

HARBOUR ♥ herald

-A Ship is Safe in Harbour-

From Mr. Hyska and Ms. Denniston

October 7th, 2025



Highlights

It has been a whole month of learning, bonding and fun in the Harbour classroom! We've already accomplished so much and are so proud of this amazing group of Harbourritos! Here are some highlights from the month of September...

- Filled our book bins with just right books, started our reading workshops and dove into our guided reading groups.
- Brainstormed possible writing topics for the year by digging deep into the things that matter most to each of us.
- Had our first SciFri and explored static electricity and what it means to be a scientist.
- Completed our beginning of the year math assessments and started our first unit on addition strategies.
- Created our hallway project, O-FISH-ally friends. If you haven't seen it yet, come on in and take a peek!
- Engaged in reading buddies to explore the importance of reading to someone while working on cooperation and getting along.
- Finished our Swimmy themed Class Promise that is hanging on display in our classroom!
- Wrote short stories across pages while focusing on quick sketches to help generate and organize ideas.
- Had so much fun getting to know each other!

Important Dates

10/6 - NWEA Testing - Reading
10/7 - NWEA Testing - Math
10/10 - CSA Spiritwear Day
10/23 - No School - CSRs
10/24 - No School - CSRs
10/27 - Field Trip to Indian Springs
10/27 - 10/31 - Book Fair
10/29 - Picture Retake Day - Please send us an e-mail if you would like your child to retake their picture
10/31 - Halloween Party

Navigator News - CSRs

We are excited to meet with you and discuss your child's progress so far this year! Please join us for our fall Comprehensive Student Reviews (CSRs) on Thursday, October 23rd, and Friday, October 24th.

CSRs are an opportunity for teachers and parents to come together and talk about your child's development as a whole—academically/intellectually, socially/emotionally, physically, and in terms of character/moral growth. We deeply value these discussions as they provide valuable insights that shape our teaching, instruction, and interactions with each student. Prior to the meeting, we typically send out a pre-conference form for you to complete and return. This helps guide our conversation and allows us to gather any resources that might be useful during our time together.

The CSRs will take place all day on Thursday, October 23rd, and Friday, October 24th. There will be NO SCHOOL for students on these days. We will use signupgenius.com to schedule conferences and may offer additional meeting days if needed. A link for the signup will be shared soon. If you experience any issues signing up, please email both teachers, and we'll be happy to assist.

We look forward to meeting with you!

Contact us – Mr. Hyska: ghyska@csaschool.org and Ms. Denniston rdenniston@csaschool.org

Halloween Party

Our class Halloween party is just around the corner! We'll be using an online system to organize donations, so keep an eye on your email for a link to the signup through signupgenius.com. If you have any trouble accessing the system but would still like to contribute, feel free to reach out to classroom teachers, and we'll help find a donation slot for you. You can expect the signup to be available by the end of this week or early next week.

The party will take place on Friday, October 31, and students are welcome to wear school-appropriate costumes that day. As you plan costumes, please remember that masks, fake weapons, and gory makeup are not permitted to ensure a safe and welcoming environment for everyone. We appreciate your support!

Please have students come to school in their costumes, ready for the fun. If they'd like to bring a change of clothes in case they get too warm, that's perfectly fine. We're excited for a spook-tacular celebration!

Character Corner

In this section of our newsletter, we will share information regarding our character education program including character traits, social protocols, emotional language, and related concepts like manners and kind acts. Although we might highlight specific concepts here, we will continue to discuss and practice all components naturally throughout the year. We encourage you to use these ideas and language at home in order to help reinforce and connect it to the classroom!

This month, we continue our journey into the six key character traits in our character education program: Respect, Kindness, Responsibility, Getting Along, Work Ethic, and Optimism. Our focus remains on finding natural opportunities to highlight each trait through daily learning moments and activities. Throughout the end of September and into October, the Navigator unit is shining a special spotlight on Kindness, as it connects deeply with the other traits and much of what we do.

Kindness, simply put, is about thinking and acting with care toward others. It's the foundation for forming new friendships, strengthening relationships, and turning a community into a close-knit family. From our new "Buddy Bench" at recess for students looking for a friend, to activities like sharing what we appreciate about one another, and collaborative classroom art projects – kindness is everywhere! In the classroom, we stress the importance of using kind words and tones when resolving conflicts. Recognizing moments for kindness helps students build stronger character and creates a supportive classroom environment, even in challenging situations. Kindness is a trait we all possess, and it's something the world could use more of. Helping students understand the emotional impact of kind actions makes the concept more tangible and meaningful.

Looking for ways to reinforce this lesson at home? Try modeling supportive language, especially during disagreements or stressful moments, so your child can see kindness in action. Sharing positive news stories that highlight acts of kindness in the community provides real-world examples. Acknowledging when your child shows kindness helps reinforce this important trait. Additionally, reading books like *Have You Filled a Bucket Today?* by Carol McCloud or *Last Stop on Market Street* by Matt de la Peña, and visiting websites like sparkkindness.org can further deepen the discussion and provide fun activities to try together!

October Learning Extension Choice Board

In your student's Tuesday folder, you'll find an October Learning Extension Choice Board. This optional resource offers additional ways for students to reinforce what we're covering in our academic workshops. It encourages them to apply their learning to creative projects, interactive games, or writing activities at home. We hope your child enjoys these engaging and enjoyable opportunities!



NWEA MAP Testing

We've been busy working through getting to know our learners and chipping away at assessments with each of them. Another way we assess is by using the NWEA MAP testing for reading and for mathematics. The NWEA MAP assessment is a Computer Adaptive Test that asks students multiple choice questions based on state standards and benchmarks. While students are taking the test, the questions they are presented with will become easier or more difficult depending upon their responses. In the Navigator unit, this first testing window helps us to introduce students to the testing format that they'll continue to encounter throughout their education.

Our class will be testing on 10/6 (Reading) and 10/7 (Math). You can help your child prepare for this assessment by ensuring they are well rested prior to their testing day and that they receive a healthy and filling breakfast the day of the test.

Please also make sure your child is on time for school so we can get started right away. Thank you for your support!

Early Literacy Volunteers

Our library is still looking for volunteers to help get our Early Literacy Volunteers (ELVs) program up and running. Check the Tuesday Times or email lpick@csaschool.org for more information and to help out.

What We Are Working On

Here are some key skills our learners are developing this month in each of our academic workshops:

Reading: Students are building their understanding of story elements through a character study, understanding the role of the beginning, middle and end, and collaborating with reading partners to discuss what they've learned.

Math: Our mathematicians are focusing on addition and subtraction strategies, fact fluency, story problems, understanding the value of a digit and modeling and writing numbers up to 1,000.

Writing: Students are learning to expand their ideas by adding more details, revising their work like detectives to identify needed changes, working on increasing their writing stamina and beginning to study mentor texts to test out different techniques in their own writing.

Contact us – Mr. Hyska: ghyska@csaschool.org AND Ms. Denniston: rdenniston@csaschool.org



Look for more pictures in the Harbour Family photo album! There is a link in our weekly recap email!