



Hackensack Public Schools

# Newsletter

## Superintendent's Message

Recently, I had the privilege of seeing students take part in the 100th day of school celebrations and special activities. There were a multitude of projects showcasing students' creativity and artistry, all highlighting a total count of 100 and I couldn't help but think: "Can it really be 100 days since the start of the school year—already?" The reality is that the 100th day of school has come and gone and spring break will be here in another month. For the record: I'm not wishing time away and would rather like to "slow the clock down," but each year, the months just seem to go by faster. The subject of time thus brings me to an important topic: The amount of time students spend in school and how absenteeism affects student achievement.

Research shows that students with good attendance are more likely to do well in school. High attendance rates are linked to high student achievement. This applies to children at every grade level—elementary, middle and high school. Studies also show that starting in preschool, when a child is absent an average of just 2 days per month, those absences compromise the "capacity of even a strong preschool program to instill the skills necessary for reading readiness and other school readiness skills" (*Attendance Works, see link below*). There's a clear connection between attendance and success in school: Every day counts! Regular school attendance is essential to successful learning and good attendance habits established in preschool and kindergarten have a lasting impact on students throughout their education. Students with good attendance performed better in math and reading. Children who had good attendance in Kindergarten through Grade 2 were more than twice as likely to score proficient on state math tests by the time they reached Grade 8 as their peers who missed more school. Studies have also shown that children with good attendance in the early grades continue to have good attendance; and students with low attendance in the early grades are more likely to have low attendance and lower academic performance, throughout their school years.

As your child's first and most important teacher, I am asking for your support in helping your child get to school on time and every day for the remainder of this school year. Your child needs to be in school in order to learn and reach his or her full potential.

Sincerely,

*Rosemary Marks*

Acting Superintendent

More information on what families and schools can do together to support good student attendance can be found at:  
<http://www.attendanceworks.org/take-action/community-and-agency-partners/parents-and-parent-organizations/>  
<http://www.state.nj.us/education/students/safety/behavior/attendance/>

**JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2018**  
Volume 2, Issue 3



### UPCOMING IMPORTANT DATES:

**March 6-7 & 8**

Pre-K Registration at ECDC

**March 6th**

12:30pm Dismissal  
(Students Only)

**March 19th**

6:15 PM Special BOE Meeting:  
18/19 Budget Presentation

**March 30th**

Good Friday - School Closed

## Mindfulness Comes to Hackensack Schools

*Mindfulness comes to Hackensack Public Schools and it was a good day in Cometland!*

The focus of our professional development day on February 6, 2018 as **Mindfulness**. Teachers and staff from ECDC, Jackson Ave., Hillers and the High School participated in a variety of “personal development and learning” sessions. Staff took their picks from among options like yoga, breathing exercises for relaxation, high-intensity/low-intensity training, acupuncture, wellness nutrition, zumba, mandala art and journaling. Guest visitors included Marisa Liza from Allpoints Acupuncture & Wellness, Erika Lannaman, a registered dietician with Inserra Shop-Rite, and Jaclyn Jacobsen, a registered dietician with Vitamin Shoppe.

One of the highlights of the day, for me ~ as your Acting Superintendent, was the fact that most of the sessions were facilitated by our very own teachers and staff! What a gift to learn from each other, especially when we have such experts among us! Special thanks to:

- Ms. Arvizu for teaching Gentle Yoga
- Ms. Carter and Ms. Moncloa (JAS) for facilitating MOI Journaling and Mandala Art
- Dr. Jakubik for teaching Gentle & Intermediate Yoga
- Ms. Lamparelli (JAS) for teaching us about "Mindfulness for Well-being"
- Ms. McConachie (HHS) for leading "Breathing for Stress Reduction"
- Mr. Rhymer (HHS) for guiding High Intensity Interval Training & Low Intensity Interval Training sessions
- Ms. Rios (JAS) for helping us take on Zumba classes



## District Outreach Updates

Over the last few months, staff, parents, and students have taken the time to share feedback about our facilities and programs by participating in various Community Outreach meetings, and by responding to the Community Questionnaire. Your feedback is valuable and greatly appreciated!

