Robert E. Willis Elementary Newsletter

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October 2026

Message from Mrs. Jadid

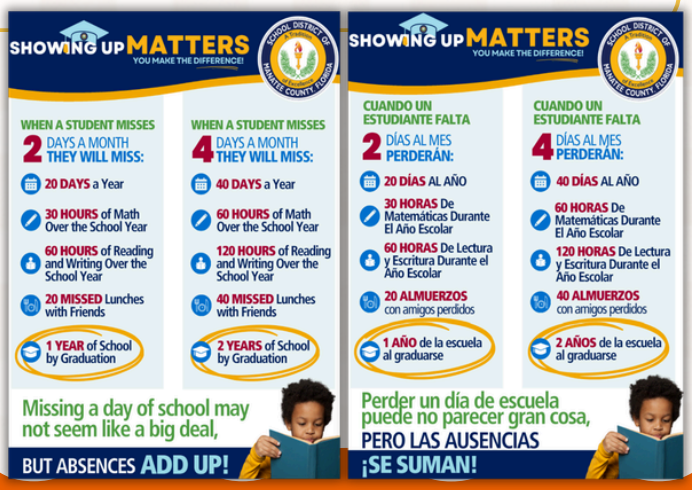
September has been a wonderful month at Willis Elementary, filled with learning, growth, and memorable experiences for our students. From the excitement of our Literacy Escape Room and Book Fair to seeing our students demonstrate focus and perseverance as we finish FAST Testing, there has been so much to celebrate. I continue to be incredibly proud of the hard work, positive attitudes, and enthusiasm our students bring to school each day.

I would also like to extend a heartfelt thank you to our amazing volunteers. Your generosity, time, and support help make these special experiences possible and contribute so much to the welcoming community we cherish at Willis.

To our families, thank you for your continued partnership and for entrusting us with your children each day. Together, we are creating a school community where every child feels supported, challenged, celebrated, and inspired to succeed. I am grateful to be part of the Willis family and look forward to all the wonderful opportunities October will bring!

Counselors' Corner

Grit is September's Resiliency Trait. Grit is working consistently towards long-term goals. Will there be times you want to quit? Will there be challenges or obstacles in reaching your goals? Might you have to change what you are doing to reach your goals? Yes, to all of the above. However, you don't quit. That is Grit. We encourage you, parents, to take some time to talk with your child about how you have shown grit and the challenges you had to overcome to reach a goal.



Campus Highlights



Our 5th grade students helped put up decorations for the new Gecko Grove parent lunch area. #beststudentsever

Upcoming Events

Sept. 29– PTO meeting 9am,
SAC meeting 5pm
Oct. 2– Early Release @ 1pm
Oct. 9– End of Quarter 1
Oct 12– Record Day– no school for students
Oct. 15– Conference Night 4–6pm
Oct. 16– All Pro Dads 7:20 am
Oct 19– First Responders Luncheon
Oct. 23– Quarter 1 Gecko Awards, Dress Down Day
Oct. 28– PLW Early Release @ 1:50pm
Oct. 30– Costume Parade
Nov. 5– Fall Pictures–retakes
Nov. 6– Veterans Breakfast
Nov. 11– Veterans Day– Schools closed
Nov. 13– Fun Run
Nov. 23–27– Thanksgiving Break

Classroom News





Pre-K

Our Pre-K students are diving into an exciting study of sea turtles! We are building early literacy skills through our daily Heggerty phonemic-awareness lessons and practicing letter names and sounds. We are also learning positional words and exploring the magic of color mixing. We can't wait for our field trip to Mote Aquarium, where we'll bring our ocean learning to life!

Kindergarten

Kindergarten has been busy this first quarter settling into our academic schedules and learning school routines. Our little Kindergarteners are working hard to learn all their letters, sounds, 2D shapes, and counting to 100! We've studied the plant life cycle (including the apple life cycle) and what all living things need. September also included Teddy Bear Day, complete with "Beary Fun" reading and writing activities. Students brought in their own stuffed animals to share in the fun activities and concluded with a Teddy Bear Picnic!





