

# Wider Horizons School

## FINAL SCHOOL DAYS



### DATES TO REMEMBER:

- 5/18 Pine island for Jr/Sr high
- 5/19 Field Day
- 5/22 GRADUATION AND STUDENT RECOGNITION 9AM
- 6/1 Summer Camp begins

One of the annual contests we hold every year is the Spelling Bee. The students begin in primary and the person who wins in kindergarten goes on to first grade. The winner in each grade moves on to the next grade all the way up to 6th grade. This year Jacob Khaidov won from second grade up through 4th where he was stopped by his 5th grade brother Ari. Fun for all.

### GIVING ADMINISTRATORS AND TEACHERS POWER TO ACCOMPLISH

By Domenick J. Maglio PhD.  
Traditional Realist

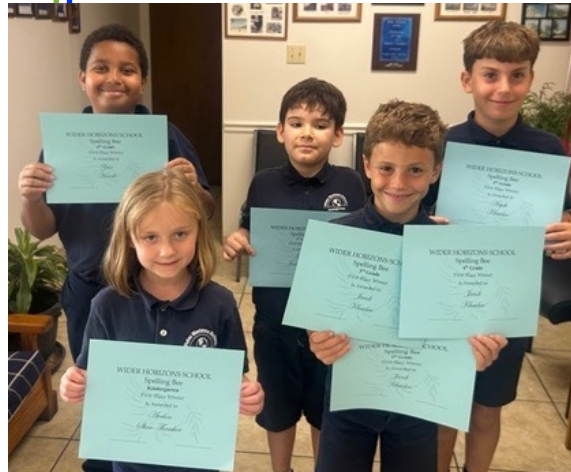
In any group a leader rises to the top where even a group of peers playing games on a regular basis without adult supervision will organize themselves. Before the advent of electronic devices, children played outdoors and chose teams to play sports. They were not just standing on the corner only moving their fingers on electronic games. One youngster took the initiative, set up a time, made sure the equipment was available as was a venue and arranged for everyone to arrive at a certain time to play ball. This person was the leader, the person in charge. This same process happens when a teacher assigns a class project. One person takes the leadership role to insure that the project is done on time.

This informal or formal process exists in any type of group. The business owner begins with a vision, has the power to hire, fire and allocate resources as he or she sees fit. These powers are essential to create a team that works together to navigate the ship to its destination that the captain has determined. When the captain loses power a mutiny may occur. This is the same in any organization.

In today's public education bureaucratic maze the power resides primarily in Washington, D.C. or the state capital, and trickles down to the individual schools. By the time it reaches the local schools the administrator, assistant administrators and teaching staff are all directed from above about their responsibilities.

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A favorite science project is the phases of the moon using Oreo cookies.



Students and mothers enjoying their special Mother's Day visit.



## PRIMARY 1

Mrs. Wallace and Mrs. Tejada

In language, students are writing goodbye poems for graduation. Congratulations to Landon for finishing his Bob Books! Students also practiced their last spelling words for the year. They had spelling words that started with a vowel.

In math, students finish up their lesson books in addition and subtraction. New students had lessons on sandpaper numbers from 1-10. We also reviewed the numbers that would go with the months of the year.

In culture, we traveled to Europe and South America. We explored the animals that live on these continents. Students were fascinated with how many animals live on these continents. Students made post cards representing the continent's and animals.

In Science this week, we explored "insects". Different types of insects, where they live, and what they eat. These insects include ants, termites, and ladybugs.

In Art, students learned to make ruby prints of an ant and a ladybug.

Our time here at school is almost over. WE had our last show-and—tell. We hope you enjoy the weekend.

## PRIMARY 2

Miss Finnerty and Mrs. Nieves

We would like to thank the students and parents for all the wonderful food and kind gifts that were brought in last week for Teacher Appreciation Week.

This week was mostly review for the children. We played sparkle with our old spelling words, and we also played around the world with math flashcards. The winner of sparkle was Angelica. Way to go! Students are wrapping up the year with lessons on the clock and telling time.

In geography, we are finishing our trip around the world with lessons on Europe and Australia. Students really enjoy learning about other cultures and especially the animals that live there.

In art, students completed abstract watercolor paintings with either warm or cold colors. We also had our last Spanish lesson of the year. Students showed us what they learned, and we all thanked Mrs. Nieves for all of her fun and engaging lessons.

Looking ahead, our Student Recognition Graduation will take place on May 22th. We will recognize all of the children, and they will return to the classroom to get their report cards. We will dismiss from the front door for early release.

Congratulations to Angelica for completing all of our GPS reading comprehension cards!

What an accomplishment, we are so proud.

Have a great weekend!

## LOWER ELEMENTARY

Mrs. Urbanek and Ms. Skiff

This week, the students have been working on completing and finalizing folders to complete the school year. Some students are working on cultural studies, while the others are working on language and math.

This week, we talked about the moon. We also created a project with Oreo cookies to learn about the eight phases of the moon.

We have been working on the seven continents and their animals. The students have also been working on filling out their United States map with capitals and abbreviations. We also read a book about the man in the map.

Please remember that there are sign-ups for summer camp. Each week has a different theme, and some classes fill up fast. Try to sign up quickly to ensure that your child has a spot. We encourage sending your child to summer camp to keep the students involved in their studies in a fun creative way.

Some students have been taking their folders home. This gives parents the chance to see all of the hard work that they have been doing all school year.

Have a great weekend!

