

MLS Messenger

In This Issue

MLS
Spotlight

What's
happening

Social Emotional
Learning

Important Dates to Remember

- Extended School Year commitment form: due April 1
- Spring Break: March 29 - April 2
- Report Cards and Progress Reports: Week of April 5
- Spring Conferences: Week of April 12



Follow us on social media for updates and the latest work of our students!

 @MLSatGemmaServices

 @Martin_Luther_School

From the Desk of Ms. Eva



We are not going back to normal! Every day brings a new normal, and this year has been filled with mastering all kinds of ways to be a school. Despite the challenges, our students continue to grow and learn. Many schools are experiencing a lag in academic growth, yet our MLS data is showing the opposite! When we return to in-person school (with our virtual academy option) we are committed to not going back to the old normal. We have learned new ways to be a school. We know that our society will continue to move forward with careers and a job market built on on-line technology and expertise. We want our students to benefit from both worlds and will have at least one day of virtual school each week, starting with Fridays during our ESY program.

On a separate, much more somber note, as our nation continues to face mass shootings, MLS is committed to furthering an anti-racist society that is built on our MLS Core Values of respect, belonging, courage, commitment, creativity, and perseverance. Peace can only start one person at a time. May it begin with us!

MLS SPOTLIGHT

Our IEP Coordinators

At Martin Luther School, our IEP coordinators are part of our students' IEP team. They are responsible for making sure your student's special education services, and supports are in place and are provided for according to the IEP. IEP coordinators oversee the IEP process for each student on their caseload. They ensure all Special Education documentation is up to date and that each child has the support they need.

Our K-4th grade IEP Coordinator, **Anna Alba**, achieved both a Bachelors's (Regular and Special Education) and a Master's (Reading) degree from the University of Scranton. She joined the MLS team in 2019 after teaching for 7 years in Special Education. Her favorite part about being an IEP Coordinator at MLS is that each day provides a new and challenging learning opportunity. She enjoys working as a team member with families and teachers to help our students succeed!

Our 5th and 6th-grade IEP coordinator, **Shannan Fasoline**, joined MLS in 2016 as a Special Education Teacher before moving into the role of IEP Coordinator in 2019. She graduated from Chestnut Hill College with a Master's degree in Education with certification in Elementary and Special Education. Her favorite thing about working at MLS is how dedicated the staff are to helping students succeed!

Our 7th and 8th-grade IEP coordinator, **Lauren Onusko**, joined MLS in 2017 as a floating substitute and Welcome Room teacher before moving into the role of IEP Coordinator. She is currently working towards a degree in Educational Leadership with a concentration in Special Education. One of her favorite things about Martin Luther School is giving both the students and families positive school experiences that they may not have had before. One of her favorite things to do outside of school is visiting the beach.



From top to bottom:
A. Alba
S. Fasoline
L. Onusko



What's Happening

Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)

by Sue DeFeo, MLS SEL Facilitator

Social-Emotional skills are critical for your child's success at school and in life. Here are some tips for building those skills at home.



- Help your child recognize and identify their feelings. Understanding feelings and where they come from is an important part of self-awareness. Opportunities to talk about feelings will help your child learn to communicate how they feel.
- Help your child recognize their strengths and challenges. Focusing on using their strengths can build confidence and pride.
- Model ways to handle big feelings (anger, frustration, disappointment) appropriately, like taking deep breaths or counting to ten before speaking or acting. Recognize and reward the times when your child can regulate their big feelings.

Touching Spirit Bear



In conjunction with the 8th grade coming of age novel *Touching Spirit Bear* by Ben Mikaelson, the culminating activity was to create a totem pole based on traits that each student felt they possessed. Much like the protagonist, Cole, our students see themselves embracing similar characteristics as Cole, such as determination, leadership, and responsibility, all of which will have a lasting impact on their lives.



#1 FAN DAY

On #1 Fan Day this Friday, staff surprised our students by popping on screen dressed like hometown fans at the Super Bowl!



Ms. Siobhan's Musings



Hi! I'm Siobhan, Supervisor of Clinical Services and Admissions Coordinator at MLS. I have been with MLS for five years and am grateful to be able to watch our students, staff, and families conquer new challenges

and opportunities. It is always rewarding to see the students transition to our school and feel a sense of belonging and, oftentimes, relief that they feel they can finally be themselves. For students to see their capabilities, it's essential for them to feel safe to try new things and push themselves out of their comfort zones. We strive to be student-focused since they're the reason we do what we do! We know the importance of a strength-based approach and meeting our students where they are. At MLS, we aim to find creative ways to teach skills and reinforce behaviors that are needed for the future rather than doing it for them. This year has posed so many challenges, and I have missed the daily smiles, hugs, and constant interruptions from popping into my office! I cannot wait to be back in person with our students and am happy to have the opportunity to see some during visits and deliveries!!

