



Moments from our September newsletter

Walking in Balance: A Message from Our Principal

Mino De'e Mino Maanjii'o

Dear families, Elders, staff, and community members,

September has given us many reasons to feel proud of Henry Coaster Memorial School. I see children smiling, students exploring their world, and learning that brings our classrooms, culture, and community together.

These newsletter highlights share that learning and the care behind it. As we look ahead, our focus remains on Oji-Cree Language, Cultural Identity and Belonging, and Academic Achievement.

Tom Recke, Principal · Marten Falls First Nation



September classroom learning, shared in our school newsletter.

SEPTEMBER LEARNING · HCMS

Every classroom tells a story

I see children finding their place in school through play, creative work, familiar routines, and new challenges. Each classroom has its own story to share.

Kindergarten

A welcome lunch and Back to School BBQ with drumming helped begin the year together. Play-based learning made room for discovery, while Dot Day on Sept. 15, inspired by *The Dot*, encouraged creativity.

Grades 1-2

Students practised routines and connected with Oji-Cree culture. The Nature Self-Portrait Collage and the Fall and Rain activity brought the changing season into their learning.

Grades 3/4

Lexia and Symphony Math supported reading and mathematics. Plant science walks and Indigenous teachings connected classroom learning with the world around us.



Active learning featured in the September HCMS newsletter.

CULTURE · SCIENCE · MOVEMENT

Drumming, science, and active learning

Our students are learning by doing: listening, moving, building, and trying ideas. I am proud to see cultural learning and hands-on exploration taking their place across the school day.

Language, rhythm, and expression

Grade 3/4 students took part in drumming and hoop dancing with Mr. Orville, alongside Native language learning with Ms. Brenda. These experiences connect students with language and cultural knowledge.

Building and exploring

In Grades 7-8 science, paper airplanes, bridges, and traditional shelters built from natural materials gave students practical ways to explore ideas and work through challenges.

Learning together through movement

Grades 7-8 HPE brought teamwork and movement skills into focus, along with drumming with Mr. Orville. Students had opportunities to participate, practise, and support one another.







GRADE 5/6 · SEPTEMBER

Grade 5/6: learning on the land

The first month was about building a strong start: setting routines, building relationships, and learning on the land and from the knowledge keepers in our community.

Friday mornings around the fire

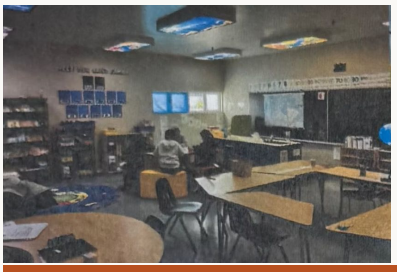
Every Friday the class spends an hour on the aki together, harvests wigwaas and wood, builds a fire, and sits in a sharing circle, introducing themselves in the language. It is a safe space where no one has to share, and the weekly practice builds connection and belonging.

Learning from Orville and Dave

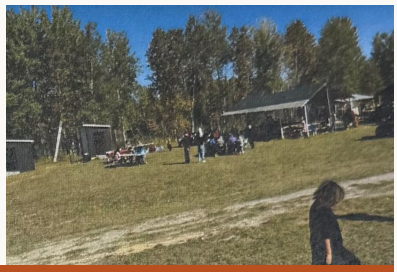
Orville and Dave shared teachings about cedar, hoop dancing and the drum. Students joined a drum circle in the gym and learned about hoop dancing. Learning from community knowledge carriers is at the heart of how our class learns.

Language class on the land

Students have Native Language every day on Zoom with Ms. Brenda, who also visited in person. Classes out on the land help students connect Oji-Cree vocabulary to the aki and remember more.







GRADE 5/6 · SEPTEMBER

Grade 5/6: a strong start together

Truth and Reconciliation

The class read Secret Path, the story of Chanie, paid respect to ancestors, and reflected on why home is so important. We gave thanks for the things that make home special: land, ancestors, families and friends.

A strong start

Routines and clear expectations are set, relationships are growing, and the class cleaned up the playground together. The community came together at the Welcome Back to School BBQ on September 18.

In the classroom

Math: hands-on work with built and measured Lego structures, plus math games. Literacy: word study, grammar and comprehension. Science: a life systems unit, starting with the human body.

Our focus for October

- Literacy: independent writing and word study
- Math: number sense and operations, decimals then fractions
- Science: the brain, heart, lungs, stomach and muscles
- Art: building confidence and creative freedom

Thank you for sending your children to school each day. — Sam Recke-Smith and Avtar Singh, Grade 5/6







GRADE 7/8 · SEPTEMBER

Grade 7/8: a happy space to learn

Hello September

A new school year is here, and the classroom is filled with smiles and excitement. September is about making friends, learning routines and fundamentals, and building a happy space where every child feels welcome and ready to learn.

