April is recognized as National Stress Awareness Month. It is important to bring attention to the negative impact of stress. Managing stress is an essential component of a healthy lifestyle. Knowing how to manage stress can improve mental and physical well-being.

In this month's lessons, the students learned about specific stress hormones that can cause our bodies to exhibit the "fight, flight, or freeze" response.

We also discussed the importance of stress and when it is useful vs. harmful. Various grades participated in the creation of the bulletin board of the month, "Stressed is Desserts Spelled Backwards!" Desserts were highlighted as coping skills being taught in the classrooms and chosen by students.

For the month of April, the students will engage in relationship building and coping skills. CASEL defines relationship building skills as the ability to establish and maintain healthy and supportive relationships and to effectively navigate settings with diverse individuals and groups. Relationship skills sound like clear communication, resolving conflicts, sharing of ideas, giving support or standing up for others. Relationship skills look like kindness and empathy, cooperation, cultural competency, leadership, avoiding negative peer pressure, and making positive choices.

Questions? Please reach out. I am best reached by email at egunaydin@montclair.k12.nj.us My phone number is (973) 509-4162 ext. 13112.