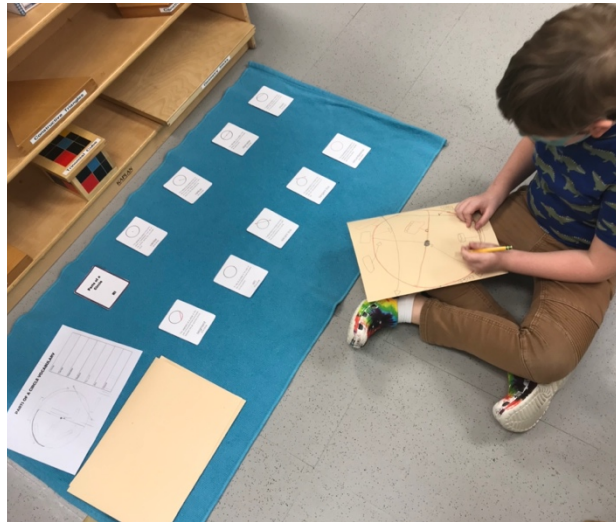




Hampton Roads International Montessori School



December 2021 Dates to Remember

Winter Break: December 20th-31st

**Winter Social has been cancelled due to increasing Covid hospitalizations and cases among children.

Planning Ahead:

Monday, January 3rd: Return from Winter Break

Friday, January 14th: Professional Day- No School for Students

Monday, January 17th: Martin Luther King Jr. Day- School is closed

From Our Head of School

Dear HRIMS Families,

As this calendar year comes to a close, it brings to mind all that has been happening at HRIMS throughout 2021. Continuing the vision of bringing a Montessori education to the families of the Hampton Roads area has been the focus, as the school evolves to incorporate the strategic plan's vision of expanding the programs to continue Montessori for our current families. Almost a year ago, I spoke with the Board about the vast possibilities that the HRIMS community believed could be realized at HRIMS, and they saw a future without limits. In response to this, we have looked at the opportunities we have had, how to create possibilities, and how to realize them.

Researching the history and speaking with parents, staff, and board members, HRIMS is no stranger to taking on new projects and creating new programs and opportunities for our students. From redeveloping the entire school business and educational structure many years ago, moving to a new facility, taking on the formidable project of the playscape, creating year-round school options and, more recently, opening a second campus, the HRIMS community has worked together to advance the school. All of these programs have been established because of feedback from our families and community.

We are now embarking on our next chapter in HRIMS's story. Along with our Board, we will be creating our next strategic plan and will look for the involvement and feedback from our families and community that have contributed to the school's vision and planning in the past. Your input allows us to best meet the needs of our students, families, and staff, while balancing the requirements we need to meet. We are fortunate to have had so many people interested and involved in our previous strategic plans and hope to have the same level of excitement and participation in forming the roadmap for the school's future again in the coming months!

In addition to programs, HRIMS has also focused on the school's health and safety level for our students and staff. Both of our school buildings are very safe ones, with current systems in place for security. However, we continue to work to keep our children healthy each day during the ongoing pandemic. As you know, I continue to participate in a weekly live webinar hosted by Children's Hospital of Philadelphia's Policy Lab with Drs. David Ruben, Adrianna Bravo, and Tanya Altmann. The webinar has provided consistent and up to date information on nationwide and statewide trends/levels, with the focus mainly on children. Their insight and guidance into the impact on schools and best practices with mitigation techniques has been invaluable in our planning and has allowed us to maintain a very low level of positive cases and no transmission in classrooms. The newest variant brings additional concerns, and we continue to monitor its effects while allowing our students to thrive in the least restrictive environment possible. Having our students attend school in person is our ultimate goal, and our mitigation techniques align with the recommendations necessary to keep our classrooms open and our students in our buildings. Although state mandates may change in the near future, our policies will continue to follow these best practices.

HRIMS students have always been safe in our school to be who they are and become who they want to be. We continue to work to give them the safe building environment in conjunction with the tools, Montessori programs, and opportunities to be leaders in every area they choose to be. Thank you to all our families, community members, and organizations that are helping to support us in that vision throughout this New Year.

