

MS 354 TIMES 2025

# Hello April

May this month bring new air and  
positive energy to all of us



**DR MONIQUE CAMPBELL, Principal**  
**KIMANI SMITH, Assistant Principal**  
**CYLANN PHILLIPS, Assistant Principal**  
**MAXINE GRIFFITH, School Counselor**  
**ELROY CORMACK, Parent Coordinator**  
**CAROLIE HOBSON, Counseling In Schools**  
**HANDEL BARCLAY, New York Edge**

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**OR CALL US MS354.COM,**  
**718-774-0362**



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# PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE



As we step into the month of April, I want to take a moment to reflect on the growth and progress we've made this school year. Spring is a wonderful time of renewal, and it's a perfect opportunity for us to embrace the changes around us - not just in nature, but within ourselves as well.

April marks the beginning of the fourth quarter of our academic year. It is a time to celebrate the hard work you have put into your studies and personal development. Many of you are preparing for state assessments, projects, and exams. Remember, these assessments are not just evaluations - they are opportunities to showcase your learning and demonstrate how much you've grown. Keep pushing yourselves, ask for help when you need it, and remember that it's okay to make mistakes; that's how we learn.

For the next few months, we have a number of exciting activities lined up! From science fairs, trips, Community Day event to our spring showcase, there are plenty of ways for you to get involved, meet new friends, and express your creativity. Participation in school events helps build a sense of community, so I encourage each of you to find something that interests you and join in!

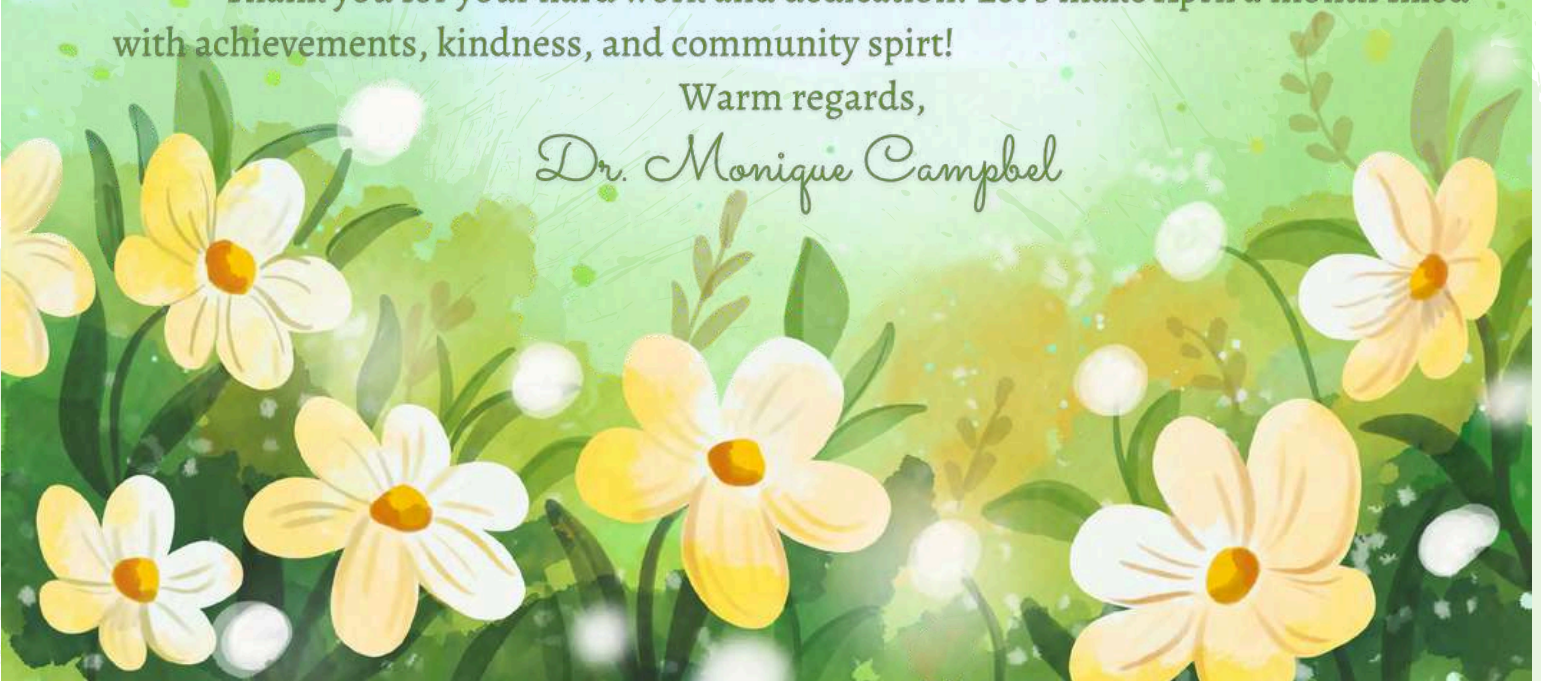
As we approach the end of the school year, let's remain focused on our goals. Whether you're looking forward to up a grade, participating in summer school or summer camps, or setting new personal goals, the future is bright. Let's finish this year strong, supporting each other along the way.

