

The KURTZ CONNECTOR

May/June 2023

Building Hours:

9:10 1st Bell (students may enter) / 9:15 2nd Bell (school starts) / 4:07 Dismissal

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|---|-----------------|
| PTA meeting in the cafeteria @ 9:30 | 5/10 |
| 5th graders visit the middle schools. Parent Info Night @ the middle schools @ 6:00 | 5/11 |
| Memorial Day - No school | 5/29 |
| 5th grade celebration | 6/2 |
| 5th grade camp Rain Date 6/13 | 6/6 & 6/7 |
| Field Day | 6/9 |
| Last day of school | 6/14 |

Parents Rock!

The Kurtz community ALWAYS makes the staff feel loved and appreciated throughout the school year. This year Staff Appreciation Week did not disappoint. Each day, staff members received gifts, meals, well wishes and even art work from our amazing students. We felt like rock stars as we came in and enjoyed the door art in every room. Seeing the smiles on each member of our team just made the experience even more rewarding and impactful.

Thank you to everyone that participated and to our incredible PTA team for organizing the work and for making it happen. Although we know the time and work that goes into things like this, you make it all look so easy!



From the Principal's Desk...

What a year this has been! On behalf of the entire professional community at Kurtz Elementary School, I would like to say thank you to everyone for making this year such an amazing experience for our students. As your building principal, I do not take lightly the responsibilities that you trust our team with every single day. We strive to meet and exceed your expectations in our endeavors to support our young minds in every capacity. Your partnerships help us to ensure our successes. We just couldn't do the things we need to do without your understanding and support.

As we close on this school year, we hope you all feel similarly and are able to go into the summer months with a sincere appreciation of your Kurtz Experience in the 2022-2023 school year. We look forward to all of the end of the year fun, in the weeks of the school year that are left.



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Kurtz Elementary School

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Kurtz Elementary



Students in the Spotlight for May

Congratulations to Evan Hada and Alexa Lara Lule for being recognized as our Students in the Spotlight this month.

Evan is a second grade student in Mr. Jennings' class. He is a leader in school. Evan is a focused student who follows rules and expectations and works hard in the classroom. He goes out of his way to make sure everyone is included in activities, both in the classroom and on the playground.

Alexa is in Ms. Vezina's fourth grade class and is also viewed as a leader and role model among her fourth grade peers. Alexa goes above and beyond

and always produces quality work. She is a great friend to all of her classmates.

Both students exemplify the type of leadership attributes our staff and students recognize as meaningful and effective.

We celebrate our Students in the Spotlight each month because they make a difference at school and in our great community.



Students in the Spotlight for June

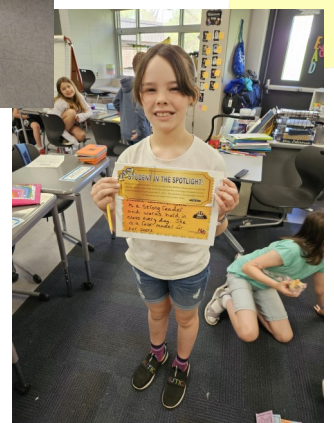
Congratulations to Kassie Belen and Vivian Delonge for being recognized as our Students in the Spotlight this month.

Kassie is a first grade student in Mrs. Zimmerman's class. She is a kind and caring student. She does a great job following rules and directions and is a great listener. Kassie always puts in all the effort needed to learn and to be a role model to her peers.

Vivian is a third grader in Mrs.

Peterman's class. She is a responsible and mature learner. She is a strong reader and works hard at her studies in class every day. She is also a role model to all of her peers.

Both students exemplify the type of leadership attributes our staff and students recognize as meaningful and effective.



English Language Learners are a Focus at Kurtz

During the 22-23 school year, first grade teacher, Kalie Zimmerman, and EL teacher, Alyssa Hathaway, participated in the Oakland Schools Leading for ELs (English Learners) Professional Learning Series. They participated in collaborative learning about the impact that co-planning, co-teaching, and co-assessing can have on the success of multilingual learners.

An Oakland Schools partner, Christy Osborne, visited to observe this culminating lesson focused on letter/sound blends and academic language in a

structured literacy block. All students actively engaged in whole group instruction. English learners were then supported in a small group, with additional explicit descriptions of vocabulary words and practice with letter sounds, with the EL teacher.

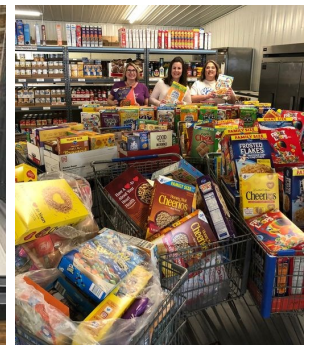
Cheers to an exemplary display of intentional collaborative teaching, coupled with push-in EL support to ensure these first graders can all be successful with grade level content and goals!



Kurtz Families are Community Minded

Breakfast with a Buddy, The Cereal Box Challenge, The Penny War, McDonald's Night and Hungry Howie's Night are just a few ways the Kurtz community has been brought together either socially or to support PTA programming and community members this spring.

