



# VAILS GATE STEAM ACADEMY

## NEWS LETTER

DECEMBER 2025



## PRINCIPAL'S UPDATE

### Hero Among Us

At a time of year when we are all reminded to be thankful for what we have and more importantly who we have in our lives we would like to recognize a hero amongst our staff. Mr. Tyreek Johnson, one of our wonderful security guards, was going about his routine of rounds and checking in with students in the cafeteria when he immediately noticed a student in distress. Liyah Ventura, a first grader, was choking on an item from her lunch. Mr. Johnson sprung into action and utilized the heimlich maneuver to dislodge the item. He then took Liyah directly to the nurses office to ensure that she was ok. We know Mr. Johnson goes above and beyond for our students, but in this case he certainly showed his training and shift care for our students in saving Liyah.

### Giving Spirit

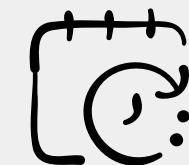
Thank you to our entire school community. Our annual Thanksgiving Food Drive allowed us to provide food and non-perishable items to over 25 Vails Gate families. Not only did your contributions help our students, but there families as well. We also want to extend gratitude to our community partners. Price Chopper, Vails Gate Shoprite and Hannaford assisted with their generous donations as well. We appreciate our PTO members in not only assisting in the organization of the donations, but seeking out the partnerships with our local businesses. Our community never ceases to amaze us and it shows the love and kindness of all of our families.

### STEAM Night

We had another wonderful STEAM night. We feel it is important to offer opportunities for our students to learn, think outside the box and investigate through different exploratory activities. Thank you to all the families that came out to share in a night of fun for all.

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## UPCOMING EVENTS



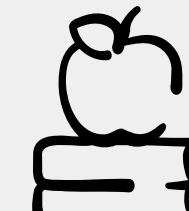
DECEMBER 4TH-NIGHT PARENT TEACHER  
CONFERENCES

DECEMBER 10TH-WINTER CONCERT

DECEMBER 18TH-KINDERGARTEN CAROLING

DECEMBER 19TH-THE NUTTY SCIENTIST  
ASSEMBLY

DECEMBER 23-1/2 DAY FOR STUDENTS



## DECEMBER CHARACTER ASSEMBLY-

DECEMBER 22ND



## PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES

DECEMBER 4TH 4:30-7:30

We look forward to seeing more of our families as we share out information on your child's performance. If you were unable to attend previously or on the 4th please reach out so that we can be sure to make arrangements with you.

DECEMBER 2025



## PRINCIPAL'S UPDATE CONTINUED

This year we created a special leadership program for our Senior Gators, 5th graders. Students applied for and were interviewed to accept the positions of a Safety Patrol member. We are so proud of our scholars as they support our whole school community. They help staff and students during our busiest times of arrival and dismissal. Each member reminds other of our expectations and helps to move things along smoothly. Most recently these students in partnership with AAA participated in the Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day on November 14th. Facilitated by Mrs. Russell, Assistant Principal and Mrs. Robert, Instructional Coach, safety patrollers took steps to find their passion and strength to bring about positive change. Safety patrollers read a letter from Ruby Bridges thanking them for taking steps to make a difference in the world and then "walked" around the building outside into the main entrance. During this walk, they discussed ways that they could show kindness in their everyday lives. This month there will be a new batch of students taking on the role of Safety Patrol and we couldn't be more excited to share in this experience with them.

## HEALTH OFFICE NEWS

### BE SURE TO WASH YOUR HANDS! ILLNESSES ARE ON THE RISE

Stay hydrated- cold weather, and increased room temperatures contribute to dehydration, and dry skin- drink water, and apply lotion and/or vaseline daily.

Dress appropriately- hats and gloves help prevent heat loss.

If your child is in need of a coat, hat or gloves- call the health office- 845-563-7907

### MONTHLY CHARACTER TRAITS

September- Respect  
October- Responsibility  
November- Cooperation  
December- Compassion  
January- Honesty  
February- Kindness  
March- Perseverance  
April- Courage  
May- Citizenship  
June- Fairness

Each month two students are selected as the Character Ambassador for that month because they exemplify the trait and are a good role model for their classmates.

### IN THE NEWS-VG EVENTS



Click the link below to see the article/pictures from our events.

[VAILS GATE STEAM NIGHT](#)  
[THANKSGIVING ANNUAL BALLOON PARADE](#)  
[NOVEMBER TOWN HALLS](#)

WE WOULD ALSO LIKE TO RECOGNIZE OUR NEWEST TENURE VG STAFF MEMBERS WHO WERE RECENTLY CELEBRATED AT THE DISTRICT OFFICES.

NATALIE CANDELARIA, LYSSA IRIZARRY, ASHLEY MCMULLEN, PATRICIA MCCABE, KRISTEN REYES, DANA ROSADO, AND NATIONAL BOARD CERTIFIED TEACHER KATHERINE DITHOMAS