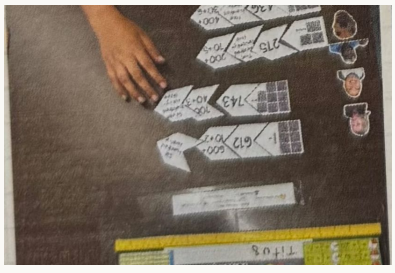
Learning

- Language: nouns and verbs, starting with the basics and strengthening fundamentals
- Math: place value and numbers up to 1 million, including relearning how to name them

Culture

In language class, students looked at words and conversations about the hunt and fall. The class continued Monday outdoor journaling. For Every Child Matters, they watched The Secret Path, discussed its connection to our community, and created their own Orange Shirt Day designs.







Snap shots from Grade 7/8






Culture Week, as shared in our September newsletter.

CULTURE WEEK · HCMS

Culture Week on the land

Culture Week brought learning into shared experiences on the land and in our school community.

Nature self-portraits and rain art gave children ways to notice and create. Oji-Cree bingo brought language into play, while hot chocolate by the fire offered time to be together.

A River Walk and a trip to the High Hills gave students opportunities to explore beyond the classroom. These experiences make room for curiosity, conversation, and connections with the land.

Making bannock, butter, and jam together was another part of the week. There is something special about learning through work we share and food we prepare together.

For me, these moments show why culture belongs within our students' everyday learning. Children can build knowledge while feeling connected to the people and places that help shape who they are.









Our school's remembrance, shared in the September newsletter.

TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

Remembering the children who never came home

On National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, our school took time to remember the children who never came home and to honour residential school survivors.

Orange shirts and the Every Child Matters story were part of that learning. A Healing Walk honouring residential school survivors brought remembrance into a shared act of care and respect.

These are important conversations to carry with thoughtfulness. At HCMS, we want children to know that they matter, that their identities are valued, and that school should be a place of safety and belonging.

Coming up

Families, please keep these October dates in mind.

October 26	PA Day
October 30	School Halloween Celebration

WITH GRATITUDE · OUR HCMS TEAM

A special thank you to our incredible HCMS staff







Our HCMS team at work

From our school newsletter: learning made possible by care.

Every photograph tells a story. Behind each science experiment, art project, outdoor excursion, reading lesson, and cultural activity is a teacher or staff member who has invested time, energy, patience, and care.

Our teachers create engaging learning environments, adapt instruction to individual needs, and build links between classroom and community life. I appreciate the thought and effort that go into helping each child participate and learn.

Educational assistants, support staff, cultural educators, specialists, and community partners are equally important to this success. Their contributions belong in the story of everything we celebrate in these pages.

I also want to recognize Education Director Susanna Baxter for her leadership and commitment to education.

Extraordinary things happen when caring educators work together with a shared commitment to children.

To every member of our HCMS team: thank you.

Looking ahead: three pillars, one philosophy

OUR DIRECTION · HCMS

Our guiding philosophy is Walking in Balance – Mino De'e Mino Maanjii'o.

As we look ahead, three pillars will guide our work. They belong together in the daily experiences we create for children.

Oji-Cree Language

We will strengthen the language and cultural knowledge that connect students to families, Elders, and community. Language learning is an important part of those relationships.

Cultural Identity and Belonging

We want children to feel valued, connected, safe, and proud of who they are. That sense of belonging matters in every classroom and throughout school life.

Academic Achievement

We will provide meaningful, engaging, and challenging learning that helps every student develop their potential. Each child deserves support and opportunities to grow.

There is still much work ahead, but there are tremendous reasons for optimism. I see children smiling, students exploring their world, teachers going beyond the ordinary, culture celebrated, and a community growing stronger together.

Miigwech, with appreciation and pride





A September moment from our HCMS school community.

Miigwech to our students, staff, families, Elders, community partners, and Marten Falls First Nation for helping make HCMS such a special place to learn and grow.

As I look through these September highlights, I see the care that surrounds our children. I see opportunities to learn through language, culture, reading, mathematics, science, art, and time on the land.

Children are discovering their strengths, building confidence, and feeling proud of who they are. That is what HCMS is about, and it is worth celebrating.

With appreciation and pride,

Tom Recke

Principal, Henry Coaster Memorial School
Marten Falls First Nation