The commitment of our stakeholders has been incredible. Our students have had opportunities to support causes locally and even nationwide, with the Healthy Heart Challenge. Our students benefit significantly when they understand that their family makes a difference in the world around them.



End of the Day Pick-Ups

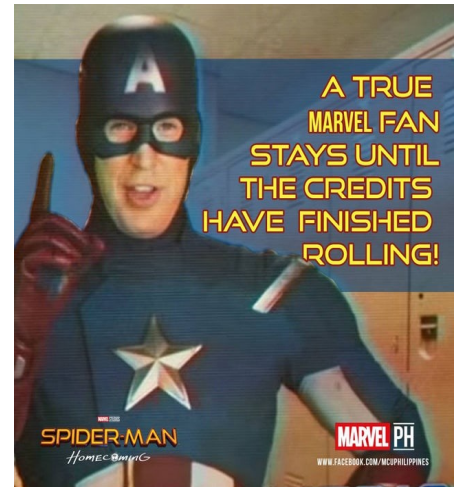
The weather has finally started to clear up and sunny days are here for families to enjoy together. Springtime also brings added activities and appointments. Your Kurtz team works hard every day to ensure that teaching/learning time is maximized.

Parents, please remember that classroom instruction takes place until 4:10. When students are picked up early, everything going on in the classroom stops. Attention is shifted from teaching and learning to the child that is being picked up. In the lower grades, teachers

often have to help children pack up their belongings. In the upper grades, the attention is often awkward for the child being pulled. Although more independent, our students still often require support and/or attention packing up and or/taking work home.

We all understand that early pulls are sometimes unavoidable, but we are asking, for many reasons, that parents do their best to avoid early pick-ups, whenever possible. It is also important to note that an early pick-up designation is put into Skyward similar to a “tardy” designation

that would be entered if a child comes in late for school.



Checking in at End of the Year Events

We are reminding parents and visitors to Kurtz that entry to the building must be made at the office door. All visitors must show ID and sign in to have access to the building. It is very easy to forget this when you are visiting for outdoor events, but please remember to support this safe and secure protocol when you are visiting, especially when you are on site for outdoor events.

It is easy to forget when you are visiting for an outdoor activity and try to follow your child back into the building, but visi-

tors without a visitor badge will be escorted back to the office to check in. Following this protocol will help the Kurtz staff to ensure that all visitors have been appropriately vetted and are supposed to be on site. Thank you in advance for working with the Kurtz team to ensure the safety and security of our staff and students.



Summer is Coming...

With the summer months just around the corner, there are a few things the staff at Kurtz would love for parents to think about in order to increase the success students will experience in the 2023-24 school year. First and foremost, maintaining routines over the summer can help young learners when they reintegrate in the new school year. When things are more predictable and familiar, students often struggle less and transition into their new classes more smoothly.

We strongly suggest making sure students are spending time weekly, if not daily, reading. Parents are encouraged to make the local library a regular stop on the summer schedule. Students who are spending (at least) twenty minutes a day are going to be better prepared to tackle all subjects in the fall. It should also be noted that there are significant gains that are made when students participate in this expectation over their entire academic career. Parents are encouraged to also engage with their young readers by asking big picture questions to kids like who are the characters, what is the setting, what is the plot, etc. These great literacy components will help students to grow as readers and as thinkers. It also provides parents with opportunities to show their own interests and engagement in literacy.

Limiting the technology will have so many positive benefits for both the child and for the family

dynamic. In this day and age, elementary-aged students are exhibiting tendencies that are very similar to textbook addiction. Our team members are noticing increases in anxiety and frustration in the classroom setting, as well as in social interactions. Conversely, overusing technology also has a very negative impact on the stamina students are developing in the classroom setting. Our team recommends limiting technology and closely monitoring devices when students are engaged with them.

Furthermore, we are noticing increases in students with cell phones and/or smart watches that give parents unlimited and immediate access to students while they are at school. We are concerned about students who become overly engaged with their devices as they are always (intentionally or not) waiting for the next notification and opportunity to connect with their parent when they are not at home.

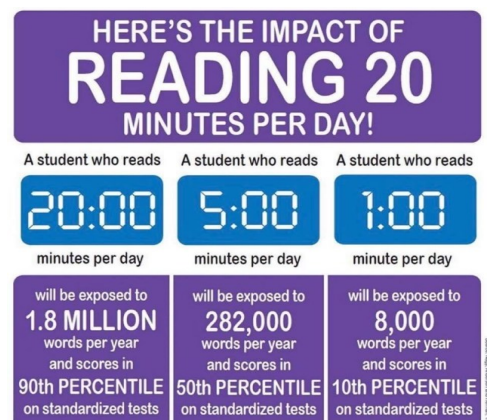
Also, we suggest ending device use approximately two hours before bedtime as there is a great deal of brain research that references the impact that blue light and over-stimulation has on the sleep patterns of school-aged kids.