Michelle D'Antonio



Toddler Community

Thanksgiving and the coming season are wonderful reminders of the holidays that celebrate coming together and giving thanks for the many special things and people in our lives. The HRIMS Toddler Community has much to be thankful for this year. The staff appreciates all of our families who choose us to teach their children. In toddler classrooms, we find joy in the small things: a beautiful flower, a new picture book, leaves on the ground, a new puzzle, an exciting lesson. We are reminded by our students to find and treasure the excitement in each and every day.

HRIMS is a place where we are surrounded by different cultures and communities, and for that we are grateful. Our school gives us opportunities to educate others about the Montessori Method, and to give back to our community by serving others. We are also able to reach out to families who may not otherwise have the resources to give their children a quality Montessori education, and for that, we are grateful.



The Toddler Community is thankful for:
Cool fall weather that gives us beautiful outside time.
Rainy weather that makes walks wet and fun.
Yummy fruits and veggies that taste delicious.
Our school that makes learning fun.
Books that give us new and exciting words to say.
Lessons that help us grow in many ways.
Our families who love and support us.



With winter break around the corner, we wanted to share some activities that your children can enjoy with you while at home. They love to be a part of what their household is doing and want to be contributing members of their family. They also want to learn about everything, so feel free to use every outing as a learning experience!

Work that focuses on refining gross motor skills and hand eye coordination:

- Raking leaves/ yard work
- Sweeping floors (tape off a box on the floor to sweep dirt into)
- Window or mirror washing with a squeegee
- Making beds
- Setting the table (one item at a time)
- Folding laundry
- Jumping in the leaves
- Rolling down a hill



Work that focuses on sensorial areas (pre-math, order, and sensory areas) and fine motor skills:

- Washing dishes
- Cooking/baking
- Mixing/pouring
- Putting away clothes
- Collecting pinecones/sticks/shells/rocks/leaves and making crafts

Remember to talk about what you are doing! This builds vocabulary and comprehensions skills. Also, reading a book every night instills a lifelong love of reading! Most importantly, remember to laugh, hug, and have fun!



Children's House



In the Montessori Children's House we play different sound games to help children become aware of the languages around them. In celebration of Thanksgiving, I asked the children if they heard any other words in the word Thanksgiving. They did! They declared that they heard the word 'thanks' and immediately started to speak about their thankfulness. Their need for sharing their gratitude was so great that they each wanted to speak and be heard first. Can you remember a time in which you were filled with such gratitude that you needed to shout it out at that very moment? I have the privilege of knowing 21 HRIMS students, who are so grateful for their families, friends, animals, and school that they needed to shout out their gratitude. (Today we did work upon speaking our gratitude in turn with a quieter voice.) The children's gratitude is their gift to us. When we adults are having a hard moment, we can turn to the closest primary aged child and ask them for whom they are thankful, and we will hear their deep love.

Thanksgiving is the perfect holiday for primary aged children. It embodies their spirit and it gives them an opportunity to give to their families with favorite works. The children love to show their gratitude by creating cards, art, and paper cuttings. They love to create art out of leaves that they have collected. They love to help wash, chop, compost fruits and vegetables. They love to sweep, mop, wash tables and chairs. They love to dust and polish. They love to carry chairs and tables. They love to eat. They love to do all these works with you while telling you their favorite jokes. They love to tell you how much they love you.

As Dr. Montessori advised all guides to do, we are going to follow your children to tell you how grateful we are for you and your children, dear HRIMS families.

