



**Mrs. Ness' Notes**  
**March 10, 2026**

**Enrollment:** 624 students +23 Shared Time students  
VPK-38, K-82, 1st-113, 2nd-92, 3<sup>rd</sup>-110, 4<sup>th</sup>-92, 5<sup>th</sup>-97

**No School:** March 20<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup> is Spring Break. There will be no school for students or staff.

**2026-27 Budget:** Please see attachment for information about the 2026-27 school budget.

**VOLUNTEERS**--We have 366 active volunteers as of the beginning of March, and they have logged 3,315 hours so far this school year--that's an incredible number! Over the next couple of weeks, we'll have volunteers wrapping up the Winter Book Fair, popping popcorn for classrooms, laminating for teachers, leading a Newspaper Club for our 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders, visiting classrooms to help with reading groups, and so much more. We thank you for giving your time to our school. You help make Elm Creek even more amazing every day!

**Seussical Kids Musical:** Stages Theatre is offering a community education after school opportunity for Elm Creek Elementary students. Students enrolled in this class will be performing *Seussical Kids Musical* on **Friday, March 13<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m.** and **Saturday, March 14<sup>th</sup> at 2 p.m.**, at Maple Grove Middle School. Admission is FREE and the show is about 1 hour long.

**Student Council** -Student Council collected pop tabs for Ronald McDonald house the month of February. Members will make their final round through the classrooms to gather and weigh what they collected.

**Spirit Day:** March 19 is Crazy Sock Day and Hair Day to support World Down Syndrome Day (March 21st)

We will be collecting stuffed animals again for Chloe Bear and partnering with Kidstop and their art supply drive April 6<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup>.

**Girls on the Run for grades 3-5**-Erica Schmidt, Kindergarten teacher at Elm Creek, is coaching again this year. Check out the flyer that came out through email last Thursday for more information.

**Coffee with the Principal:** I like to connect with families in several ways to gather feedback and be available to answer questions. One way is through *Coffee with the principal*. The next coffee with the principal will be Friday, March 13th from 10:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m. in the Elm Creek Media Center.

**Kindergarten News:** Kindergarten is currently exploring the idea that March weather comes in like a lion and out like a lamb. We are crossing our fingers for lots of lamb weather. We are working hard to put all of our foundational reading skills together and are becoming more confident readers. We will be wrapping up our reading unit about Kings and Queens with a royal tea party!

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## **Recess Protocol-**

Osseo Area Schools continue to prioritize the health, safety, and well-being of every student in our care; therefore, there will be a unified, district-wide protocol for indoor recess. These guidelines have been developed with careful consideration and are based on recommendations from the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) and the Minnesota Youth Athletic Services and reviewing the Minnesota State High School League – [Board Policy for Weather Conditions and Competition or Practice](#). Our goal is to ensure a consistent and safe approach across all elementary schools, recognizing that the decision to hold recess indoors is a crucial aspect of student safety.

### **1. Air Quality**

When the Air Quality Index (AQI) reaches 201 or higher (coded as "Purple" or "Very Unhealthy"), all elementary students must have recess indoors. This guideline is based on the MDH's "[Minnesota Outdoor Air Quality Guidance for Schools and Child Care](#)," which highlights the increased health risks for everyone at this level of air pollution. EPA has a helpful app that can help track the air quality, EPA AIRNow

### **2. Cold Weather**

When the wind chill or "feels like" temperature is -5°F (negative five degrees Fahrenheit) or below, students will have recess indoors. This measure is to protect students from the risks of frostbite and other cold-related health concerns. We continue to encourage families to ensure their children come to school with appropriate winter clothing. **Since we are almost through the winter cold, we will continue to follow our current procedure of below zero for indoor recess. We will implement the -5-degree policy next school year.**

### **3. Hot Weather**

When the heat index reaches 104° or above, students will have recess indoors. This protocol is in line with the Minnesota Youth Athletic Services [Heat Index Guidelines](#) recommendations to prevent heat-related illnesses during periods of extreme heat. Heat stress poses significant dangers to children, who are more susceptible to heat-related illnesses. Additional resources can be found on the MDH [Extreme Heat website](#).