Lastly, I want to remind everyone to always treat one another with kindness and respect. We all come from different backgrounds and have unique stories to share. Let's build a community where everyone feels valued and included.

Thank you for your hard work and dedication. Let's make April a month filled with achievements, kindness, and community spirit!

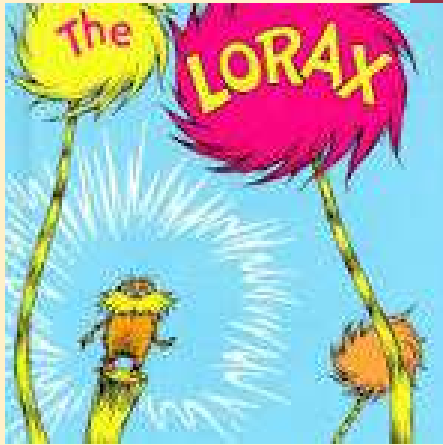
Warm regards,

*Dr. Monique Campbell*





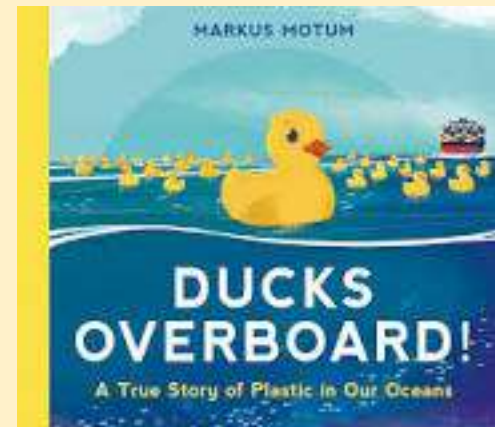
## SEL MONTHLY THEMES



**The Lorax**  
by  
Dr. Suess

"The Lorax" is a cautionary tale by Dr. Seuss about the environmental consequences of unchecked greed and industrialization. The story follows the Once-ler, a businessman who arrives in a lush, vibrant valley, and begins cutting down Truffula Trees to make a product called Thneeds, which he believes everyone needs. The Once-ler, despite the warnings of the Lorax, who "speaks for the trees," continues to expand his business, causing widespread deforestation and pollution. The story highlights the importance of environmental stewardship and individual responsibility in protecting the natural world.

Inspired by a real incident, this captivating and innovative look at the pollution crisis in our oceans follows one of the ducks as it is washed away on ocean currents, encountering plastic-endangered whales and sea turtles and passing through the giant floating island of marine debris known as the Great Pacific



**Ducks Overboard**  
by  
Markus Motum

"Saving American Beach" tells the story of MaVynee Betsch, an African American opera singer who, after the Civil Rights Act, became an environmentalist and activist, dedicated to preserving her family's legacy at American Beach, a segregated beach in Florida bought by her great-grandfather. The book highlights Betsch's life, from her childhood on the beach during the Jim Crow era to her later career as an opera singer and her eventual return to protect American Beach



**Saving American Beach**  
by  
Heidi Tyline King

# STAFF SPOTLIGHT

April 2025

Claudette Leckie



Ms. Leckie has served our school community for the past 10 years as a dedicated science and math teacher. She has a knack for making complex concepts accessible for the students that she serves. She has a passion for science and math and aims to “touch and change as many lives as possible - to help students reach their full potential.”

