We have worked our way through the **Byzantine Empire** to the formation of the **Ottoman Empire**. We will be moving on to the development of Asian countries during the Medieval Ages.



# Student Council

by Mrs. Odle



Shortly after the last edition, our student council put on their **Escape From Steward Prison Escape Room**. The escape room consisted of 3 age brackets with three puzzles to be solved and was themed after the great escape from Alcatraz. All the students had a blast as they worked together to solve their puzzles and move from room to room. Everyone got to enjoy their "freedom" with a little extra recess time at the end of the day.



Finally, the student council is gearing up for **two community service projects** for the spring semester. They are working diligently to get things planned and can't wait to share what Steward students will be doing to help their community in the coming months. The pictures below are a clue as to what they are planning.

As we prepared to take a break from school for a week, we kicked off Spring Break with an **ice cream social** Friday afternoon. K-4 ate their ice cream in the cafeteria and 5-8 had their ice cream delivered to them in their rooms.



# Meet the teacher Mrs. Stroh



My name is Calla Stroh and I currently teach 6th through 8th grade in reading, language arts, and social studies. In other years, I have taught both 4th and 5th graders. I attended **Northern Illinois University** for both my undergraduate and graduate degree. I did a round of student teaching at Steward Elementary and seemed to just never leave. I have been involved at Steward in some fashion or another for about **15 years** now.



I live in **Steward** with my husband, Dennis, and my pack of dogs. In my spare time, I enjoy working with **dogs** at an animal shelter and assisting in the training of those dogs. I have spent countless hours with my own dogs accomplishing basic obedience training and nose work training for human scent and deer sheds.



I am an avid lover of **escape rooms** and have mastered many of them with a group of friends.

I enjoy going home to visit my parents and two sisters in Lake Villa, IL where I grew up. Last year, we welcomed my first niece into the family. I cannot tell you what a joy it is to be an aunt. I love being able to play with Shay, show her dogs at the shelter through face time, and reading all the books I loved when I was little. When I am at home with my family, we enjoy watching Blackhawks games, having bonfires together, or going to one of the many forest preserves in Lake County to go for a hike.

## What I would do if I wasn't a teacher:

- 1) **K9 specialist in the military.** I've gotten into dog training and behavior and have recently thought that a K9 specialist would have been a fascinating career path.
- 2) **Archeologist.** Ever since high school, I have loved Indiana Jones. I would have loved to be out with a crew discovering new facts about ancient history.
- 3) **Astronaut.** In middle school, I had a class on astronomy, and that started my love for space. I even have my own astronaut Lego figurine with my name on it. I've often thought about wanting to be the first person to step foot on **Mars**.





# Meet the teacher Mrs. Odle



Mrs. Odle was born and raised in **Paw Paw, IL**. She has lived her entire life on the family homestead. After graduating high school, she attended **NIU** where she graduated with a BS in Education. After finishing her education at NIU, she married Mr. Odle before starting her teaching career. She taught her first year in Yorkville, Illinois.



Mrs. Odle took 10+ years off to raise her kids, Lucas and Bethany. During that time, she also enjoyed coaching volleyball for 16+ years at Paw Paw Schools as well as coaching softball and basketball at various times throughout her kids' younger years.



In her spare time she enjoys riding their three horses:

**Little Bit**  
**Whiskey**

**Alibi**

and playing with their four dogs:

**Ruby**

**Rebel**

**Daisy**

**Daphne**



As her kids move on to high school, Mrs. Odle is looking forward to watching them play their favorite sports from the stands.





# Meet the teacher Mrs. Aldridge

My name is Deanne. I was born in Oklahoma. My family moved to Utah when I was 5 years old. I lived in three different cities in Utah the remainder of my childhood. From the end of 3rd grade until after I graduated high school we lived in Layton (a city about about 30 minutes north of Salt Lake City). The thing I miss the most about Utah are the mountains! 

When I was **16** I worked at a local amusement park as a rides operator in the kiddie area. When I was **18** my family moved to a little town on the Utah/Nevada border. At **19** I joined the Navy. (Not to date myself, but I went into boot camp 1 week after 9/11). I spent 5 years as a Corpsman (medical) for the Marines. My first duty station was Okinawa Japan, where I met the man I call my husband, Larry. He was a Marine, and Okinawa was also his first duty station. We married while we were both in the service. We have now been **married for 18 years**. When his contact was over (1 year before mine), he decided to move to Fort Lauderdale, Florida to be with his brother. 