Here are a few updates on facilities “projects” that have taken place as a direct result of your feedback:



*A new sound system has been installed at the HHS Athletic Field*

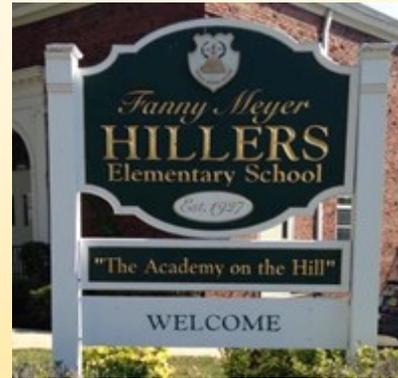
*A door for the wrestling gym has been ordered. Installation is expected to take place by the end of April.*



At all of our Community Outreach meetings, we have heard parents/guardians asking for after-school clubs and activities at our elementary schools and the Middle School. The District and the Board of Education are committed to being responsive to the needs of our community and we are currently working on a plan to provide for options like chess and coding clubs, as well as other STEM/STEAM and intramural activities.



We are listening and understand that HHS roof leaks have gotten out of control—affecting classrooms (along with teachers and students), the main gym, the East Wing gym, windows and more! Plans are currently underway for a roof project that will address these leaks and reseal Bloom Bridge windows. A timeline will be shared with you as soon as it’s available. Look for the stadium bleachers sealing project to be done during Spring Break.



*Due to the old heating infrastructure at FMH, some classroom temperatures have been too hot or too cold. Plumbing work has been done to address pipe issues, the boiler tank on the ground level was repaired and numerous boiler condensate leaks are in the process of being repaired. The District is looking at various options to provide for more long-term “fixes.” We understand that our students and teachers deserve comfortable classrooms to learn and teach in.*



The Middle School roof replacement project will be part of the HHS roof project and a timeline for the needed work will be shared in the March newsletter.

### SCHOOL FACILITIES FOLLOW-UP SURVEY

Your feedback counts! The second school facilities survey is now available. Please consider sharing your feedback as we move forward with our school facilities planning:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Facilities-Survey2>

## Fanny M. Hillers School

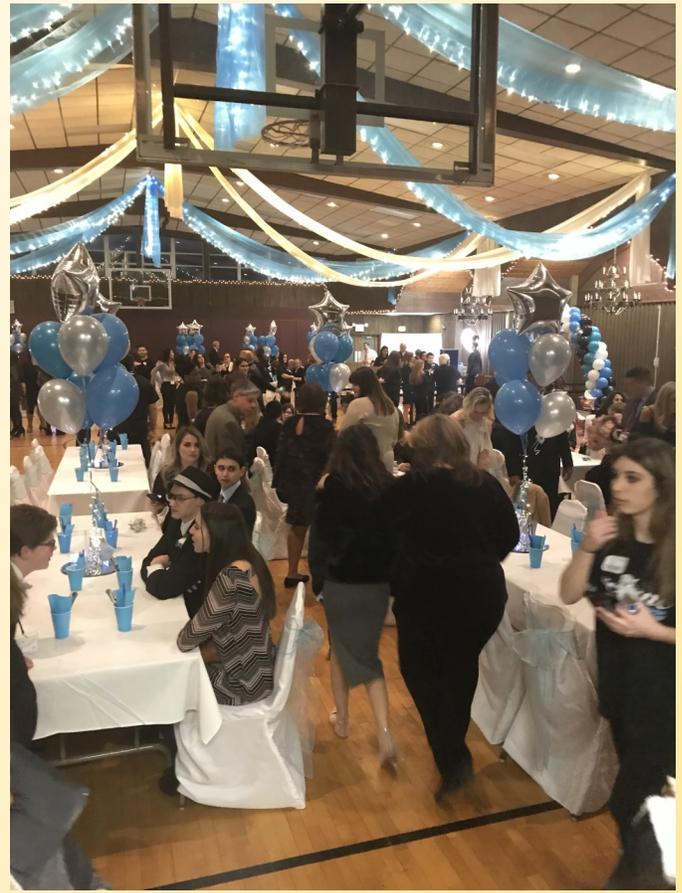
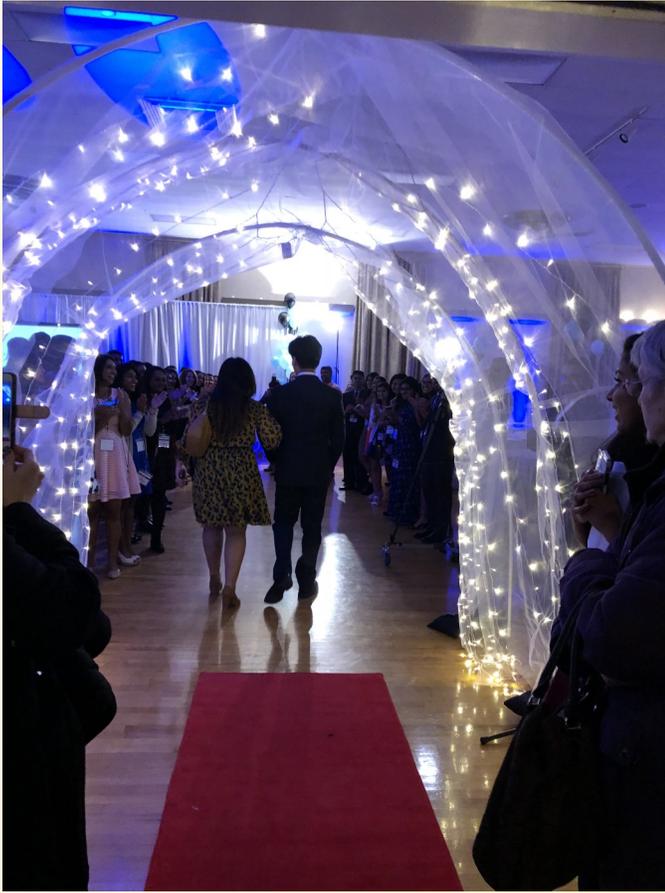
### Breakfast with the Principal at Hillers School

