

Field Notes

The Weekly Newsletter of the Community School for Place-Based Education

September 29, 2023 | Year 10, Issue 4

From the Office:

Dear TCS families,

When I was a little girl, my mom would wash the windows of our house (inside and out!) each spring and ask my brother and I to help. It wasn't until many years later that, as an adult, I grew to understand that windows are the eyes of a home. Now I, too, clean the windows of my home each spring. Every day, I watch the workings of the school through the large window that looks out over Babson Creek. I see the Woodlands on the stump circle speaking, I see the Alpines play in the field, and I hear the Intertidals stomping around upstairs in their classroom. Sweet Ferns come in and out of the office all day, traveling through the gnome portal to find the restroom in the kitchen.

As a new person in this community, I am full of appreciation to your children and to you for sharing them with us. It is a true blessing of my life to have spent almost 19 years with young people. They keep me young, they make me laugh, and they tell me hilarious things all day like what they ate over the weekend or that they like my socks.

In the afternoon I notice that the creek sparkles in the sunlight, almost as if someone has thrown a thousand tiny diamonds across its deep brown surface. I stare out past the pine trees and listen to the sound of many children learning and having fun while they do it. Thank you to Tom Sargent for our fabulous new tables in the Timber Frames that I was able to enjoy today during lunch.

There are so many things to appreciate each and every day: sunrise, clouds, apples in trees, and young people at our school. Thank you for welcoming me!

- Patience

Thank You

Emily Henry and Julie of Chickadee Hill Flowers, **Cornell Knight** of the Town of Bar Harbor, and **Martine and Anna** of Beech Hill Farm for hosting our Outings; **Tom Sargent** for making our new picnic tables; and **Heather Carlisle** and **André DiMattia** for helping with our feast!

Reminders

Monday, October 2nd is our first **Parent Craft Night** from 6-8pm.

Wednesday, October 4th is the grades' **Northeast Creek Paddle**. Pickup and drop-off will be at 1098 State Hwy 3 in Bar Harbor. If your child has a **PFD lifejacket** or **paddle**, please pack them and ensure they are clearly marked. Additional PFDs and paddles will be available.

From the Sweet Fern Class

Dear Sweet Fern families,

Autumn is upon us and we have been quite the busy bunch of Sweet Ferns. Our adventures have been many and each day our learning continues to grow.

Autumn is the season of harvest and the Sweet Ferns have been doing just that. We spent our first outing at Leland Point Orchard and it was a day filled with apples and appreciation. We picked apples, tasted apples, processed and pressed apples, and of course, sampled our cider. In between all of the apple activities, we found time to play, explore the intertidal zone, and share appreciations and gratitudes around the enormous eagle nest tree. Truly an amazing sight to see!

Closer to home, the Sweet Ferns have continued our exploration and use of our five senses. This work has involved a variety of activities and adventures out to the whalesback (a very special granite outcrop on the back edge of the marsh). During these adventures out to the whalesback, we have explored the five senses through silent meditation walks which focus on specific senses, and while at the whalesback, we have engaged in a variety of activities which include documentation of our learning through the creation of a five senses accordion book. We are so excited to share this work upon completion!



Leo finds mussel shells at Leland Point



Charlee and Corinna take in the view



Sweet Ferns press apples at Leland Point



Charlee and Quinn observe the eagle's nest

Inside the yurt, we are gearing up to begin our literacy work. We have spent the first part of the school year orienting ourselves, practicing rhythms and routines, and learning expectations inside our classroom. This work is super important and will provide the foundation for our learning moving forward. We are also excited to share that we have begun receiving a weekly visit from our Alpine reading buddies! Always an exciting and special time in the yurt.

With Gratitude,
Ms. Jasmine, Mr. Jesse, and Mr. Kreg



Quinn works on a drawing of an apple tree

From the Woodland Class

Dear Woodland families,

Happy Fall! It was so lovely to see you all at our class meeting. We are excited about learning and adventuring with your children this school year. It was fun to share some of that excitement with all of you.

Speaking of adventuring, we visited Emily Henry at Chickadee Hill Flowers this week. The Woodlands had compiled a list of questions for Emily about her flower production, ranging from her favorite flower to her biggest challenge. They love to ask the tough ones! We learned a lot as we toured the rows of flowers and the greenhouse. We were impressed by the number of bees and butterflies we saw. Did you know that Chickadee Hill is a certified Monarch Waystation? These places provide the necessary resources to help monarchs reproduce and sustain their migration. Emily and her young daughter, Julie, even gifted us a chrysalis to bring back to school with us! We are excited to see what emerges.

As September comes to a close, we are finishing up our Agriculture on MDI theme. The Woodlands will plan and design their own farms to produce food for their community as a final project. Their goal is to consider what they will grow/raise and what products will be created from what they choose. They will each be making an aerial map of their farm layout. Who knows, there could be some new local restaurants that may form a relationship with them. Stay tuned!



Margaux leads the way to the flowers!



Picking basil with Emily Henry

Next week, our Outing will take us to the Peggy Rockefeller Farm with a possible stop for lunch at the Stone Barn. Just a reminder, we are outside on these chilly mornings. Please send your Woodlands with warm layers. We appreciate your support in helping us continue to learn outdoors comfortably as the seasons change.