"I am truly thankful to observe the genuine and thoughtful gestures my students demonstrate to help another classmate with a coat or shoes, sweeping up the classroom, drying a spill on the floor, or helping to fold the tablecloths without being asked. By working together and volunteering as classroom community members, we plant the seeds for future volunteers and kindness around the world! I am also blessed to have supportive staff members who go out of their way to help others. By supporting others and keeping the conversations flowing makes our staff community stronger!"--Ms. Kara Daniels

"I am thankful for HRIMS families who are very supportive by keeping up with our Covid-19 policies and procedures during the pandemic and allowing us to guide their loving children in our nurturing environment. The children bring smiles and happiness into our community. I am thankful to the Creator who protects us and gives us strength and good health. May Allah shower us with blessings. Aameen."--Ms. Asma Ishrat

We end with one of Ms. Kim's Hinmon's favorite Montessori quotes, "The child is both a hope and a promise for humankind." May your Thanksgiving be filled with health, laughter, chopping, cleaning, leaf piles, 100 colored triangle gifts, hugs, and the gratitude of the children.

Please check out the next page for some activity ideas to enjoy over winter break and for some gift ideas that align with Montessori philosophy. You can also check out some of the ideas listed in the toddler and elementary articles in this newsletter!



More From Children's House

Activities to enjoy during the holiday break:

1. **Gingerbread House:** This hands-on activity is sure to keep your little ones entertained. You can start by either baking the separate parts of a gingerbread house or buying a gingerbread house kit. Assist your children as they put the house together and decorate the house with different candies. Go over the different textures and colors of the candy as they stick it onto their house. You can even flavor the icing in different flavors and they can guess which flavor is associated with which candy.
2. **Cinnamon-Applesauce Ornaments:** Start with $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of Applesauce and 4oz of cinnamon. Have your children mix the ingredients together in a bowl then roll out the dough. Have several different shape holiday ornaments available and let your children choose which to use. After they cut out all of the ornaments, make a small hole at the top of the ornament. Bake at 200 degrees for 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours, then string a ribbon through the hole and hang it on your tree.
3. **Reindeer Counting Game:** Start with 10 pieces of paper and number them 1-10 (if your children are old enough, have them write out the numbers 1-10 for practice). Then let your children lay out the number of reindeer that is represented in each piece of paper. This is a fun counting game that keeps children engaged while learning to count and recognize different numbers.
4. **Cinnamon Scented Gingerbread Man:** Start with sandpaper, pompoms, and a cinnamon stick. Start by cutting the shape of a gingerbread man out of the sandpaper. Let your children feel the rough texture of the sandpaper and compare it to the soft pompoms and cinnamon sticks. Then let them scratch the sandpaper with the cinnamon stick – this will make the sandpaper cinnamon-scented. After they are done, they can glue on the pompoms to make a face and buttons on the gingerbread man's shirt. This sensory activity is fun and will leave your house smelling great!
5. **Sensory Sorting:** Start by choosing three flavors (we suggest peppermint, cinnamon, and chocolate) and pick 4 items for each flavor, and put them in a basket together. Have your children sort the items by smell, taste, touch, and look. This will put their senses to the test all while having fun!
6. **Raking leaves:** Provide them with a rake and demonstrate how to build a pile of leaves.
7. **Pinecone crafts:** Provide pinecones, tempera paint, ribbon, glue, and seasonal items to paint and glue to the pinecone and hang it up to enjoy!



Link to activities to do in the home during the holiday breaks:

<https://www.mother.ly/our-partners/holiday-gift-hack-will-make-your-life-easier/>

Gift ideas and links to Montessori items for the home:

<https://www.naturalbeachliving.com/the-best-montessori-books/>
<https://www.naturalbeachliving.com/montessori-toys-for-3-year-olds>
<https://www.naturalbeachliving.com/gifts-for-4-year-olds>
<https://www.montessoriservices.com>

Lower Elementary

November has been another month of learning and new discoveries. The students continue to enjoy coming to school to learn new things and socialize with their friends. Children in this second plane of development are no longer solitary beings, but instead tend to gravitate toward others in their environment. Children around this age are beginning to learn how to get along with each other and thus choose to sit near or collaborate on projects of mutual interest. Everyday day in our elementary classroom there is never a dull moment. Children are working at their own pace. The younger students are always observing and learning as they move around the room. I always look forward to hearing their stories from home. We are a family all together, treating each other with thoughtful consideration.



