

March

Upcoming Events



March 17-18

- No school - Staff Day

Dear HRIMS Families,

Spring has finally arrived! We are excited for all it brings to our school.

We are thankful for your support throughout this year for our staff, students and policies. You have helped this year be a positive and successful one despite the challenges the world has faced, and you have allowed us to not only manage those but take advantage of so many opportunities as well.

Opening the second campus has allowed us to offer enrollment opportunities to additional communities, creating a larger, more diverse community at HRIMS. It has shown us how important a Montessori education is to the greater Hampton Roads community, with a waitlist already in place for the 2022-23 school year. We truly appreciate our families who have re-enrolled, allowing us to keep to our admissions schedule and admit these new families to our HRIMS community. Thank you also for embracing our new parent portal and all it has to offer! It was a large undertaking for our office staff but has already shown to make our processes more efficient and effective for our staff and for our families.

We are also enthusiastic about the new data trends with Covid cases. Over the past two weeks, we have seen a great reduction in the number of cases in our area as well as in our schools. January and the beginning of February had seen a great increase due to the omicron variant. As we watch this data over the next few weeks, we will be looking at the new recommendations and guidance to update our policies.

Thanks to the warmer weather and availability for outside activities, we will be having our Spring Fair in April! We have missed seeing our families come together as a community. Ms. Janet has begun the planning for the petting zoo, activities, and crafts. If you would like to help with the planning, please contact the office.

We are beginning our next Accreditation Self-Study process for SAIS (Southern Association of Independent Schools)! Please expect some quick and easy surveys to be coming your way in the next few months as we compile a dashboard of our demographics and plan a vision and course for the future of HRIMS. We would love to have your ideas and input on where we go from here! The accreditation process allows us to review all areas of our school and assess our opportunities for growth in each area. After completing the process with the Middle States Association (MSA-CESS) and the National Council for Private School Accreditation (NCPSA), we cannot wait for the opportunity to work with our team at SAIS.

Thank you to all of our community, again, for your continued support. We are excited about the learning, growth and opportunities we'll see over the next few months and cannot wait to share them with you and your children.

Ms. Michelle

Toddlers

WHY WE USE GLASS IN THE TODDLER ENVIRONMENT



Seeing young children drinking from glass cups and carrying glass dishes to the table or sink may take many concerned parents aback. What if they drop a dish and it shatters? Won't they step on the glass and need a trip to urgent care? What is the purpose of risking having to buy more dishes all the time? This just seems too dangerous and senseless for a classroom.

The reasoning behind the use of glass over plastic in the Montessori learning environment is something called "control of error." When children use glass dishes, they learn very quickly how to control their movements, so as not to break the dishes. Using these controlled movements is beneficial to brain development. It also offers lessons in caring for fragile items. It has been proven that taking risks such as this is great for their development.

Using plastic does not create a need for the same level of purposeful movement and control. There are no natural consequences of a broken dish if the child is careless or moves quickly or without purpose. There is also no pride or building of confidence when using plastic, as there is when using glass. A child is proud of their accomplishment when they carry a glass plate to set the table and do so with the defined, purposeful movements that are needed to do it successfully.

They also know that the adult feels that they are capable of such a task, one that requires concentration and focus, and this also builds confidence in their own abilities. These attributes are so important in their willingness to try new things and learn new concepts.

What if my child breaks a glass dish? When you implement Montessori, it's all about finding lessons in real life activities. Teaching how to maneuver safety around broken glass and how to properly clean up glass is important. Even more important is that the child learns to stay calm when something unexpected happens and that it is not a major disaster or something to feel guilty about when glass breaks. We clean it up and move on. This reduces anxiety producing responses that are common now in adults and children.



How do I teach my child how to clean broken glass? Make sure the child has shoes on for safety. Show your child how to pick up the larger pieces carefully put them in the trash. Demonstrate for your child how to brush smaller shards of glass into the dustpan and carefully dump them into the trash. Ask your child to stand back and let them watch you sweep a large area surrounding the break. Explain that when glass shatters, tiny pieces can travel quite far. Go on a scavenger hunt with a flashlight. See if you can find any pieces reflecting the light.

Another reason to use glass in Montessori classrooms is for the beautiful environment. Glass is more pleasing to look at than plastic and is better for the environment. Walk into any Montessori classroom and you'll notice the beautiful, natural materials and how the children respond positively to them.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF CHILDRENS' HOUSE

Every morning, when a child enters the building, they follow their routine. Knowing that this routine is the same, helps them feel safe and confident as they begin their day. They go to their cubbies, independently taking off their jackets, hanging them on their hook, and changing into their indoor shoes.

