

Principal's Weekly Newsletter
September 24th, 2021

Dear Center School Families:

As we round out of our third week in the building, it is starting to *feel like school!* Students have been busy with acclimating themselves to their new routines, a handful of classes have ventured out into the community, and we held our first (planned, this time!) Fire Drill. Things are feeling normal, as normal can feel, in these challenging times.

In the vein of with Getting Back into the Swing of Things, we are so glad to announce that we will be offering After School Clubs and Activities for the 2021-22 School Year. Please be on the lookout next week for information and registration particulars. We are currently finalizing dates and times for a myriad of programming on offer for our students at every grade level.

As a reminder, we are indeed beginning "Start Strong" State standardized testing on Monday. Please practice good testing habits and ensure your learners are eating a hearty breakfast and getting enough sleep before they come into school. These are simple, yet proven effective steps you can take to get the most out of a test like this. We anticipate great results from all of our students, and will do whatever it takes to support them through this experience.

Have a fantastic weekend. The weather is looking to be excellent.

-Mr. Erhardt

Sunday, October 3 The Center School annual 5-K Fun Walk/Run takes place.

Sign up and come out. Students, Staff, Parents, Friends are all welcome.

THE CENTER SCHOOL
MOVING STUDENTS IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

5K

FUN WALK • TIMED RUN

DUKE ISLAND PARK
191 OLD YORK ROAD, BRIDGEWATER, NJ 08807

OCTOBER 3RD, 2021

SIGNUP AT WWW.CENTERSCHOOLMOVES.COM
EMAIL US AT CENTERSCHOOLMOVES@CENTER.SCHOOL

#CENTERSCHOOLMOVES



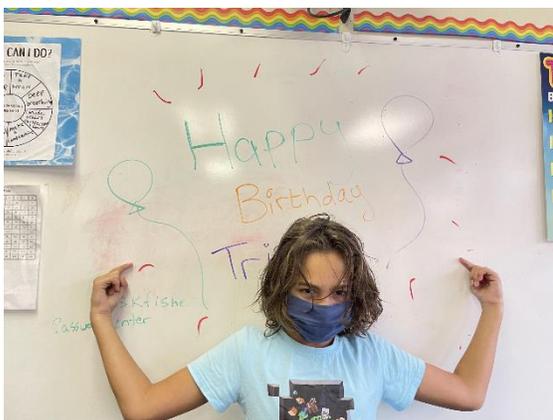
Elementary School

The Elementary School took their first reward trip of the year to Kid Street Park in Bridgewater. Students enjoyed the time outside with their peers to play hide and seek, swing, run and climb. It was a fun afternoon practicing social skills as they took turns and interacted with our peers.

In Mrs. Sheeley's class, students welcomed fall by reading *My Autumn Book* by Wong Herbert Yee. Students then shared about their favorite part of autumn and made text-to-self connections. Some of our favorite things about autumn are jumping in the falling leaves and celebrating Thanksgiving with a "yummy family dinner."

Have you ever read a book by a queen? Students listened to *The Sandwich Swap* by Queen Rania Al-Abdullah (Queen of Jordan) and Kelly DiPucchio. This book is about two girls, Lily and Selma and what they eat for lunch at school. Observation and inference skills were put to the test as we used facial expressions and body language to "read" the pictures in this book. Students also enjoyed chatting with their classmates about what they like to bring for lunch at school.

Ms. Ascione's students enjoyed reading several fairy tales this week, all of which demonstrated how creative thinking can overcome challenges. To reinforce the lesson, they had the opportunity to test a solution from, *The Crow and the Pitcher*. In the story, a thirsty, but clever, crow dropped pebbles into a pitcher to bring the water level into reach, since its beak was too large to fit inside. The students also learned new vocabulary words and were tasked with sorting spelling words into categories based on vowel sounds. During math, the class worked on different methods of multiplication, which included repeated addition, skip counting on a number line, and using arrays. Each student then created their own array, along with a matching multiplication sentence.



Happy Birthday
Brendan (10) and Tristan (11)!

