

OTTER NEWS

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND ELEMENTARY

QUARTER 2
January 2026



PRINCIPAL'S POINTS

Happy New Year! As we step into the final two quarters, I look forward to the growth that lies ahead for our students. Our dedicated staff is committed to providing a nurturing and stimulating environment that encourages each child's learning journey.

We believe that collaboration between families and educators is essential to maximize our students' potential. Your involvement in your child's education plays a crucial role in their success, and we encourage you to engage with us through open communication, volunteering, and attending school events. Please make sure you are signed up for the new PARENT SQUARE communication tool sent out by the school district. You can access all communication by App, Text and Email!

As we continue to navigate the academic year, we will focus on building strong foundations in literacy and numeracy while also fostering social-emotional growth. Together, we can ensure that our students not only meet their academic goals but also develop the skills necessary to become global citizens. Report cards will be in your student's communication folders today!

Thank you for your continued support and partnership. I look forward to a productive and inspiring remainder of the year, filled with learning and growth for all our students!

Mrs. Brockway

SCHOOL CALENDAR													
JANUARY 2026							FEBRUARY 2026						
Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
				1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
25	26	27	28	29	30	31							
Full day for students No school for students First day back for students							Early dismissal for students Weather make-up day, if needed In-service day for school staff						

Hilton Head Elementary School	
Upcoming Events	
JAN 7	Students Return to School First day back from winter break.
JAN 9	Report Cards Go Home Please check your student's backpack for important information.
JAN 15	HHIE School Tours New student and family tours offered from 8:00-9:00am.
JAN 18	HHIE Ghost Pirates Spirit Night Come watch the Ghost Pirates Hockey Team play at the Savannah Encore Stadium. Proceeds benefit the HHIE PTO.
JAN 19	NO SCHOOL No school in observance of Martin Luther King Day.
JAN 28	Wellness Wednesday Students may wear school appropriate athletic wear.
JAN 29	MLP Morning Chat Multi Language Learner families gather for breakfast and a chat 7:15-8:15am. Please park in the overflow HHPCA church parking lot.

**Save
The
Date**

PTO Meetings @ 8am
2/5, 3/5, 4/2, 5/7

SIC Meetings @8am
1/29, 2/26, 3/26, 4/30

No School Days
1/19 MLK Day
2/13 Staff In-Service
2/16-2/18 Break



Notes from Mrs. Ryman Assistant Principal



cassandra.ryman@beaufort.k12.sc.us
Field Trips-MTSS-Wellness-Carline

YELLOW CARLINE



Please **pull all the way up** the first Unloading Zone sign. Parents should remain in the vehicle and students should be exiting through the passenger side. Please have students **ready to exit** the vehicle **quickly** once it stops (book bags on, lunch box/water bottle in hand, phones/tablets put away, etc.). Students should be exiting vehicles using the **entire length** of the **Unloading Zone**. Thank you for your cooperation to ensure our car line runs **safely and quickly**.

WELLNESS CHALLENGE - COOK TOGETHER!

Try one new **healthy recipe** as a family each week, focusing on fruits, veggies, and whole grains.



AFTERSCHOOL CLUBS

Fall clubs were a hit! **Spring club flyers** will be coming home towards the end of January. They will run from **February 11th - April 8th**.

VOLUNTEER IN THE SCHOOL

Please remember to fill out your **background application** if you wish to go on field trips. Volunteer Link [Here](#).



Notes from Mr. O'Hara Assistant Principal



sean.o'hara@beaufort.k12.sc.us
Safety-Testing-Bus Info

ACCESS Testing and **ALT ACCESS** Testing will start at Hilton Head Elementary School on **Monday, February 2nd**. It will end Friday, March 6th.



Reading/Listening: 2/2-2/6

Writing: 2/9-2/12

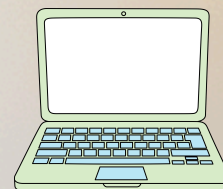
Speaking: 2/19-2/27

Make-Ups: 3/2-3/6



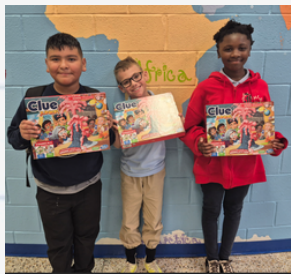
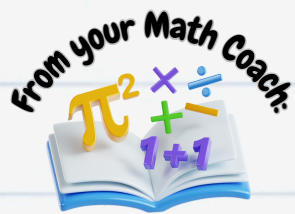
Things to remember:

- Please make sure students are **present** in school during these windows.
- Please make sure students arrive at school **on time**.
- Please make sure they have a good night's **sleep**.
- Please make sure they eat **breakfast** on those days.