Breakfast with the Principal is a special time set aside to honor the students at Hillers School who achieved academic honors for the first marking period. In 1st grade it was for Academic Achievement and in 2-4th grades it was for Principal's list. A total of 64 children were invited over a two day period to breakfast in the cafeteria. They dined on a yummy breakfast of scrambled eggs, mini pancakes, fruit, bagels/sweet breads, juice, water or milk. The breakfast was supplied by Maschio's our food service company and served to the children with style. Mrs. Soto-Holland, Assistant Principal, also joined in the festivities.

Mrs. Whiting is a firm believer in lifting the spirits of children and encouraging them to always reach for their personal best in everything they do! Evan Ahearn a first grader who attended the breakfast said, "I was excited because I got to have breakfast with Mrs. Whiting. I loved the pancakes too!" Fourth grader, Sarah Aboulgamed remarked, "When I got the invitation to have breakfast with Mrs. Whiting I was so happy because I finally got to get to talk to her and get to know her better in a different setting. I would love to be invited again after the next marking period. I sure hope I do! Being on Principal's List makes me smile and feel accomplished." At the end of breakfast, Sarah and Evan weren't the only ones smiling....Mrs. Whiting was too! It was a great way to start the day!



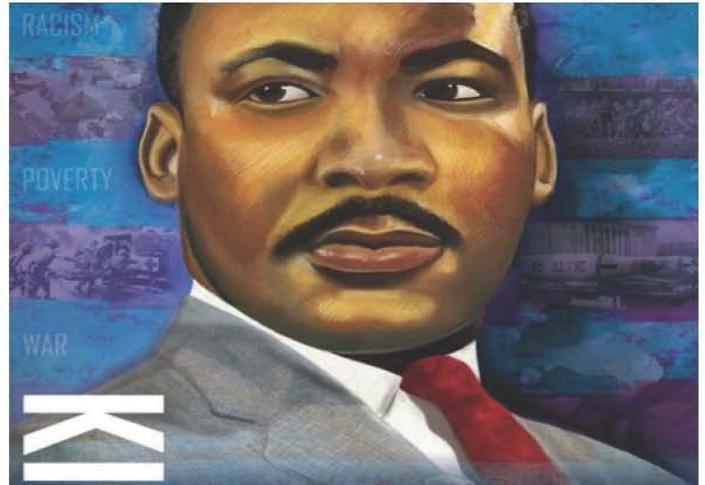
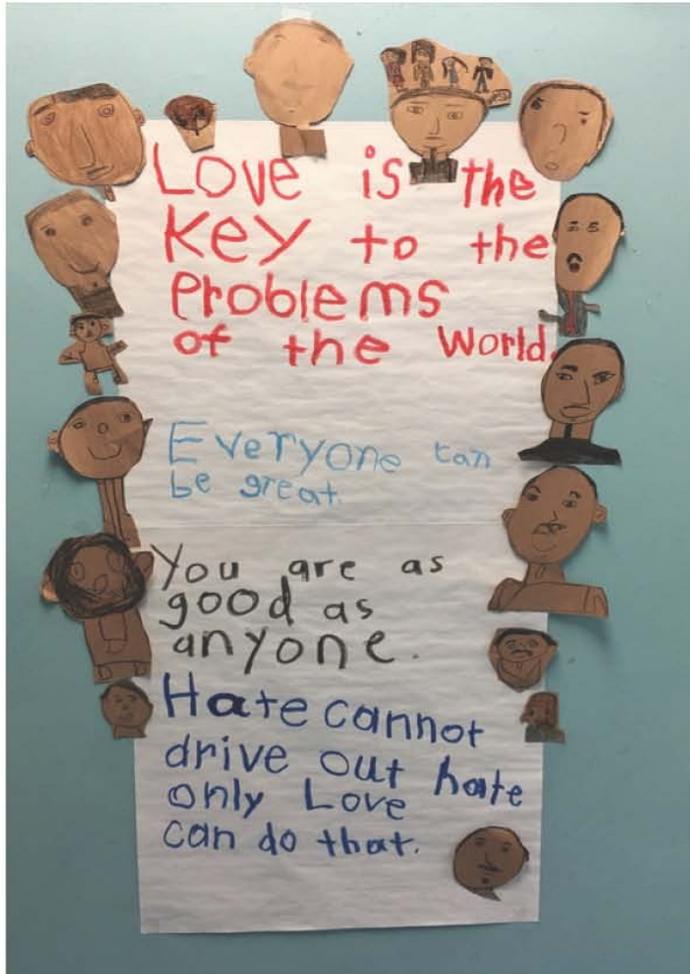
## A Night to Shine—HHS Students