MS. Leckie serves as teacher to some of our students with disabilities as well as Library Science Technology Teacher where she helps students focus on reasearch skills and improve reading comprehension skills.





# Student Spotlight

April 2025

## Emely Buch Hernandez

**Hobbies:** I like to play with my little brother and spend time with my friends.

**Subject:** Math- I like how my teachers teach, I am improving because I understand it more.

**Future:** Doctor - I would like to help cure people.

**Grade 6**



## Bryce Williams

**Hobbies:** I like to play video games and sports. I love football and basketball.

**Subject:** Math and ELA. My teachers make learning fun.

**Future:** Football player

**Grade 7**



## Rwan Abuali

**Hobbies:** I like to help my mom, play games, and sleep.

**Subject:** Social Studies - I find it interesting and I get a better understanding in the class.

**Future:** Nurse - I would like to help people.

**Grade 8**



## Feature Story

# Momentum Education

## Peer Group Coach: Leslie Buttaflysoul Taylor

At MS 354 we recognize that middle school is a period of significant change and challenge for our young men, making it an important time to nurture their growth and resilience.



Respect

Leadership

## Positive Peer Groups

Uplifting young men in our middle school is crucial for their overall well-being and development, fostering a positive self-image, encouraging emotional expression, and promoting healthy relationships.

Culture

Self Love

## Goal

- ✓ Build Self-Esteem and Confidence
- ✓ Promote Emotional Expression
- ✓ Build Self-Esteem and Confidence
- ✓ Encourage Resilience

- ✓ Support Academic Success
- ✓ Develop Character
- ✓ Expand Horizons
- ✓ Nurture Strengths and Talents
- ✓ Provide Guidance and Support

Community



# Stress Awareness

As we draw near to the end of the school year, let's take a moment to talk about something that impacts all of us – STRESS. Most of you may experience stress at different points, whether it's due to schoolwork, extracurricular activities, friendships, or personal challenges. It is important for us to understand that feeling stressed is a normal part of life, especially during this time of year. However, knowing how to recognize and manage stress is crucial for your well-being and success.

## UNDERSTANDING STRESS

Stress is your body's natural response to challenges or demands, often called stressors. These can range from upcoming exams, sports competitions, or even social situations. While a little stress can motivate you to perform better, excessive stress can lead to feelings of anxiety, frustration, and exhaustion. It's important to recognize when stress becomes overwhelming, and to know that it's okay to ask for help.

## SIGNS OF STRESS

### ✓ Physical Symptoms

Headaches, stomachaches, fatigue, or changes in sleep patterns.

### ✓ Emotional Signs

Feelings of sadness, anxiety, irritability, or mood swings.

### ✓ Behavioral Changes

Withdrawal from friends and activities, changes in appetite, or trouble concentrating.



## SEL Feature



## STRATEGIES TO MANAGE STRESS

### ✓ Stay Organized

Keep a planner or calendar. Break tasks into manageable parts to avoid feeling overwhelmed.

### ✓ Practice Mindfulness

Take a few minutes each day to practice mindfulness or deep breathing exercises.

### ✓ Stay Active

Physical activity is a great way to relieve stress.

### ✓ Connect with Others

Build a support network of friends, family, teachers, or school counselors.

### ✓ Get Enough Sleep

Sleep is crucial for both your physical and mental health.





Our talented pannists journeyed to Virginia to compete in the Virginia International Pan Festival.

# MS 354 STEEL PAN ORCHESTRA



# Teacher Appreciation WEEK

**MAY 05 - 09**

• *Monday*



• *Tuesday*

**Gift of Giving**



• *Wednesday*

**Thankful Wednesday**

Let's show thankfulness with attractive notes



• *Friday*

**Friday Surprises**



• *Thursday*

**Food Treat Day**



"TEACHERS DON'T TEACH FOR THE INCOME. TEACHERS TEACH FOR THE OUTCOME."