During my time serving our country, I did two deployments to Iraq, as well as being stationed in Japan, California, and North Carolina. As much as I loved serving in the Navy, I knew I wanted to be a mom and raise my children without the chance of being away from them for months at a time. So I decided to get out.

I joined Larry in Fort Lauderdale. I got a job in data entry for a hospital district. At this time, I hadn't quite decided what I wanted to be when I grew up. My husband and his brother had always talked about opening a business, so I decided to pursue a bachelor's degree in Business Administration in order to help them with the business. I figured by the time I finished that degree, I would know what I wanted to do.

During this time we began our family. My first child, who was **a girl**, was born in Dec. 2007. While I was pregnant, Larry was recalled back to the Marines. He was stationed in North Carolina. In February my daughter and I joined Larry in North Carolina. A few months later he got out of the Military, and we decided to move near his parents in a little town named Ashton in Illinois. We bought a house and have been there ever since. Meanwhile, we had our second child who was **a boy**. We decided that having one of each completed our idea of a perfect family.

# Mrs. Aldridge cont...

In addition to our children, we currently have **2 dogs** and **3 cats**. We also have started fostering pets for Tails animal shelter and have **fostered 2 dogs** so far.

From the time I had my daughter until my son was 6 months old I was able to enjoy being a stay-at-home mom. When the time came that I needed to go back to work, I had a neighbor tell me about where she worked. She worked in a group home with adults with disabilities. This sounded like a perfect job for me, so I applied and got the job. After a year I found out about a similar company that was closer to my house, so I applied and got a job there. I spent 10 years working for that company.

During that time I was approached about becoming an **EMT** for my local fire department. I loved the emergency medical part of being a Corpsman. So I applied to be on our volunteer fire department. Shortly after joining I went to school for 4 months to receive my EMT license.

I had always planned on going back to school. After I realized that my family and I survived me getting my EMT license, I decided it was time to get the degree I wanted. After much pondering and research, I decided to pursue my masters in Special Education from **Liberty University** online. While pursuing my degree I decided it would be useful to work in a school. I applied for a paraprofessional position through **Mary Morgan Elementary School** in Byron. I worked there until I started student teaching in the very same classroom.

I have always loved being an active part of my community. In addition to being an EMT and part of the volunteer fire department, I've also been a **cub scout leader, girl scout leader**, part of the **PTC for my kids' school**, a **baseball coach**, and a **soccer coach**. I love being an active part of my kids' lives.

One of our favorite things to do as a family is **play games**. We play games as much as we can. Something that we started a few years ago is whoever won the last game played would get to pick the next game. It has been a fun way of figuring out which game to play.

We also enjoy **traveling** together. Over the past few years we have started taking family vacations. One goal we have is to be able to **visit all 50 states**. We have 26 states down and are planning to add another 7 this summer!

**I have very much enjoyed my first year of teaching at Steward Elementary. It has been amazing to work with the students and make connections over this past year.**



# Meet the teacher Mrs. Loeffelholz

Did you know that although this is Mrs. L.'s first year at Steward School, it's her **17th year** of teaching art?! It's true!

She earned her degree in Art Education at **NIU** in Dekalb.

Although art is her first love, Mrs. L. also enjoys practicing **yoga** and **meditation** in her free time.

She even implements **"one minute of calm"** at the beginning of each art class in order to give students (and herself) the opportunity to relax and take a breather before getting down to business.

## Fun facts about Mrs. Loeffelholz:

- a) her **first job** was at a small video store (do kids know VHS any more? Haha!)
- b) her **favorite subjects** in school were **English** and **Art!**
- c) best advice she's heard: **"Look for the good in everyone. It's there."**
- d) her hidden talent is she can **whistle** a sound like a spaceship landing!
- e) Mrs. L.'s **best friend** is her 13-year old rescue pup, **Elmer**



Mrs. L. recently celebrated **26 years** with her high school sweetheart! She grew up in East Dubuque, IL, but now lives just 25 minutes north of Steward.

She and Mr. L. enjoy raising **two teen daughters** that constantly keep them in stitches with hilarious antics!

**She appreciates the warm welcome from Steward!**