Computer reminders:

- All devices should be used for **SCHOOL** related activities **only**. Students should only use their computer for ELA, math, science, social studies, and school related projects or games.
- Your child should **not** be using their computer **late at night**,
- Your child should **not** allow **ANYONE** else to use their device.
- Please make sure your child **reports lost or damaged computers** as soon as possible.



Reflex Math Contest

Fact fluency was the focus of the **Reflex Math Contest**, which ran through December 5th. **Winning homerooms** included Ms. Lugo's homeroom in 5th grade, Ms. Fernandez's homeroom in 4th grade, Ms. Rooney's homeroom in 3rd grade, Ms. Halley's homeroom in 2nd grade, and Ms. Sturman's homeroom in 1st grade.

Congratulations!

Congratulations to our randomly-selected individual **Reflex Math Classroom Contest winners** for the fall! Fourth grader Liam Reyes Cortez, fourth grader Driver Lee, and fifth grader Khanya Bryan won Clue Jr.!

Thank you so much to the community for **supporting** our **2025 Deep Well Toy Drive!** We collected more than **263 toys for Deep Well's Santa Workshop**. Thank you to all of our families who helped our **IB students take action** and live the Learner Profile by being caring and showing empathy for the **community**.

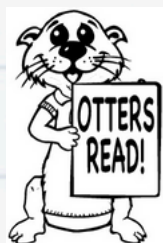


Reading & Writing Growth at HHIE

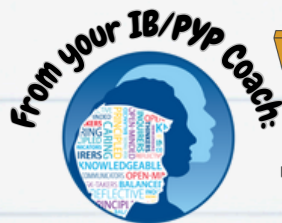
Congratulations to grades 1–5 for **strong growth** on the **i-Ready reading diagnostic** and to Mrs. Sturman, Dr. Z, Ms. Quigley, Mrs. Olander, Mrs. Fernandez, Sra. Lugo, and Mrs. Thompson for **winning the Q2 i-Ready Candyland Challenge!** Winners enjoyed **popsicles and a read aloud with the principal**. Students should keep working on their i-Ready Reading path and aim to pass at least **two lessons each week**.

This quarter we'll deepen **thinking** and **communication** through varied texts:

- Grade 5: informational texts on historical time periods and research skills.
- Grade 4: poetry and fiction, focusing on author's craft, characters, and themes
- Grade 3: science reading on astronomy, light, and sound with continued research
- Grade 2: multisyllabic word study and organized paragraph writing
- Grade 1: story retelling in order and decoding/encoding long and short vowels



Please **remind students to bring home their Otters Read folder** each night and ask about their reading – the more they read, the more they learn!



Town Hall at HHIE is a monthly, 30-minute **grade-level gathering** led by an administrator and the IB Coordinator that **celebrates** character and **community**. Each session highlights an IB Learner Profile **attribute** and a District Character Education **trait**, with students sharing examples and being recognized for **modeling** these **values**.

Town Hall also includes **announcements**, welcomes new students, and features guest speakers, **performances**, and activities that **connect** to classroom **learning** and global celebrations, **fostering** belonging and **teamwork** across the HHIE community.



October - Courage & Tolerance

1st Grade: Kennedy Reyes Santos (Belluscio)
2nd Grade: Sadie Reynells (Urys)
3rd Grade: Cristian Rojas Belman (Gleason)
4th Grade: Alexandra Sevilla (Olander)
5th Grade: Alessandra Velasquez Lopes (Davis)

November - Respect & Gratitude

1st Grade: Arlie Hernandez Lopez (Andrews)
2nd Grade: Zayne Loomis (Blink)
3rd Grade: Luna Caballero Turcios (Krapf)
4th Grade: Luke Bohr (Forman)
5th Grade: Amelia Woodhouse (Lomasney)

December - Compassion

1st Grade: Juan Gomez Nava (Faniola)
2nd Grade: Isaac Izarra Velasco (Sullivan)
3rd Grade: Ethan Bradley (Courtney)
4th Grade: Sy'aire Richardson (Birth)
5th Grade: Leia Joyce (McGrath/Wu)

未 **Chinese Special** 鶴

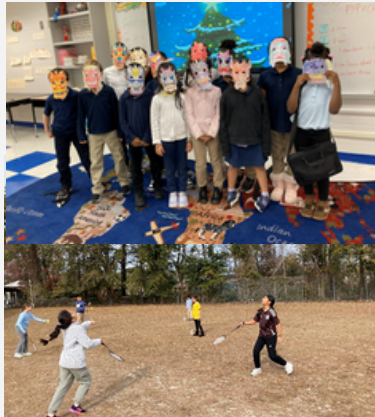
5th graders studied **Chinese immigration**, **Angel Island**, family-related **vocabulary** & Chinese **literature**, with Immersion students completing a **Moon Festival dialogue**.