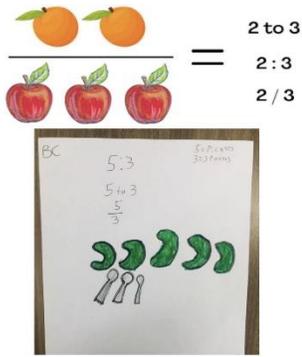


Fun at KidStreet Park



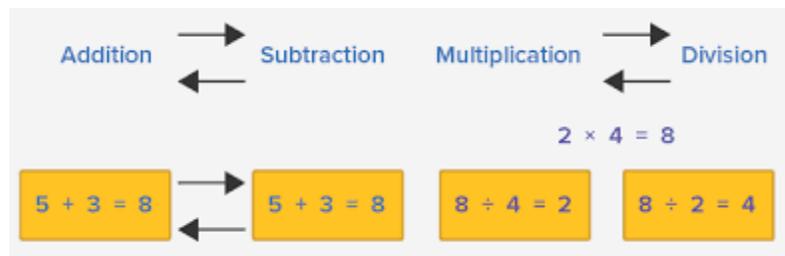
PIC • COLLAGE

Middle School



In Ms. Akushie's Math class, students are learning about the concept of a ratio and using ratio language to describe a relationship between two quantities. This week, they participated in an activity that required them to create their own ratios. Once they completed their assignment, they were able to share their math problems with their classmates.

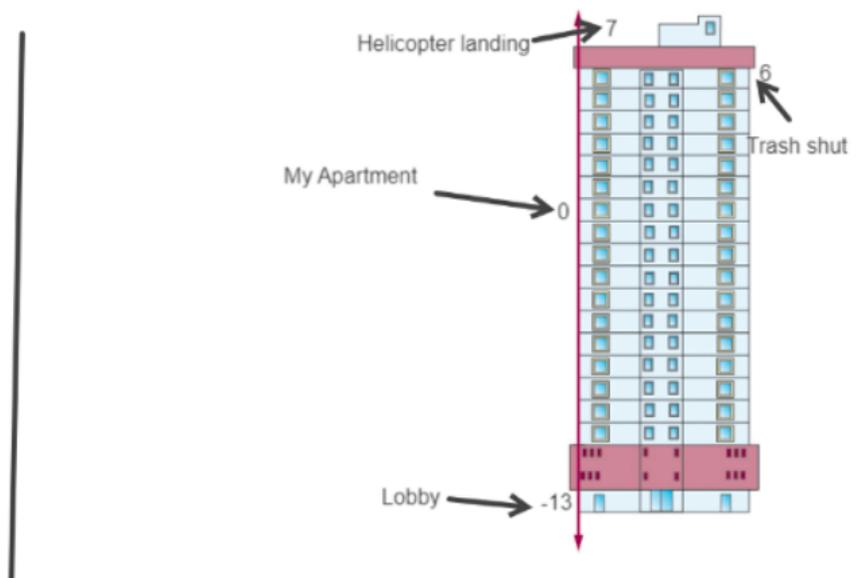
Mrs. Burak's Math class has been working on reviewing and reinforcing the process of solving one step equations. Students discussed what inverse operations are and how they apply to solving these equations. After completing several problems together on the board, the students were able to independently complete the worksheet. The class discussed how this skill is the foundation for solving multistep equations and equations with variables on both sides.



Mr. Duffy's Math class started a unit on signed numbers this week. Students were introduced to the concept of positive and negative numbers, integers, absolute value, and additive inverses. To introduce the unit, students created their own apartment building and mapped their apartment, three additional features (gym, game room, friend's apartment, etc.), and then assign each room a value on a number line. Last, students created mathematical expressions to describe traveling throughout their apartment building.

Design Your Dream Apartment Building

Use the Whiteboard to design your dream 20-story apartment building. Choose the floor where your apartment will be located. Choose at least three features to include on other floors of your building, such as a gym, a laundry room, a movie theater, a supermarket, or a friend's apartment. Be sure to include a lobby on the ground floor. Label your apartment as the origin. Complete the number line by labeling each feature with its name and coordinate relative to your apartment.



High School

Harrison

This week Ms. Harrison's Pre-Algebra Class began working on finding the missing term in a number sentence. As the new concept was presented, students were focused on learning each step. The class took turns coming to the board, showing their work and explained how they arrived at the answer. The students were surprised and happy to see that Pre-Algebra used prior information and made each step that much easier. One student shared, "The name, Pre-Algebra, made it sound like it was going to be really hard. But I get this!" After hard work, review and a quiz, all were successful. Everyone was happy with the results. To conclude a challenging week, the students enjoyed a round of Giant Jenga.



Miller

What a week it was for our chefs in training! In Mr. Miller's Culinary Arts class this week, students were able to fire up the grill to make some very tasty shish kabobs and homemade hamburgers. Students prepared the kabobs by learning how to properly dice chicken/vegetables and whip up a simple, yet delicious marinade. No frozen burgers here! Students learned how to mix and customize their own burger with their choice of ingredients and each student had a turn to flip their own burgers as well. A nice side of homemade French fries was also enjoyed! Next week, the class will be preparing a classic, hearty Italian dish.