Classroom News

1st Grade

What a wonderful start to our school year! September has been a busy month filled with learning and growing. Our first graders have been working hard, and we are so proud of the progress they are already making! We have officially completed our PM1 assessments, and our students worked hard to show what they know! We will continue using this information to celebrate their strengths and support their individual learning goals throughout the year.

In Reading, we have been diving into story elements and characters. Students are learning to identify important parts of a story, think about characters, and use details from the text to explain their thinking. In Math, we have been developing fluency with addition and subtraction. Students are exploring different strategies and ways to solve problems while building confidence and accuracy with their math facts. Every day brings new opportunities to learn something, try something new, and grow a little bit more. We are so proud of the effort and curiosity we see in our first graders! Thank you for partnering with us and supporting your child as we begin this exciting first-grade journey. We have so much more learning, growing, and fun ahead!





Classroom News

2nd Grade





September was a fun month in ELA, as second graders learned about habitats around the world. Students are learning to identify the central idea and relevant details, as well as how to determine meanings of unknown words by using context clues.

One of the ways 2nd graders are building foundational reading and literacy skills is through Lexia. The photograph shows students in Ms. Senyshyn's class who received a certificate in Lexia for moving up to the next level!

Our writing was tied directly to our ELA study of habitats. Students wrote an expository essay on a habitat of their choice and also completed an animal research project. The photograph taken in the Willis foyer is Ms. Hesdra's class with their animal research projects.

In math, we completed a unit on working with equal groups, setting the foundations for multiplication.

3rd Grade

September has been a busy and exciting month in third grade! In ELA, students are building strong reading and writing habits while learning how to understand texts, identify story elements, summarize key details, and support their thinking with evidence from what they read.

In Math, we are strengthening our number sense and problem-solving skills. Students are also practicing their math facts daily to build fluency and confidence with addition, subtraction, and multiplication concepts.

In Social Studies, we are wrapping up our map skills unit, where students have been exploring continents, oceans, cardinal directions, map keys, and other important features that help us understand the world around us.

In Science, students have enjoyed participating in fun, hands-on experiments that encourage questioning, observing, and thinking like scientists. These activities help bring scientific concepts to life while fostering curiosity and excitement for learning.

Thank you for your continued support! Please remember to check student folders and ClassDojo regularly for important updates and classroom news. We look forward to another month of learning, growing, and discovering together!

Classroom News

4th Grade

Fourth grade has had a busy month! We completed our first round of FAST testing for Math and ELA. We also started the first project for our Mote Marine partnership. Students learned and wrote about fisheries.
In ELA, we have been enjoying reading dramas including Peter Pan and The Wizard of Oz. We also are reading the novel, Because of Winn-Dixie. We will finish the quarter by watching the movie and comparing it to the book. In Math, we have been studying multiplication. Keep practicing those facts! In Science we finished our unit on Earth in Space. Next, we will study rocks and minerals.







5th Grade

Fifth graders have been hard at work, learning about all four operations with decimals and fractions! In the photos, you can see our students "traveling" to countries around the world to solve decimal problems and collect stamps in their passports! Here are some activities you can try at the store: have your child keep a running estimate of what you put in your cart and give you the total at the register! Another is to compare two products and see which one is cheaper per item (for example, a 36 pack of soda for $18 vs. a 24 pack for $10).

In ELA, students are learning about how characterization contributes to plot! Ask your child to name a character trait that they would use to describe a character in the book that they are reading and how that has influenced the plot of the story! In Social Studies, students are learning how to think like a historian and investigate primary and secondary sources. In science, students have been learning about space, particularly galaxies, solar systems, and each of the eight planets. Are you smarter than a fifth grader? Which planet is known as the "windy planet"? Which is the hottest planet in the solar system? Ask your child for the answers!