This month the focus was on our state of Virginia. Students explored our five geographical regions, the first Jamestown settlers and the Native American tribes indigenous to our fair state. In this field of study, students discovered the homes, foods, customs and clothing during colonial times. They admired the hardships they endured in order to reach the new world and also once they arrived. Accompanying the regions of Virginia was a lesson on Native Americans. Children identified the three major tribes of Virginia, their languages and in what regions they resided. As like the colonists, students explored Native American homes, customs, clothing and foods and even learned how their diet changed according to the season.

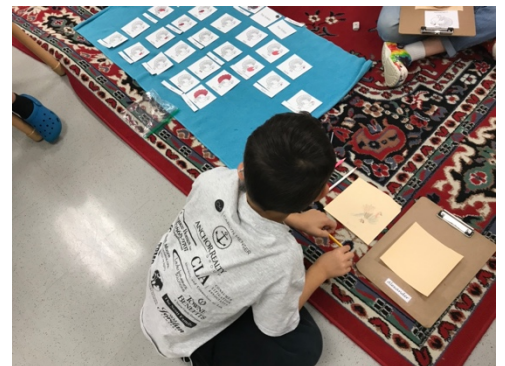


To tie-in with Thanksgiving, students learned the parts of a turkey and followed up with matching 3-part cards that depicted the bird's various parts and nomenclature. In other curriculum areas, students were introduced to the harsh reality of global warming and its effects and in math they labeled the parts of a circle.

This time of year is a great opportunity to express our gratitude to our parents, students, teachers and administration. We want to start by just say thanks. Thank you all for the care, commitment and courage you have shown during this year. For us is very important to acknowledge, all the good things you do for the well-being of our community.

Administration, we are thankful for the care and the extra mile you take to make everything possible. We are thankful for uniting us parents, students and teachers as a community. Thanks for believing in us and for help us grow every day. Because of your great efforts, we are all able to contribute to the growth of our students in a safe, clean and cozy environment. Thanks to you always.

Parents, thank you for believing in us and for being the mentor to your child. We extend our appreciation for your belief and trust in us during this year. I hope we have met your expectations, as we are working very hard to achieve them each day. We appreciate the values you have instilled in your child. Your values are indeed praiseworthy.



Students, we have enjoyed having you in our class this year. We are thankful for your enthusiasm and for your efforts to continuously learn. We love how our second year students encourage our first years to love learning as an experience and as a fun approach and for that we are thankful.

We are thankful for all the funny things you say every day, like hearing Jackson singing "I'm a gummy bear, oh I'm a gummy bear," hearing Apollo saying, "bro I'm good at this math," hearing Phillip say, "I jumped from that swing, but that was not a good idea," hearing Bennet say, "I'm putting my pants out to the sun so I can dry out; didn't notice the slide was wet," and seeing Lillian dancing the "cha-cha" and saying, "You want to learn the cha-cha?"

Oh, we have had a blast these days! We are thankful for the laughs and for all you teach us every day. Finally, thanks for all the good things we have shared so far and for all the good ones to come.

More From Lower Elementary

With the month of December fast approaching, students are anxiously awaiting the upcoming holidays.

While home over the break, parents are encouraged to spend quality time with their children by going for long walks and stopping along the way to observe the nature around you.

Families can also create special moments by including children in cooking preparations, playing board games, and making crafts.

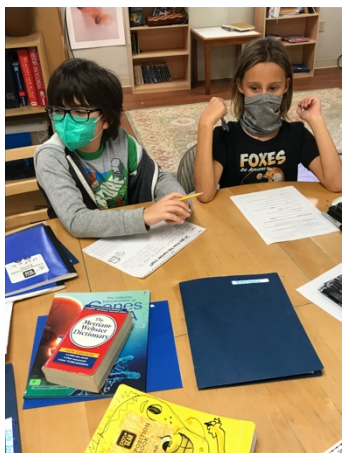


Sharing stories of past holiday gatherings, traditions, and forming new traditions are also wonderful ways of connecting during these times.