Gibson

Ms. Gibson's Applied Science class is continuing their work with cells and tissues. The students enjoyed several hands-on activities to classify organisms as unicellular or microcellular. Consumer Math students focused their attention this week on understanding the difference between "wants" and "needs" in regards to budgeting. We had a healthy debate on whether a pizza is a want or a need!

Torres

In Ms. Torres' Algebra II classes, students are studying patterns and expressions. They learned to identify and describe patterns and write rules for expressions. Algebra I students started building on their knowledge of variables and expressions by using the order of operations to evaluate expressions involving exponents. Students in Consumer Math built on their knowledge of hourly rates and overtime pay to calculate more complex timesheets. Geometry class learned the ruler and segment addition postulates to compare segment lengths and the angle addition and protractor postulates to compare the measures of angles.

D'Alessandro

This week Mrs. D'Alessandro's Algebra classes have been tackling solving multi-step linear equations. I am so pleased with the progress all the students are making and applaud their efforts as they methodically "follow the steps" and "watch their signs."

Geometry students are investigating the three essential building blocks, (points, lines, and planes) which sets the stage for the rest of the year. Students can now describe these terms, sketch them, write them symbolically and give real life examples of them.

Pre-algebra students reviewed exponents and wrote expressions for the volume of a cube as a product and as a power. We reviewed the order of operations, discussed why in fact we need them, and practiced evaluating numerical expressions by applying the rules. Again, these students have demonstrated tenacity and we could not be more proud of them. Keep up the great work!

Stevens

Grade 12 English- Seniors continued reading Puritan literature and analyzed Anne Bradstreet's "Upon the Burning of Our House." We conferred about the significance of Biblical allusions in Puritan texts, and identified Puritan values in Bradstreet's poems.

Grade 11 English- Juniors are reading "The Metamorphosis" by Franz Kafka. We analyzed Kafka's choices regarding craft and structure, and began a sophisticated character analysis of Gregor.

Grade 10 English- Sophomores began to chart a story arc for an adapted version of "The Fall of the House of Usher." We synthesized the importance of word choice, and were able to express the relationship between setting and mood.

US History 1- Students were introduced to the Constitutional Convention and discussed possible amendments to the Articles of Confederation.

Creative Writing- Students applied their knowledge of sensory details in descriptive writing, and were given time to begin an original narrative.

Gonzalez

In Ms. Gonzalez's Spanish 1 class, students completed the lessons of the Spanish Alphabet and Getting to Know You (where students learned how to introduce themselves and learned to say "me gusta" / "I like" and identified things they like in Spanish). Students also completed their first project, "Me Gusta" Google Slides project by creating a Google Slides presentation using 10 translated Spanish words that they found during one of the learning activities, "Using a Spanish Dictionary" and presented their projects to their classmates.

In Ms. Gonzalez's Spanish 2 class, the students identified the 21 Spanish-speaking countries and their capitals on a map. Then, they each chose a different Spanish-speaking country to conduct Internet research. Using a rubric outline to guide their research, the students identified specific facts, added images to go with their facts, and presented their research findings in a Google Slides presentation to their classmates.

In Ms. Gonzalez's English 3 class, the students were introduced to our digital literature textbook and the theme of Unit 1: Priorities. The selections in the unit include poems, short stories, a drama, and a novel where students will be examining the theme of priorities: the ideas and values that motivate an individual. Students explored the unit's theme of priorities by journal writing and brainstorming on Google Jamboard on the different kinds of priorities and to draw on the students' prior knowledge, helping them make a connection to the theme. Students engaged in pre-reading activities with a lesson on the literary element of setting and the literary device of flashback, on the vocabulary, and on the author and background information before they began reading the first short story, *The Bet* by Anton Chekhov. As the students read the short story, they analyzed and discussed the thematic idea and how each of the two main characters' acts in accordance with his own priorities. Students also completed a diagnostic of their language arts skills on IXL.com, which determines the skill levels of each student and creates a personalized action plan for students to practice their language arts skills. At the same time, students started to review lessons on the grammar topics of using colons and proper adjectives on GrammarFlip.com, an interactive online grammar and writing program.

Ostrander

Last week students in Mr. O's photography class took a trip to New Brunswick and photographed various elements from the architecture and sites they encountered.



