



# Spencer Trail Times

## JANUARY Newsletter 2026



### A NOTE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Happy New Year! January is an exciting time in kindergarten as we settle back into routines and jump into new learning adventures. As we begin a new year, we invite families to set a few simple goals together!

**Read Together Daily:** Spend 10-15 minutes each day reading with your child and talking about the story.

**Practice Kind Words and Actions:** Encourage saying “please,” “thank you,” and helping others at home and school.

**Create a Consistent Routine:** Set regular times for bedtime, meals, and reading to help children feel secure.

**Talk About Feelings:** Help your child name their feelings and practice calm ways to handle big emotions.

**Limit Screen Time:** Make time for play, conversation, and creativity without screens each day.

**Play and Move Every Day:** Enjoy outdoor play, family walks, or movement games to stay healthy and active.

**Practice Independence:** Let your child try things on their own like putting on coats, cleaning up toys, or packing backpacks.

**Share Family Gratitude:** At dinner or bedtime, talk about one thing each family member is thankful for.

**Stay Connected with School:** Check backpacks, newsletters, and school updates regularly and celebrate your child’s progress.

Small, consistent habits make a big difference! Thank you for partnering with us to make 2026 a happy and successful year for our kindergarten students!



Jen Pender & Jenny Christophersen

### Office

Superintendent- Dr. Lori Motsch

Principal- Mrs. Jennifer Christophersen

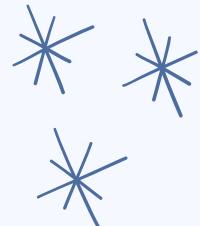
Secretary- Mrs. Jamie Key

Assistant Principal- Mrs. Jen Pender

Secretary- Mrs. Jill Foytik

Office hours- 7:20AM- 3:50PM

Phone Number- (815) 462-7007



# January

January 5<sup>th</sup>- Teachers Institute  
No School

January 6<sup>th</sup>- School Resumes

January 19<sup>th</sup>- No School  
Martin Luther King Day

January 20<sup>th</sup>- School Board  
Meeting @ 6Pm

January 29<sup>th</sup>- Jim Gill Assembly

# Nurse's Corner

Cold, and flu season is officially upon us!

Just a few quick reminders.

- Please keep your child home when they are sick or show any signs of sickness. This really helps to decrease the spread of illness to others.
- Keep your child home if he/she has a fever of 100.0 F or higher. Do not send them back to school until they are fever-free for 24 hours without Ibuprofen or Acetaminophen.
- Please make sure your child is vomit and diarrhea free for 24 hours before sending them to school.
- In the event your child becomes ill at school, please make sure you or your emergency contact is available to pick up your child within 30 minutes.

Thank you for your help in keeping our kids healthy!

# A Note from Mrs. Ozbolt

Welcome back! I hope you and your family had a relaxing, yet fun winter break. As a reminder, be sure to take note of your child's library day: Yellow neighborhood is on Monday, Green neighborhood is Wednesday and Red neighborhood is Friday. Remember that you don't need to wait for your library day, students can always return books early. Also, thank you for emailing or sending a note when a book is torn or damaged. We do a lot of repairs here in the library, so it's not always a lost cause.

In December, we worked on characters, setting, problems and solutions of a story. We sequenced and retold stories through discussion. We also did a fun guided drawing of a cardinal to go along with our read aloud. I'm so proud of our students and their amazing listening skills this month!

Now that it is January, I think our kindergarteners are ready to start checking out two books if they wish. When a child returns all the borrowed books previously checked out, s/he may borrow two more. If s/he has any books at home, the student just borrows one book. We will start this after our book fair.

Speaking of book fair, it is coming really quick! It starts at the end of the month. Book fair details and times will be coming out very shortly, please be on the lookout for more information. If you would like to volunteer your time to help with the book fair, please contact me at [sozbolt@nlsd122.org](mailto:sozbolt@nlsd122.org).

*Limited spots available - first come, first serve. Happy Reading!*



# Specialist Spotlight



## A Note from Mr. L

So far this year we have covered: Toy introductions, obstacle course, soccer and basketball (dribbling). In January and February we will be working on bowling, and jump rope. Please remember to dress your child in appropriate gym shoes during their P.E. day.

Neighborhood Gym Days:  
Monday-Green Neighborhood  
Tuesday-Yellow Neighborhood  
Wednesday-Red Neighborhood



## A Note from Mrs. Tinny

Happy New Year Spencer Trail Families! I hope you all had a relaxing holiday! December went by so fast this year!

We did quite a bit of fun winter music leading up to break, and will continue with winter-themed music. We will continue to study rhythm and how to keep a steady beat.

In Art, we will focus on more advanced fine motor skills, in order to strengthen the students' hands so they become strong artists and writers. They need the physical stamina to complete projects as they progress in school. We also have been doing directed drawings, which breaks up a project into small, manageable steps that are modeled to the students. It is an excellent exercise in listening, following directions, and attending to a task.

I hope you all stay warm and have a fabulous January!



## TERRANOVA TESTING FEBRUARY 3

As part of our ongoing commitment to academic excellence in New Lenox School District 122, the TerraNova NEXT assessment will be administered to all 7th-grade students beginning the week of February 3, 2026. In addition, both the TerraNova NEXT and InView assessments will be administered to all 3rd–6th grade students during the same week.

The TerraNova NEXT is a nationally normed assessment that measures student achievement in reading, language arts, and mathematics. Students in grades three through six will also complete the InView assessment, which measures cognitive abilities such as reasoning, problem-solving, and critical thinking. Results from these assessments are components used to determine eligibility for our Gifted and Accelerated Programs. We encourage all students to give their best effort when completing these assessments.



## Preschool Screening

New Lenox School District will be screening children from ages three to five in the areas of motor, cognitive, and speech/language development.

Early childhood educators will present “game like” activities to your child which assess various development skills. All preschoolers who reside in our district are eligible to attend free of charge. This is a preschool screening, not a kindergarten readiness screening. This year the screenings will be held at Cherry Hill Elementary and Early Childhood Center.

2026 Screening Dates  
March 13<sup>th</sup>      May 8th



Call Cherry Hill School at 815-462-7831 to schedule an appointment.

# Important Information

## Memory Books

Order a Spencer Trail Memory book [HERE](#)



Orders are online only and will close on March 10.



### Upcoming Events

Spencer Trail Book Fair and Art Show is February 5th.

Kindergarten Info Night is February 19th.

More info to come!



# january Birthdays

Everly A.	Layla K.
Katelyn B.	Barrett K.
Niko B.	Emma L.
Trevor C.	Alessandra L.
Ruby C.	Madelyn M.
Anthony C.	Caden M.
Lily C.	Jonah M.
Anisa C.	Nolan M.
Layan D.	Noah N.
Archer E.	Calvin O.
Reese F.	Vincent P.
Adriella G.	Isabella P.
Layden H.	Eleanor R.
Duke J.	Harlow S.
Yasmine W.	Lewis S.
	Wyatt T.