



HILLSIDE HAPPENINGS

October 23, 2026

[Hebrew translation](#)

[Korean translation](#)

[Spanish translation](#)

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

Student Safety During Arrival and Dismissal

Drivers **must remain inside their vehicles** at all times. If your child needs assistance entering or exiting the vehicle, please park in a designated parking space.

Do not double-park or ask your child to walk through the pickup line to reach your vehicle. **This is extremely dangerous and puts children at risk.**

Keeping our children safe requires the entire Hillside community to follow arrival and dismissal procedures. Thank you for your cooperation and commitment to student safety.

STUDENT COUNCIL OFFICERS

We are excited to share our Student Council Officers for the 2026-27 school year.

President Cristiano Punla

Vice President Elliot Han

Treasurer Melody Du

Secretary Audrey Kim

HALLOWEEN

Hillside School will celebrate Halloween on Friday, October 30. Students are welcome to wear **simple** costumes to school.

To ensure a safe and productive learning environment, please follow these guidelines:

- Costumes should allow students to wear them comfortably throughout the day and be easy to manage independently (e.g., using the bathroom).
- We encourage simple costumes. Avoid anything hanging below the wrist or ankle to prevent tripping or getting caught.
- No costume masks or weapons are permitted.
- Costumes should be appropriate and not frighten younger students.
- If your child has Physical Education on October 30 (D Day), ensure the costume is safe and easy to move in.
- **Weather permitting, students will have recess outdoors.**
- Class parents will provide information about food for classroom activities, which will follow the school nurse-approved list. **Do not send in goody bags, they will be returned home.**
- Pre-K students will receive additional details from their classroom teachers.

We hope these guidelines help ensure a safe and enjoyable Halloween celebration for all students.

TO NOTE

The next edition of Hillside Happenings will be on November 20. This will be the only newsletter for the month of November.

In The Halls of Hillside

Students attended a Fire Safety assembly presented by The Closter Fire Department.

From Ms. Iyo, STEM teacher

Third Grade STEM: Designing, Building & Creating!

This trimester, all third graders are visiting the STEM Lab to explore how engineers use the Engineering Design Process and computer science to solve real-world problems.

Our first challenge was to design and build a maze for a bot! Students worked through each step of the Engineering Design Process:

- ASK — What problem are we solving?
- IMAGINE — What could our maze look like?
- PLAN — Which idea will we build?
- CREATE — Build the prototype.
- TEST — Can the bot make it through?
- IMPROVE — What can we change?
- REPEAT — Test, learn, and improve!

Students are now exploring 3D design using MakersEmpire, a computer program that allows them to create their own designs for our 3D printers. Each student has a school account and can

We're excited to see our third graders develop their creativity, problem-solving skills, and engineering mindsets as they bring their ideas to life!

In recognition of Mental Health Awareness Month, join us to learn about ways to support children's emotional well-being, recognize their mental health needs, and help families access support when needed.

Counselor's Corner

♥ ICARE in Action

Each month, we focus on one ICARE value through short, intentional video lessons sent to all students each week. Our four-week approach connects the monthly theme to social skills and friendships, emotional awareness and feelings, mindfulness, and academic success. We reinforce these concepts through in-person classroom lessons.

October Theme: Respect

This month, our ICARE focus is Respect! Throughout October, students have been exploring what respect looks, sounds, and feels like and how our words, choices, and actions can show respect to ourselves, others, and our school community.

Watch our October videos here:

👤 [Respect Starts With Me](#)

👤 [Be An Upstander](#)

👤 [Pause, Breathe, and Choose](#)

Final Lesson: Your Choices Matter (To be shared in the next newsletter!)

♥ Throughout the month of October we celebrated key weeks including the Week of Respect and School Violence Awareness week to learn about respect, kindness, and peace.

♥ ICARE at Home: Conversation Starters

Use these questions to continue our learning at home and talk with your child about how they can Show ICARE Everywhere!

👤 Respect:

"What is one way you can show respect to someone today?"

♥ Caring & Empathy:

"What could you do if you noticed someone feeling left out?"

✳️ Being an Upstander:

"What could you do if you saw someone being treated unkindly?"

♥ ICARE in Action:

"Who is a trusted adult you can talk to if something makes you or someone else feel unsafe?"

✳️ Wellness at Home: Small Acts of Kindness

Kindness doesn't have to be a big gesture! This week, challenge your family to practice one small act of kindness each day. You might offer to help someone, give a compliment, include someone who is feeling left out, or thank someone for something they did.

💡 Family Tip: At the end of the day, ask, "How did you show kindness today? Did anyone show kindness to you?"

PTO Halloween Fair



Upcoming Dates

- 11/5 & 6-School closed, NJ Teacher's Convention
- 11/17- Picture Day make-ups
- 11/25- Early dismissal (K-4 at 12:40, PreK at 12:20)
- 11/26- Happy Thanksgiving, school closed
- District calendar for the 2026-27 school year [linked here](#).
- A-F letter day rotation [linked here](#).

Reminders

Supporting The Traits of a Closter Learner

To limit disruptions to learning time, items dropped off during the school day, such as lunches, water bottles, and other materials, will be delivered to students during non-instructional times, mainly lunch. Frequent classroom deliveries interrupt instruction for everyone.



We encourage you to help your child check that they have everything they need before leaving home. This small daily habit supports the Profile of a Closter Learner, helping our students grow as critical thinkers, self-directed learners, responsible citizens, and well-balanced individuals.

Other Information

**JOIN THE CLOSTER
GREEN CHALLENGE!**

**OCTOBER/NOVEMBER
WALK/BIKE CHALLENGE**

This month challenge yourself to swap short car trips for walking or biking.

Explore Closter's neighborhoods, downtown, and the Nature Center.



Enter to win:

Share your actions & tag
[@ClosterEnvironmentalCommission](#) or email to
gc@sustainablecloster.org by Nov 30.

**Bi-monthly winners receive gift cards to
Closter businesses.**

**Overall winner earns Mayor's Award at
year-end celebration!**

If you have any questions or would like to contribute to the work of
the Closter Environmental Commission, please contact us at
hello@sustainablecloster.org



Ms. Dianne M. Smith
Principal