Transition

McKenna

This week was busy for the transition students. Bridges to Employment, an outside employment agency, spoke with the students about going into the work field and the expectations of employers. The students discussed the current job market and the ways in which they can find gainful employment. Students learned about the assortment of resources they can use to assist them in finding a fulfilling career. They also discussed attitude in the workplace and the importance of etiquette. In the near future, students will be going into the work field and experiencing new work-related situations. We're very excited for the future!

Lees

In Vocational and Life Preparation the students answered questions about themselves and their interests. They used this information as well as their results from the O*Net Profile to search for jobs that they are interested in. They used indeed.com, monster.com, and snagajob.com to help them on their job search.

Related Arts

Industrial Arts

This has been a very hands-on week in the Industrial Arts Makerspace! Students of all grade levels have had a chance to practice cutting wood on the Table Saw, Miter Saw, Band Saw and Jig Saw. Elementary & Middle School students are building personal tool boxes. In the High School, two students are creating model biplanes, and one student is making a Model T Car. The Transition Assistants have been hard at work either mentoring students, building a 5' cabinet or working on door decorating to celebrate our 50th year of educating exceptional students! Busy busy busy!



Art

Welcome back to Art class happenings! The Elementary students are continuing their Picasso portraits coloring with oil pastels. Students in middle school learned about the artwork of M.C. Escher. Then they created a 3D hand drawing that really looks like it's leaping off the page! Painting class learning



about atmospheric perspective and why things look lighter the further away it is. They used one color and gradually added black to vary the tones. Transition workers are continuing their work with their parachute cord and Perler bead magnet creations set to be sold at our storefront in Somerset.



Music

This week in Elementary Music, students had fun using the Parachute while listening to Classical Music which included “The Planets” by Gustav Holst and “The William Tell Overture”. We also reviewed our notes and their durations. Middle School students created their own logos and then we had fun reading *Fairy Tales Go To Court*. Each student portrayed a different character in the story. High School continued working on their instruments. For Theater Arts one student presented their monologue to the class.

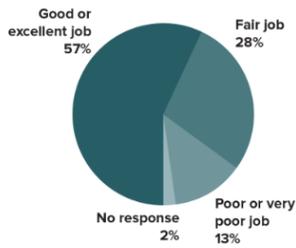
Sign-ups for Glee Club have begun for Middle and High School Students.

And last but not least, several Middle School students have expressed interest in band instruments and have been attending choice period to practice.

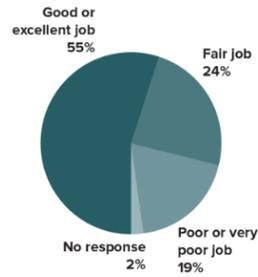
Speech/Language

Speech and Language: A number of the Speech and Language students were exploring a social dilemma, the purpose of school. They were introduced to 5 Focus Words: *analyze, function, factor, interpret, and structure* within a reading passage titled: “What is the Purpose of School?”. Each word was defined and discussed in a conversation. Students were taught how to “Bridge” their statements by using questions to “Bait” their listener. For example, if a student stated “One important *factor* necessary in a school is having good teachers.” He/She was prompted to “bait” the listener by saying “What do you think?” to continue the conversation. Moreover, some of the students *analyzed* data on pie charts and had to *interpret* information regarding the success of a public-school education in America.

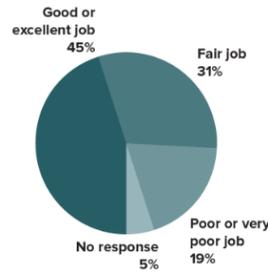
How well do local public schools prepare students for college?



How well do local public schools prepare students to be good citizens?



How well do local public schools prepare students for the workforce?



The students learned that there are many *functions* of an education including preparing for college, improving character traits to become reliable citizens, developing critical thinking skills, preparing for the workforce, and acquiring skills for daily life activities.