Lastly, we recommend parents look into incorporating Summer Bridge Activities workbooks to keep students on track over the summer. The workbooks are

offered by grade level and contain great review materials of the content they just learned during the school year. They also provide a bridge between the grade just completed and the new grade starting in the coming school year. These workbooks can be found online at sites like Amazon.

Summer Bridge Activities workbooks have quick and easy assignments that are connected to curriculum standards. This tool is a great resource to help children battle “summer slide” and maintain the learning growth they have worked so hard to build during the school year. As mentioned, routines are very important to maintain over the summer. These activities are short and are great to use as the work that needs to be completed, in order to earn time on technology or high interest rewards.

As parents ourselves, these ideas are things we highly suggest as we see the positive outcomes with our students and even with some of our own children.



PTA Corner

We can hardly believe that there are only 6 weeks left of school! We are in the home stretch and are so proud of all that our students, teachers, and families have accomplished this year. It has been a challenging year, but we have come together as a community to support one another and ensure that our students receive the best education possible.

We would like to take a moment to express our gratitude to all of the volunteers who have helped make this school year a success. Thank you to all of the parents, grandparents, and community members who have generously given their time and energy to help. Whether you have helped with fundraising events, signed up to setup/cleanup, or volunteered in the classroom, your contributions have made a difference for students.

Finally, we also want to give a special shout out to our PTA President, Michelle Lauzon. This is her final year at Kurtz, and we are grateful for her hard work and dedication to our community. Michelle has been a driving force behind

many of the programs and events that have made Kurtz Elementary such a special place. Her leadership and guidance will be sorely missed, but we wish her all the best in her future endeavors.

As we bid farewell to some families who will be moving on to middle school, we also look forward to welcoming new faces to our PTA board. To all our parents, we encourage you to continue supporting our school community, volunteering your time and skills, and becoming active participants in the PTA. Your contributions will make a significant difference to our students, teachers, and staff.

We encourage all Kurtz families to stay connected with us through our website and social media pages. We will continue to update you on important events and announcements throughout the rest of the school year and into the summer.

Thank you again for your support and dedication to our Cougar community. We look forward to finishing the year strong and celebrating all that we have accomplished together.

Upcoming Events:

May 1-5 Teacher Appreciation

Week

May 2 No School

May 10 General Membership PTA meeting – 9:30 AM (last meeting of the year) – new board election

June 2 - Fifth grade celebration

June 14 LAST DAY OF SCHOOL

All are welcome to join the LAST Kurtz PTA General Membership meeting in the cafeteria **May 10, 2023 at 9:30 AM.**

Please watch social media for the agenda and info you do not want to miss!

Kurtz Spirit Wear available year-round at 1st Place Spirit Wear

<https://1stplacespiritwear.com/>

2022/23 Kurtz PTA Board:

Michelle Lauzon- PTA President

Jenny MacDonell- Vice-President

Jodie Courtney- Treasurer

Kristin Rolfe-Communications Secretary

Amy Gritzinger- Recording Secretary

Follow us on social media

Facebook: Kurtz Elementary PTA

Instagram: Kurtz Elementary PTA

Email:KurtzElementaryPTA@gmail



Pick Up and Drop Off

We are very proud of the pick-up and drop-off processes we have in place at Kurtz. We work hard to make this daily routine safe and effective. There are Kurtz staff members assigned to ensuring our systems work effectively, while still making sure to use the time to connect with students and provide support when and if support is needed. We assure you that our system works and is most effective when visitors follow our plan. We are always focused on getting you in and out of the parking lot as quickly as possible. Visitors can help us make pick-up and drop-off times flow best by not parking on the curb during pick-up and drop-off times.

- Mind the 15 MPH speed limit on Kurtz Drive.
- Vehicles should be pulling all the way up and quickly getting child(ren) in and out of the car. Please do not get out and help children in or out of the vehicle.

- Utilize pick-up and drop-off Kurtz staff or park if your child requires extra support.
- Visitors should never pass in the left lane of the loop because it is not safe for our students and could (and has) resulted in damage to vehicles, adding unnecessary stress on individuals. We feel strongly that passing really only has the potential to save a few seconds on your commute and strongly expect you not to do it.



- If you are planning to park, please park in a designate parking space. Kurtz staff members park in the back of the lot in order to make it as easy as possible for parents to find a parking space in our small parking lot. Al-

so, students should never be walking through the parking lot without an adult. Parents, please observe the posted speed limit sign on Kurtz Drive.

- We ask parents to respect our neighbors and never block driveways when you are picking up or dropping off. We have also been contacted by our neighbors at the Document Store to ask parents not to use their parking lot as a pick-up space.

Parents are not to escort their child(ren) to their classrooms for various health and safety reasons. Teachers meet their students outside each morning to start the day in a positive and personal manner. Your participation in this process is both expected and appreciated. Please feel free to share ideas and suggestions in writing with me, Mr. Chisik, at your earliest conven-

Welcoming + Empowering + Achieving = GREATNESS!