THANKING ALL TEACHERS FOR THEIR HARD WORK.



# Smart Finance, Bright Futures



Financial literacy is an invaluable life skill that requires ongoing education and practice. By actively engaging in financial topics, utilizing resources, and fostering open discussions about money, parents can build a solid foundation of financial knowledge for themselves and their children. This in turn, cultivates a generation that is empowered to make informed and responsible financial decisions.

## UNDERSTANDING BASIC FINANCIAL CONCEPTS:

- **Budgeting:** Create a budget that accounts for income, savings, expenses, and discretionary spending. A simple budgeting formula to begin with:
  - 50% for needs (housing, food, transportation).
  - 30% for wants (entertainment, dining out).
  - 20% for savings or debt repayment.
- **Saving & Emergency Funds:** Save at least 3 to 6 months' worth of living expenses in an emergency fund to cover unexpected expenses.
- **Debt Management:** MANage paying off debt, particularly high-interest debt like credit cards.

## FINANCIAL GOAL SETTING:

- **Short-term vs. Long-term Goals:** Identify and categorize financial goals (e.g., buying a house, saving for college, retirement etc.).
- **SMART Goals:** Set Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound (SMART) financial goals to provide clear direction and motivation.

## TEACH MONEY MANAGEMENT TO CHILDREN:

- **Lead by Example:** Demonstrate positive money management behaviors, including budgeting, saving, and investing. Children often learn by observing their parents' behaviors.
- **Parental Involvement:** Involve children in family budgeting discussions to help them understand the value of money and the need for financial planning.
- **Use Practical Scenarios:** Engage children in discussions about money, exposing them to real-life financial decisions, bill payments, and budgeting tasks.



## COMPLIMENTS CREATE CONNECTION - AND CONNECTION BUILDS CHARACTER

Compliments aren't just kind words - They're tools for building your child's inner world. When kids hear genuine praise, especially about their character or effort, it teaches them not only who they are but how to treat others.

### BRAG ABOUT YOUR PARTNER IN FRONT YOUR KIDS

"Your dad is such a **hard worker**, he always fixes everything that's broken at home."

"I love how much your mom **shows us love**, she's so **thoughtful**."

"I appreciate how patient dad is. He always **stays calm**, even when things *get stressful*."

"Your dad is so funny, he always **makes us laugh** when we need it most."

"Your mom always *makes time for us*, even when she's busy. She's so good at **making our family feel special**."



## PARENT CORNER

noticing the **small efforts** you and others put in. They'll also start expressing their appreciation out loud.

Compliments need to be authentic and specific - not just "Good job," but "I saw how hard you worked on that drawing. You kept going even when it was tricky."

### TELLING A CHILD

- You were really patient with your sister today,
  - I noticed how you helped your friend without being asked,
- does more than boost their mood - it reinforces core social-emotional skills like empathy, cooperation, and self-awareness.

When children hear meaningful compliments regularly, they begin to:

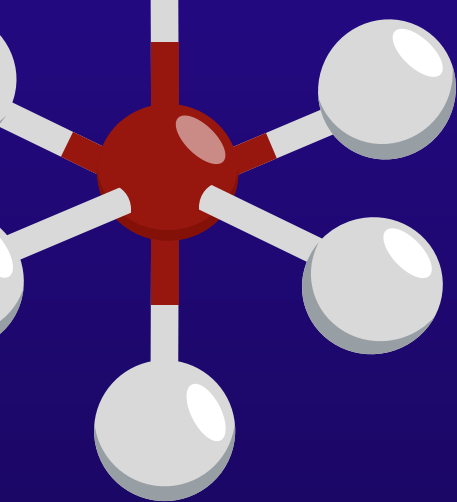
- Develop a positive self-image
- Feel seen and valued for their efforts - not just outcomes.
- Learn how to encourage and appreciate others.
- Build confidence in how they show up in relationships.