## UPPER ELEMENTARY

Mrs. Gutierrez, Miss Bandini, and Mrs. Russell

Students are working diligently to finish the school year strong. Students were asked to bring in a white T-shirt for tie-dye activities this Friday, and they will be able to wear their shirts for Field Day next Tuesday. Please remember to apply sunscreen and bring a water bottle to help manage Florida's warm weather. Students who have not completed their required coursework will be unable to participate in Field Day activities. In addition, textbooks should be returned by next Wednesday. On Friday, students who remain after graduation will need to bring lunch, as pizza will not be provided on that day.

Fourth graders worked on the Language Tower this week as a review of many of the concepts learned throughout the year. Most students are nearing completion of the Saxon 5/4 Math textbook or have already finished. Congratulations to Caden, Elliott, and Kinsley for completing their math textbooks this week. Students also completed their final spelling and language tests. In zoology, students were assigned to combine animal adaptations found in the wild into a new animal species.

Fifth graders completed their final spelling test today, and the vocabulary final will be administered on Monday. Students are continuing to work hard to finish the quarter successfully in both areas. In language, students studied complements and their relationship to action and linking verbs. Students also presented their South America projects and continued working on brochures featuring landmarks in various European countries.

Sixth graders spent the majority of the week working diligently to

complete their math and language textbooks. Congratulations to Gianna, Alice, and Zain for advancing to seventh grade math. To ensure participation in all end-of-year activities, it is essential that students remain consistent in completing their assigned daily work until all coursework is finished. In science, sixth graders were assigned a chapter presentation in poster form or PowerPoint format, which provided an opportunity to improve their final grade. In geography, each student chose a landmark from an Asian country and created a haiku to share with their peers.

## HIGHSCHOOL

Mrs. Parks, Mrs. Youse, and Miss Wheeler

As the academic year draws to a close, we are filled with pride and gratitude as we reflect on all our students have accomplished throughout this semester. From academic achievements and hands-on projects to meaningful experiences, our Junior and Senior High students have demonstrated dedication, growth, and perseverance.

We are proud to share that our students have officially completed their final exams. We recognize the focus, discipline, and hard work required to finish the year successfully. Whether students were experiencing finals for the first time or completing them as experienced upperclassmen, each one showed admirable maturity, resilience, and determination during this demanding season.

Now, with exams completed, we look forward to celebrating these accomplishments at our upcoming graduation ceremony. This special event will honor the achievements of our graduating seniors while also giving us an opportunity to reflect on the memories, growth, and

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milestones we have shared together throughout the year. In addition, we will proudly recognize students who have earned the distinction of Honor Roll and membership in the National Honor Society. Their commitment to academic excellence and leadership is truly commendable.

We are excited to gather together with families and friends to celebrate the remarkable accomplishments of our students and the successful conclusion of another wonderful school year.

## AFTER SCHOOL

Ms. Brewer and Ms. Russell

This week, we read a book called "Different Climates of the World." The children wanted to know what the word climate meant. Well, climates are patterns of weather recorded in any one place. For example, the climates in mountainous areas are usually cold and windy. In the tropics, the climate is hot and wet. In some areas, it rains all year-round. We also have dry, cold, and desert climates. In a wet climate, you can find aquatic plants that grow in ponds and perennials that like soggy, wet areas. In a hot climate, you can find lantanas, marigolds, daylilies, and other flowers.

On the playground, some children played Red Light, Green Light (one of their favorite games). Others played inside the sand box or used the playground equipment.

Once inside, some children worked on their homework, while the rest played with board games or any activity of their choice.

Enjoy your weekend!

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They learn the methods to use but do not possess the power to alter how it gets done. They have no latitude to be more efficient and meet the needs of the students in the classroom. These school officials have the responsibility without the authority to get the job done.

Looking up from the local school level, the individual administration, teachers or staff employees owe their positions and advancement to some important bureaucrat sponsor above them. The mission is not to inspire students, their families, or principals. Often the person to report to in the bureaucracy changes and so do the assignments, rules and expectations. Everyone in the system realizes the real power resides outside of the particular school.

The current mindset of the public school teacher is to control the potential classroom chaos and appease the parents. Many principals and their assistants evaluate the teachers on their ability to have the fewest complaints. The growth of individual students is not a focus in itself, rather only a part of a total class performance. The performance is defined by the latest fad and data indicators, which often changes. The data collected primarily are for the school system's numbers to appear to improve, not for the student's best interest.

This is the reason why the vast majority of teachers have strong misgivings about "No Child Left Behind", and "Common Core." The teachers quickly understand that they were relegated to robotic teaching specifically to a particular test. No longer is the teacher allowed to be a professional, creative person. Teachers were limited to reading and going over very specific material from the test practice booklet, using the exact wording, to prepare students to pass the test. This type of studying for comprehensive normative tests is more like a clerical position than a teaching one. There is little opportunity for the script readers to develop as teachers by practicing the art of teaching.

A teacher has to have the power to decide how the curriculum should be taught to become truly invested in the process of teaching. Being commanded to follow a script in a detailed manner is demeaning to a creative professional. It is boring and a waste of time for the student's learning. This "one size fits all" approach clearly demonstrates which students are the best prepared, academically, competitively and motivationally to follow directions, not who has improved the most. This high functioning group does well in this type of testing process.

When compared with students of the world the vast majority of American students do mediocre to poor. On the PISA (Program for International Student Assessment) the USA has scored 26th in math, 21st in science and 17th in reading, out of 34 developed nations. This is even though the United States spends more money than almost every other country per student but is not providing a stellar education.

Present high school testing shows that at best we have a two tier educational system. The highest functioning students are well prepared. The much larger group of students does poorly regardless of the per capita spent. The public school establishment's constant mantra "we need more money to improve education" is a farce.

What is needed are small schools where the principal has the power and authority to create high functioning schools. Giving local principals the responsibility to do the right thing without the power will keep our national education system as a second rate one.

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