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Occupational Therapy

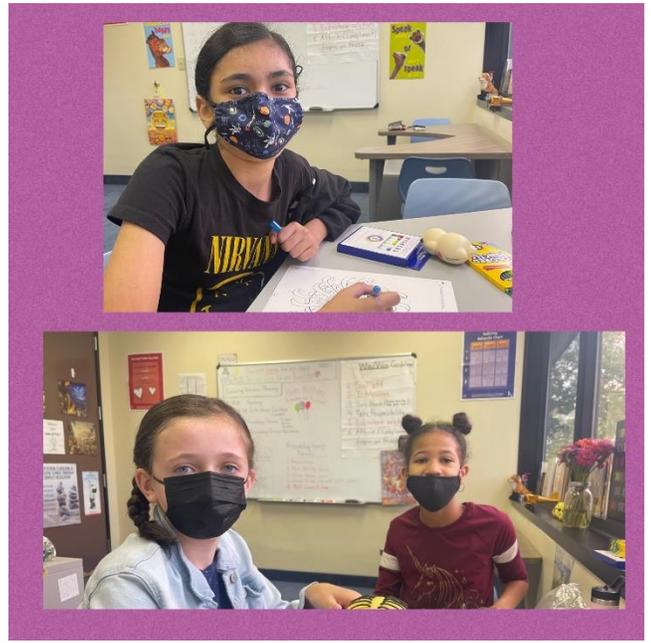
In OT this week, the students worked on their strength, balance, and motor planning while using a rope to climb up a large foam ramp and crawl across various obstacles. Tactile discrimination skills were also addressed as students had to locate items hidden in a box, using their sense of touch only, and not using their vision. The sessions concluded with students participating in relaxation to assist with self-regulation and successful transition back into the classroom.



Therapeutic Department

Nelson

This week I continued meeting with students individually and in our 'friendship group' sessions. The students and I have been enjoying this time to get to know one another better and begin forming new friendships. Some of our initial group activities included introductory activities such as name games and playing 'Don't Spill the Beans'. We used this game as a way to get to know one another, share unique things about ourselves and better understand group confidentiality. We also focused on creating member-generated rules to ensure the group is a safe space for all participants to share, learn and grow. Group names were also suggested and voted upon. We are all looking forward to our next meeting!



Coronado

This week Mr. Coronado's Middle School groups focused on understanding the relationship between thoughts, feelings, and actions. The students were given statements of a thought, a feeling or an action, and were then required to place these statements in the correct categories. For example, one statement read, "Student puts head down at desk." This is an example of an action. This is not a feeling; however, a feeling may precede this action. Additionally, a thought may precede the feeling. This helps students to understand the power of thinking positive thoughts.



Puleo

This week in Ms. Puleo's counseling groups, we finished our unit on Positive Affirmations, Positive Experiences and Positive Traits/Qualities. The students were able to identify their own positive qualities and when they displayed each of those qualities in everyday life. They were able to have a discussion with peers about qualities they share and how some students have had similar experiences. To wrap up the week we started to discuss what qualities we look for in a friend as well as the qualities we have as being friends.

Sadiq

Ms. Sadiq's High School groups discussed how we see ourselves. The students admitted to having a negative perception of themselves as they discussed with one another, where these ideas originated. As they were sharing their stories with their peers, they had a better understanding of each other and were able to see themselves in a more positive light. The students began to realize that they all had similar experiences and had more in common than they realized!

De Luca

The focus in the group was the ICEBERG anger activity, where we discuss what gets us Angry and where it comes from. Many groups identified that people, family, communication and places often get them frustrated, which could lead to anger. It was then discussed that it's alright to get angry, but how to express it in an appropriate manner.

A trip is scheduled to Raritan Valley Community College next Thursday, which will be taking three prospective students.

Literacy Support

Students are engaged and enjoying the varied activities and/or reading within the Reading Center. In Functional Communication, our student is expanding vocabulary (receptive and expressive) and identifying/labeling items from the home environment. All language and reading skills were applied with the designing of a bedroom and bathroom. Our student loves to organize, shop and design!

The leveled reading book, *Encounter*, provided short stories which called upon understanding of more sophisticated vocabulary, critical thinking and problem solving. One story in particular, *The Widow's Son*, exemplified story-telling through this tale offering two endings. Our student is working on perspective/point of view and how emotions impact a story.

The Wave (T. Strasser) is thought-provoking and being enjoyed by another student. In this book, we are able to see how control, discipline and many times fear of isolation, are moving a social experiment too far. We have two predictions of how the book will resolve the effects of the experiment. Thus, we are eager to complete the story.

PTO

Join The Center School PTO!!!

Please stop by our PTO table at Back-to-School Night to sign up and learn more about the PTO. We have several upcoming events, starting with a fundraiser that will launch on October 6th. Come and check out a few samples from the catalog.

Please contact Marcia Lees to join/rejoin the PTO or if you have any questions at mlees@center.school

Important Dates:

"Start Strong" State Standardized Testing Begins	Mon September 27 th
3rd Annual 5-K Fun Walk/Run	Sun Oct 3 rd
Back to School Night	Wed October 6 th
Early Dismissal 1:05pm Staff Development	Fri Oct 8 th

Sincerely,



Daniel Erhardt
Principal