Some other ideas of activities to do at home:

- Try a [new recipe](#) together (family bonding, learning to cook, the correct use of kitchen tools, helping, measuring and math, and hands on activities)
- Outdoor picnic or hiking (enjoying nature and exercise)
- [Make slime](#) (fun, science, and motor skills)
- [Bake cookies](#) (family bonding, measuring/math)
- Learn to sew, knit, or crochet (motor skills)
- Painting (enhance creativity, recreating a painting, focus and bonding)
- Karaoke night (reading fluency, comprehension and rhythm)

Upper Elementary



It is hard to believe that November has come and gone already. We have spent a lot of time within the classroom discussing things that we are both thankful and grateful for. We have talked about not only material things but experiences and events that have helped shape who we are as individuals, as a community, as a nation, and as an inhabitant of our universe. It has been amazing to hear the children share with each other- thinking more about the big picture than what is just right in front of them.

During this time, I personally have been able to reflect on how grateful I am to be part of the Hampton Roads community. With me being completely virtual, the support and encouragement I have received from the students and families has been incredible. The children have accepted me with open arms and have completely accepted me as part of the classroom family. They come prepared and ready to work with me each day and are truly amazing individuals.

You as the parents have been beyond supportive of this non-traditional teaching situation and I thank you for trusting me to work alongside your students, though it may be virtual and your support from your home. Because of your trust and understanding of the situation we have been able to make amazing academic strides.

This is truly a community that believes it takes a village to raise a child and the families, faculty, and staff go above and beyond to help everyone and anyone- whether they are their class or not. It has been a pleasure to work with so many individuals that genuinely care about the children academically and emotionally. Thank you for allowing me to be part of the HRIMS family.

Some ideas for awesome holiday gifts for Elementary students:

Kiwi Crate- <https://www.kiwico.com/> Multiple monthly mail order boxes for infants to teens with stem and hands on projects.

Legos- <https://www.lego.com/en-us> building collection from cars, to famous buildings, to even a giant world map.

Little Passports <https://www.littlepassports.com/> A monthly mail order boxes about cultures and countries around the world for students toddler- tween.

Universal Yums <https://www.universalyums.com/> A monthly mail order boxes about foods from around the world.

Symbolic Animal Adoptions <https://gifts.worldwildlife.org/gift-center/gifts/species-adoptions.aspx> Help preserve, and provide funding to keep endangered species safe.



Newport News and Hampton Campus Updates

During this season of giving, please remember that you can help support HRIMS by **[purchasing gift cards through the SCRIP program](#)** on your phone or computer and use them to pay for your shopping or give them as gifts! Hundreds of stores give percentages up to 15% to HRIMS! Stores like Amazon, Lowe's, Target, Walmart, Macy's, your favorite grocery stores, and so many more! It only takes a minute to choose Hampton Roads International Montessori School as the nonprofit you will be supporting with your gift card purchases now and throughout the year.

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Shop early to get your gift cards ahead of time

Find holiday gifts for everyone on your list while raising money for your organization. Whether you buy gift cards as presents or use them to buy gifts, you immediately earn on every order. Share the giftspiration with others—the more people that order, the truly merrier.

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End of year donations are greatly appreciated!

Don't forget our Educational Improvement Tax Credit Scholarship Program! You receive a 65% tax credit on your VA taxes on donations over \$500! More information can be found on the www.hrimontessori.org website!



Also announcing: Limited-time \$5 and \$10 gift cards

The perfect small gift for teachers, friends, bus drivers, mail carriers, and more.

Get gift cards delivered right to your door

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Tell a friend!

In order to keep tuition prices from rising as fast as inflation, we need to keep our costs to a minimum and increase enrollment at our new facility. Word of mouth is the best form of marketing and saves us on marketing costs! Share what you like about HRIMS on your social media and tell your friends! We'd love to give them a tour. New applications being accepted now until March 1st for August start dates.

Thank you to all our community members who supported our GIVING TUESDAY CAMPAIGN. Tuition alone does not cover the costs of education our students, and we truly appreciate every donation. Thank you for beginning the season of giving by thinking of HRIMS!