The child then walks into the classroom, greets their teachers, and washes their hands. They may wish to take some time to have some conversations, to share their thoughts, concerns or excitement, which can help them transition into their day. Sometimes a child who may be feeling sad that morning may need extra hugs. When others listen to their concerns, they feel so much better. A friend may even come with a tissue for those teary eyes. Wow! Our three- year-olds are so empathetic and are learning how to help others when they are sad.

A child may come to the teacher saying, "I am very hungry." We will problem solve with them. "Hmm, let's go check if the snack is ready to serve." They find out that it's not ready yet, and we typically pointed out that the dishwashing basins are not prepared either. The child knows that these need to be ready in order to have snack. They hurriedly and willingly volunteer to prepare the basins. It's impressive to see a child carefully carrying a pitcher full of water and filling the basins to wash snack plates. What if the water spilled on the floor? They bring the floor towel and wipe the

floor. The child is developing independence, self-esteem, and self-control, while completing a multi-step process that helps the classroom. They find value in this work, and it builds confidence in themselves and their role in their classroom society. Finally, it is time to serve and enjoy their snack, practicing social graces and courtesy, skills they will use outside of the classroom as well.



The rest of the children greet and socialize. They are excited to see each other; a lot has happened since they were together yesterday! Throughout the day, they may have conflicts, disagreements, and difficulty sharing or taking turns. This is a natural part of learning social skills at this age. In Children's House, a friend may bring a peace rose saying, "You hurt my feelings." The students will then go to the peace table to use "I" statements to discuss what happened and come up with a solution. This is a process they learn that helps them learn how to share their feelings without blame and accusations and learn to come up with solutions together.

The students begin the work cycle. The classroom is a quietly busy place. A child is eager to bring his previously presented lesson to practice. A younger child decides to observe an older child's work. Someone is interested in creating a sculpture with clay using movements such as pinching, squishing, patting, rolling using back and forth motion. A child in the library is looking for a book. Another child comes along and asks if we can look at a book together.

I've noticed a group of children is working on the collective exercise, practicing multiplication, setting up the decimal cards, calling out units, tens, hundreds, and thousands, and asking for a multiplication problem. Someone is painting a picture mixing primary colors and excitedly says, "Look, I made green by mixing yellow and blue!" Exploration! They make sure the easel is ready for the next friend. The children wipe and wash the palette; clean the paintbrush and pay attention to detail.

The children love to explore using sensorial material, matching objects like a sphere. They learned how to illustrate three-dimensional geometric forms. A chalkboard wall is always a busy place, practicing writing words or drawing shapes or just drawing stick figures. They love to express their detailed artwork, which enhances their language skills.

We enjoy music and movement during transitions. This helps children gather on the line, put their work away, and look forward to enjoying outdoor recess. They once again follow the routine, changing shoes, put on their jackets, and ask their friends if they need assistance with zipping up their jackets. This process encourages independence.



The playground is always fun. Intuitively, we all know that the outdoors feeds the mind as much as the body. Science supports this theory, too.

According to research, outdoor recess provides a brain boost for children, enabling them to focus and learn better once they return to the indoor classroom. The outdoors also presents a host of sensory learning opportunities for children. They splash through a puddle, feel a cool breeze, touch the bark of a tree, hang on bamboo, and slide down the slides or roll down the hill. These are all examples of sensory experiences that teach them about the world in which they live.



We then come back, change shoes and take off jackets and then enjoy story time. We get ready for lunch with music in the background. The students choose a friend to eat lunch with, an excellent opportunity to socialize. The children take an active part in sweeping and wiping the tables after lunch. The younger children walk to the nap room and the third-year students are eager to learn new lessons and practice with peers in the afternoon. Sometimes, we walk outdoors and do some exercise fun! We have more creative fun in the afternoon in full day. They play with building materials, make crafts, and show their creativity. The children create many crafts using various art mediums and enjoy working in small groups.

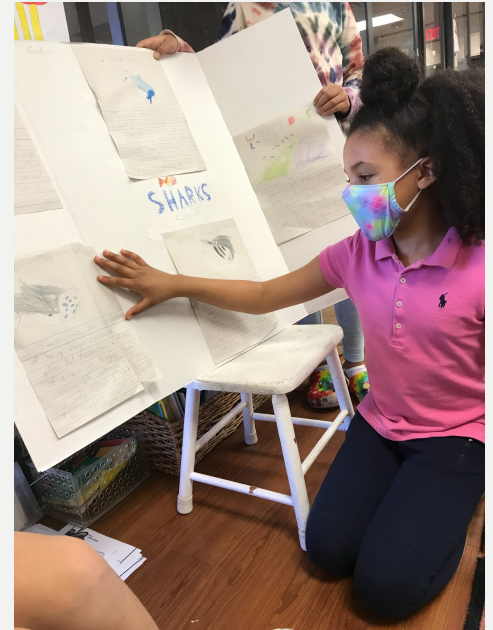


Lower Elementary



February was the month of love and our classrooms are shining. We introduced the Great River which is a metaphor the circulatory system in our study of the human body. Human body systems is our next large unit. Emphasis was put on the heart and how it functions in and throughout our body. We looked at the concept of our heart in a different way, as we introduced poems and worked with figurative language to enhance their writing skills.