4th graders learned Chinese **colors**, explored **panda conservation**, and analyzed a **Chinese poem**. 3rd graders explored Chinese **cuisine** by creating and presenting **recipes**.

2nd graders learned numbers 1-100 and Chinese **landforms**, while 1st graders learned numbers 1-10 and explored **shadow puppetry** by creating their own **plays**.

Students in the autism classroom were introduced to pinyin, numbers 1-10, Chinese **culture** through **songs** and **movement**.

Most 2nd-5th grade classes also earned a Chinese activity class featuring **hands-on cultural projects** and **games**.



Art Special

Greetings from the Art Room!



Our student artists have been busy! Each grade level took part in creating artwork for "**A River Of Words**", a book of **art** and **poetry** designed by BCSD students. Many works were **submitted** from HHIE, and we are anxiously awaiting the results! We can't wait to see who will become **published artists**!

1st and 5th grades finished up the semester by creating **clay animal pots** (1st) and **Animal Bobble-Head** figures (5th).

2nd grade is currently working a mixed media **superhero** pieces as a study of "who we are" and how to take action to help others.

3rd grade is studying the impact of natural disasters in a **landscape** and learning how to depict this on paper.

4th graders created gorgeous **winter** landscapes using **salt**, painters **tape**, and liquid **watercolors**. I look forward to a great second semester!



♪ **Music Special** ♪

1st Grade: Music was lots of fun this quarter! Students finished learning about **meter** and began **exploring rhythm**. They can **identify** simple rhythms using words like **apple** and **pear**. Next, we will start learning the **treble clef** and **note names**.

2nd Grade: Students began studying **music history** by learning about the **Baroque period**, **discovering** that the music was fancy and **written** before the **piano** was **invented**.

3rd Grade: Students continued **music history** with the **Classical period**, learning that music became **simpler** and the piano **replaced** the **harpsichord**.

4th Grade: This quarter **focused** on the **Romantic period**. Students learned about the strong **emotions** and **drama** in the music and **listened** to examples from this **time**.



5th Grade: Students studied **Impressionist music** and **composers** and were introduced to **fretted instruments**. In **January**, they will begin learning to play the **ukulele**.



Hola **Spanish Special**

This quarter, our **5th grade class** explored **Spain** through a PYP lens. Students learned about Spanish **geography**, **traditions**, and **food**, practiced related vocabulary, and completed **cultural projects**. As a **hands-on** experience, they made and tasted **churros** in class, **connecting** their learning to the real world while celebrating **cultural curiosity** and **collaboration**.

Students explored **Nicaragua**, **Bolivia**, **Spain**, **Paraguay**, and **Argentina** through hands-on cultural activities. They created **paper flags** for each country and turned them into wearable **necklaces**, practicing flag **symbols** and vocabulary while collaborating with classmates. The project celebrated cultural **diversity** in a fun, **memorable** way, and each necklace can be added to student portfolios as a learning **artifact**.





Library News – Spring Author Visit!

We are thrilled to announce that HHIE's Spring 2026 Author Visit will feature **award-winning author and illustrator Troy Cummings!**

Troy is the creator of more than **forty** beloved children's **books**, including *The Notebook of Doom*, *The Binder of Doom*, and *Can I Be Your Dog?*

Troy Cummings will be visiting our school on Thursday, March 26th, where students will have the exciting opportunity to **learn** about his books, **illustrations**, and the **creative process** behind them.

To make the visit even more fun, students will be able to enter a **special contest** for a chance to win a **pizza lunch** with the author! 🍕 ✨ Be on the lookout for more details coming soon from the **library**.

We can't wait to **celebrate** reading and **creativity** with this amazing author!



Studio Special

The Learner Profile in Studio



1st graders showed **Risk-taking** as they safely used hand tools in the Scene Shop and explored **rotation and orbit** through **cooperative** circle games.

2nd grade Communicators completed Reader's Theater **performances** of the Chinese Cinderella Fairy Tale, *Yeh-Shen*.