These kind affirmations shape how kids interact with friends, resolve conflicts with siblings, and connect with adults. They begin to model the kindness they've been shown and use that as a reference point for how they should treat others.

@create\_kids-edu







# D17



# STEM EXPO

Water conservation project – Our scholars investigated the water quality in NYC and designed and created a 3-D model of a water filtration mechanism that can be used in homes .



## STEM Team:

Soraya Thiam, Brandy Jones, Zoey Amadis, Razack Amao,  
Yehou-Nic Isemar, Reon Sanchez, Jesus Mercado, Tristan Christophe  
Ms. Parkins



STEM EXPO

T-Shirt Design Winner

Nathaniel Green





# HAPPY Birthday TO YOU

**Kaielle J. 4/1**  
**Tahmid M. 4/1**  
**Zoey A. 4/2**  
**Jonathan H. 4/5**  
**Carlito B. 4/6**  
**Keianna C. 4/8**  
**Samiyah L. 4/9**  
**Jefferson A. 4/11**  
**Jesus M. 4/17**  
**Sariah H. 4/18**

**Natoly B. 4/18**  
**Jayla Ann D. 4/18**  
**Kalyani Holmes**  
**4/19**  
**Maykel C. 4/20**  
**Jayquan B. 4/20**  
**Melody P. 4/21**  
**Selbert C. 4/22**  
**Angeliz S. 4/24**



# Happy Mothers Day

You Are The Best Mom!



We hope that you liked the sentimental cards  
and gifts that your child brought home in  
celebration of your hard work and  
commitment to raising them.

# KINGSBOROUGH

COMMUNITY COLLEGE

THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

## COLLEGE TOUR

At MS 354 we strive to build a “college-going identity” and foster aspirations for post-secondary education. Each year we take our students on college tours to expose and inspire them to attend college early in their academic journey. We hope to increase their college knowledge, and make the possibility of college more realistic to them.

### BENEFITS OF VISITING COLLEGES



#### **Foster College-Going Identity:**

Students can see themselves as potential college students and feel like they belong.



#### **Increase College Knowledge:**

Students can get a firsthand look at what college is like.



#### **Developing Socioemotional Skills:**

Visits can improve students' self-efficacy and grit, making them feel more confident in their ability to succeed in college.



#### **Informing Decisions:**

Visits can help students make informed decisions about which colleges might be a good fit.





# ATTENDANCE CELEBRATION

## The Importance of Regular School Attendance

Regular attendance is crucial for a child's academic success, social-emotional development, and overall well-being.

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Students who attend school regularly are more likely to achieve academically, graduate on time, and pursue higher education, leading to better life outcomes.

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Additionally, regular attendance helps students develop important social and emotional skills, and builds a foundation for success in the future.







HAPPY  
**EARTH**  
DAY

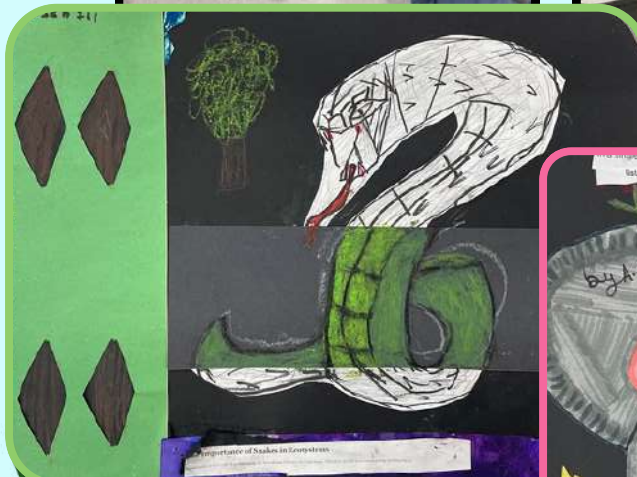
APRIL 22,  
2025





# Art Class

## Endangered Species Drawings





# April is Poetry Month



Students created blackout poetry in Art by painting and drawing on the pages of books. By circling certain words and cover over others, students created new meaning out of an existing text.