Acts of kindness were encouraged as we celebrated that theme throughout the month. Valentine's Day was a day of creativity as students artistically decorated bags and exchanged cards showing how they truly cared for each other.

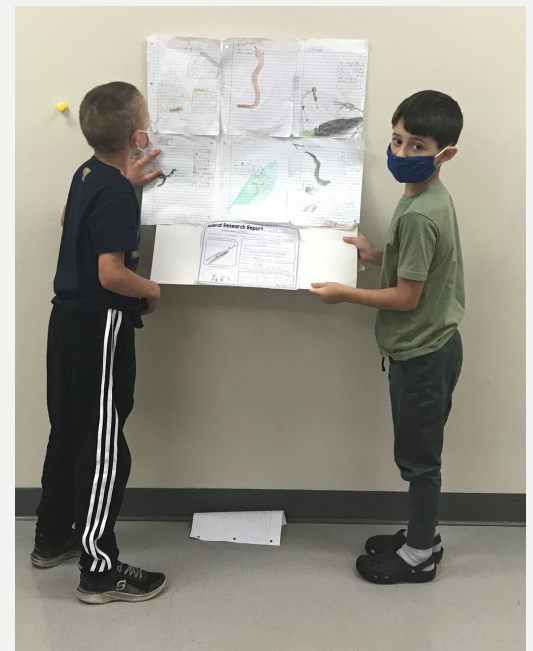


On Presidents' Day students learned about two of our leaders, George Washington and Abraham Lincoln. They also enjoyed researching and learning about our many other Presidents and what made each of them noteworthy.

The fourth great Montessori lesson was introduced, in which students learned the story of the development of the written alphabet and why words matter. It is important how we use them, and how we choose the right word to convey the meaning we are trying to get across. They learn about ancient forms of writing, such as hieroglyphics, cuneiform, as well as other forms of communication

Children were fascinated by the Phoenicians and created imaginative ideas including writing their names in various alphabets.

We have begun to introduce fable stories to our children which is helping them to use imaginative story writing ideas. Punctuation and correct grammar is the main focus. Adverbs and prepositions have helped to create much more elaborate sentences. As each part of speech and mechanics area is added, the students writing becomes more engaging. We look forward to their continued development.





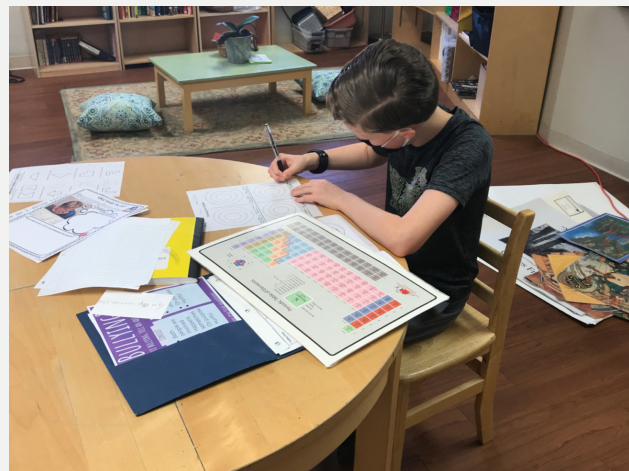
Upper Elementary



It has been a month of exploring influential leaders and individuals who have helped shape our world.

We have spent a large amount of time this month learning about individuals that helped shape our world from influential people of the Civil Rights Movement, to Presidents, athletes, scientists, and so much more.

We finished the month with our Wax Museum Presentations in which we learned about a diverse group of individuals. The students had an amazing time learning all about their individual, from their childhood experiences, to things they have accomplished. Realizing that these individuals share many common experiences and events parallel to those in their own life.



We are continuing our chemistry studies, which will include more experiments within the classroom. We are learning how to do proper experimentation by using the Scientific Method.



Our math studies are running parallel to our chemistry studies as we are working customary and metric units of measurement. Converting inches to centimeters, centiliters to milliliters and so much more.

Another marvelous month of discovery and learning.