Warmly,
Ms. Autumn and Ms. Alisa



Edith, Cassidy, and Nina work on their Expedition Logs

From the Intertidal Class

Dear Intertidal families,

Intertidals partnered up with Woodlands at the Common Ground Fair last week to explore all the amazing things on offer. We saw Mr. Kreg and his pottery stall, Nick Rossi and his knife collection, and Hilary with lots of amazing fabric on display from The Cultivated Thread. Groups enjoyed eating together, seeing the animals, getting their faces painted, and sliding down the hill on cardboard. A long but rewarding day saw Intertidals come home happy, exhausted and excited for next time!

Our outing this week took us into the municipal offices in Bar Harbor where we met with the town manager, Cornell Knight. We asked questions about the town budget and learned where the money comes from and how it is spent. We finished in the town council chamber where town meetings were held and felt what it was like to run a meeting.



Preparing for the 2033 Town Election

Wednesday saw us foraging for cranberries and baking bread with the Sweet Ferns before practicing literacy skills and team work with the Woodlands. We finished our regular week of classes in the forest, tasting apples and exploring watercolor pencils.

A big thank you this week to Mr. Jesse and Ms. Jasmine for hosting us. And thank you to Cornell Knight for showing us around the municipal offices!

- Mr. Jon and Teacher Dani



Harrison shows Clara and Skyler the Sweet Ferns' bread recipe



Quinn catches airtime at the Common Ground Fair

From the Alpine Class

Dear Alpine families,

Alpines have settled into their rhythms and routines during this week of vegetables, forest reading, and volleyball! During Expedition, we measured the new raised beds for the garlic and created a plan with Mr. Chris to reuse reclaimed materials as much as possible. Our raised beds should be ready in few weeks for the next generation of TCS garlic.

On Wednesday, Emily brought samples of *cucurbits* and Alpines learned that a young summer squash can be eaten raw. (Their tastebuds did not agree). We also visited Beech Hill Farm on Thursday, where we learned more about soil health and helped to harvest carrots which will be used in our sauerkraut.



Above: Simone poses with a bunch of carrots.



Left: Despite harrowing carrot-harvesting memories, Alpines persevered!

Meanwhile, in math, the 6th graders are turning ratios into fractions and putting information into table, while the 7th graders are representing proportions with equations. Eighth graders are simplifying exponential expressions and learning to create proofs that end in QED.

We had a special ELA session this week of silent reading at the Whaleback. Now that students have found their “challenge” books for independent reading, we are ready to begin our reading logs.

These reading logs will be launched next week using Google Classroom. Your student will be responsible for reading 100 minutes every week (or 20 minutes a night) and on Sundays, filling in a Google Form response for their reading log. The first reading log link will be emailed next week and their response will be due on Sunday, October 1st. Thank you for your support with this new Alpine homework, and please reach out if you have questions!

warmly,
Eloise, Emily, and Kelsi



Bronwyn and Tobias enjoy constructing mathematical proofs



Eli and Kaleb settle into Forest Reading during ELA

News and Upcoming Events

Parent Craft Night #1: Monday, October 2nd, 6:00-8:00pm in the TCS kitchen

Join Patience for a flower pounding workshop on silk scarves, in preparation for Harvest Festival. Pounding is a way to extract the beautiful natural colors from plants. We will be using a hammer to release the flower pigments into the silk. Come learn a new technique and exercise your creativity with members of the TCS community.

Wonder Walks: Wednesdays in October (4th, 11th, 18th, 25th)

Join teachers in the Sweet Fern Forest Kindergarten for a four-part immersion in the season of autumn. Each week, we will explore a location and theme through hands-on, nature-based activities that foster conversation and community-building among parents and children.

NE Creek Paddle/Cranberry Harvest: October 4th, All-Day Outing

Grades 1-5 will embark on this all day outing on Northeast Creek to learn about the ecology of the bog and harvest cranberries for our annual batch of TCS canned goods. Drop off and pick-up will be at the old Pooler Farm, 1098 State Hwy 3, Bar Harbor. Please pack extra snacks and be sure your child is wearing their grundens and rain boots!

10/10 Celebration at Fogtown: October 10th, 5:00-7:00pm

Come celebrate TCS's 10th year with wood fired pizza and family friendly place-based drink at the Fogtown Ellsworth beer garden. The featured pizza of the evening will be a TCS apple-cheddar with caramelized onion and wild sorrel, and Jon will be making a local apple-cranberry spritzer for the event. A slideshow from the last 10 years will play throughout the evening and 10% of sales on 10/10 will be donated to TCS.

Apple Fest: Friday, October 13th, 3:30-5:30pm

Come press apples, taste our favorite heirlooms and enjoy a fireside potluck at our 10th annual apple festival! Apples have so many stories to tell and they are part of our fall tradition at TCS. Come explore, taste and welcome fall with us along Babson Creek.

TCS Film Screening, October 14th: 5:00pm at COA

Since last March, local filmmaker Nikolai Fox has been filming our programs with an observational documentary approach. At this event, we will present an in-progress reel and host a discussion about filmmaking and Place-based education.



Cultivating a Sense of Self, Place, and Community