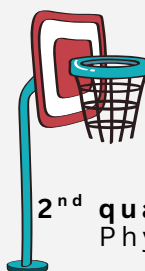
3rd graders used **Knowledge** by creating animal puppets for a "Survival of the Fittest" **debate**.

Open-minded 4th graders collaborated in small groups to **direct** and **perform** a *Medieval Reader's Theater Play*.

5th graders Reflected on the high school production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* while practicing a **dramatic reading** of Puck's Soliloquy.



STEAM Winter Wonderland was in full swing this quarter. Students participated in different STEAM activities such as; **engineering** a reindeer **obstacle course**, designing a **parachute**, engineering and measuring **gingerbread** houses, and designing a holiday **light circuit**.



PE Special



We have had a **great 2nd quarter** with your students in Physical Education class!

Please remind students to **wear tennis shoes/sneakers** on their designated red and yellow PE days.

Students have been working on a variety of skills including **throwing and catching**, **cardiovascular** fitness and **cooperative** games focusing on **sportsmanship**.

Coming up in **February** our **2nd grade** students will be participating in **swim** lessons at the Island Rec Center and all students will be doing lessons and activities for the **Kids Heart Challenge**.

We are hoping to raise a lot of money for the **American Heart Association!!** Look for info coming soon with more **details** about **both** activities.

Please encourage your child to be **physically active** each day!

MLP students will be taking the annual **ACCESS test** which tests their proficiency and **progress** with **learning** the English language.

Students will **practice** in **January**, and **test** through the month of **February**.



MLP Morning CHAT

Join us in the Red Auditorium on **January 29th** from **7:15-8:15AM** for **breakfast** and helpful information about the school and how you can **support your child**.



We have been studying **poetry** and **A Midsummer Night's Dream** by **William Shakespeare**, which has helped students learn how to **read** and **understand** both poems and plays. Through poetry, students explored **figurative language**, while the play **challenged** them to track multiple **characters** and follow the plot. Students also practiced reading **between the lines** to understand **different** characters' **perspectives**. As we wrap up this unit, we look forward to beginning our study of the **Italian Renaissance** and starting **ACCESS** practice.

Multilingual Learner (ML) students are actively **communicating** in English every day! They continue to build strong **connections** in English Language Arts while steadily expanding their **vocabulary**.



During MLP Specials, students practice and prepare for English language **proficiency** across all domains; listening, reading, **writing**, and **speaking**. In small-group pull-out sessions, students focus on **phonics**, comprehension, and everyday communication skills.

Across classrooms, ML students are **growing** in **confidence** as they answer questions using complete **sentences** and engage in richer **conversations** in English.



Attendance

Students are allowed **eight 'parent note'** excused days per year. These are times when your student does not feel well enough to come to school but probably does not need to see a **doctor**.

If your student sees a doctor, the absence is marked as **medical**. Other **excused** absences are religious holidays and attending funeral services. Please **use** our attendance email

hhiesattendance@beaufort.k12.sc.us

to communicate **ANY** time your student is out. You may also send medical notes to this email. Travel or vacations are marked as **unexcused** absences. If a student has **3** unexcused absences **in a row**, or **5 total**, they will be marked as truant per state law.



Notes from Social Worker & School Counselors

Bedtimes: Please help your student be successful in school by **getting a good night's sleep**. Elementary age children should get 8-10 hours of uninterrupted sleep. We suggest a bedtime of 7:30 pm for younger students and no later than 9 pm for 5th graders. Students should not have televisions, cell phones or electronic devices in the room where they sleep. Remember you are developing **good habits** for middle school and beyond.



Back Pack Buddies: We have a **program** at HHIE where a bag of **food** items is sent home every Friday. The food items are provided by the **Hunger Coalition of the Lowcountry**. If you are interested in this for your student please contact denise.friday@beaufort.k12.sc.us.

Lost & Found

Located at our front office.

There are many items in the lost and found, mostly sweaters and sweatshirts. Please **LABEL** your students' items and come to the school to check the lost and found if your student is missing something. We donate several large garbage bags of items each semester.



School Tours

Get to know us!



CHANGEMAKERS
HILTON HEAD ISLAND SCHOOLS



We invite you to join us for
School Presentations and Tours

Thursday, January 15th

Hilton Head Island
School for the Creative Arts

10 Bus Drive
Hilton Head Island
(843) 342-4380

Media Center
9:15-10:15 AM

Hilton Head Island Elementary
an International Baccalaureate World School

30 School Road
Hilton Head Island
(843) 342-4100

Media Center
8:00-9:00 AM

Spanish translation will be available for all tours.



Proud to be Title One Schools.