**Birthday Lunches:** One day towards the end of each month, a table is decorated in the lunchroom. Students who have their birthday during that month can have lunch with the principal and will get ice cream. Our February birthday table is on Thursday, March 19<sup>th</sup>.

**PBIS & Outstanding Eagles:** Remember to check out our Outstanding Eagle student photos in Osseo-Maple Grove Press each week. As part of Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS), we also recognize classrooms that keep their room neat and tidy with a golden vacuum-one classroom per week.

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**Eastman Nature Center:** Eastman Nature Center field trips are scheduled for all K-5<sup>th</sup> graders. We applied for a transportation scholarship through Three Rivers Parks last spring and all of our transportation costs for these field trips will be covered. Families will need to help cover the \$6/student Eastman fee. We value our partnership with Eastman Nature Center, which allows each grade level to spend time outside learning. If you haven't been to Eastman Nature Center as a family, I encourage you to visit. 😊

Eastman Field Trip dates are:

**3<sup>rd</sup> Grade – Adaptations (10:00-12:00pm)**

10/28 – Ward/Wyman

10/29 – Dylong/Ockuly

*Bus 9:45/12:15*

**4<sup>th</sup> Grade – Outdoor Survival (10:00-12:30pm)**

12/4 – 2 classes

12/5 – 2 classes

*Bus 9:45/12:45*

**1<sup>st</sup> Grade - Birds Big & Small (10:00-12:00pm)**

5/4 – 2 classes

5/5 – 3 classes

*Bus 9:45/12:15*

**5<sup>th</sup> Grade – Geocaching (10:00am-12:30pm)**

5/7 – 2 classes

5/8 – 2 classes

*Bus 9:45/12:45*

**Kindergarten - Better Homes & Habitats (10:00-12:00pm)**

5/12 – All 4 classes

*Bus 9:45/12:15*

**2<sup>nd</sup> Grade - Pond Study (10:00-12:00pm) & Playground**

5/20 – All 4 classes

*Bus 9:45/1:30*

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**Dates to Remember:**

**March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup>:** Parent/teacher conferences and Winter Book Fair

**March 13<sup>th</sup>:** Coffee with the principal, 10:30 a.m. in the Elm Creek Media Center

**March 13<sup>th</sup>:** Seussical Kids Musical, Maple Grove Middle School, 7 p.m.

**March 14<sup>th</sup>:** Seussical Kids Musical, Maple Grove Middle School, 2 p.m.

**March 16<sup>th</sup>:** WATCH D.O.G.S. at Elm Creek

**March 17<sup>th</sup>:** Fourth Grade Recorder Concert, 6 p.m.

**March 19<sup>th</sup>:** Student Council Spirit Day, Crazy Sock Day

**March 19<sup>th</sup>:** March Birthday lunches

**March 20<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup>:** Spring Break, no school for students or staff

**March 31<sup>st</sup>:** Elm Creek Student Newspaper for sale, 25 cents

**April 3<sup>rd</sup>:** No School for students or staff

**April 6<sup>th</sup>:** Coffee with the principal, Annabelle House in Osseo, 10:30 a.m.

**April 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup>:** MCA Reading Test, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, & 5<sup>th</sup> Grades

**April 14<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup>:** MCA Science Test, 5<sup>th</sup> Grade

**April 14<sup>th</sup>:** PTO Meeting, 6:30 p.m., Elm Creek Media Center

**April 15<sup>th</sup>:** Fifth Grade field trip to Ordway

**April 16<sup>th</sup>:** Elm Creek Kindergarten Information Night, for 2026-27 Kindergarten families, 5 p.m.

**April 21<sup>st</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup>:** MCA Math Test, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, & 5<sup>th</sup> Grades

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