Hackensack High School students in Ms. Balik's class "shined" in their prom best on February 9th, at "NIGHT to *Shine*." Sponsored by the Tim Tebow Foundation, "NIGHT to *Shine*," provides people with special needs an opportunity to participate in an unforgettable prom night experience. Held at the VFW in Hasbrouck Heights, students entered the event on a red carpet and were greeted by a friendly crowd and paparazzi. From professional photography, hair and make-up stations, corsages and boutonnieres, a catered dinner and a karaoke room, students and their guests received the royal treatment.



## Jackson Avenue School



## DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

In January, Jackson Avenue School celebrated the Life and Times of Dr. Martin Luther, King, Jr. on the 50th Anniversary of his most courageous moments. In classrooms, common spaces, announcements, and in a Second Grade Assembly, our students learned about the sacrifices Dr. King made in his life to make us a better nation. Students shared their own dreams for a better nation, for equality, and for remembering Dr. King.

JANUARY 2018

## Nellie K. Parker School

### #kidcamp Kids Teaching Kids

According to the National Edcamp Foundation, edcamps are free, organic, participant-driven, un-conferences that empower educators to maximize professional learning experiences and peer networks. As a longtime edcamp enthusiast what I love most about the movement is that at its heart it's all about educators teaching and empowering other educators. What if we gave our students the same opportunity their teachers have to learn alongside one another, lift each other up, and maximize their learning experiences all while promoting empathy and kindness?

Being an avid "edcamper" and having learned so much from my experiences, I gave this some serious thought and asked my class of 4th graders if this was a model they would be interested in trying out. I explained what edcamp is all about for grownups and asked them how we could bring this type of learning experience to Nellie K. Parker during the school day.

After some brainstorming we came up with two scenarios. First, we would give it a try during our last period of the day where students in our class would volunteer to facilitate sessions to teach other students about things they are interested in and knowledgeable about. We brainstormed a bit and came up with the idea of partnering with a younger class the way the 3rd grade did last year with their Kindergarten "Reading Buddies."

Our first try at #kidcamp had some of our students facilitating sessions for other students in our class. This was a big hit! We have been exploring Osmo, Bloxels, Tynker, Scratch Jr., and Ozobots this year. Some kids have become experts on certain platforms and volunteered to teach their classmates who wanted to learn more. Stations were set up around the room to give kids the opportunity to observe, jump in, or bounce from station to station depending on their learning wants and needs. At the end of the hour the overwhelming response was that they wanted to do this again and also share with their Kinder Buddies.

Stacey Carela, a Kindergarten teacher at NKP, and I put our heads together to find some common time for our kids to work and learn together. My students decided amongst themselves who would man each station. I explained to the 4th graders that they must be patient, kind, and remember that their Kinder Buddies are only 5 years old and may need more guidance than their 4th grade peers. When our Kinder Buddies arrived Ms. Carela and I took a backseat and let the 4th graders take over. We were there for support if needed but spent most of the time observing and making note of things we would discuss during our reflection time afterwards. Throughout the hour-long session, Ms. Carela kept remarking about how engaged her students were and that some of her students who don't speak much in class were talking a blue streak with their 4th grade buddies! What I noticed was that some students who were otherwise shy and reserved found a voice that I had never seen before! But most of all, I was proud of the way my 4th graders nurtured and supported some of our youngest learners here at NKP as they explored new learning.

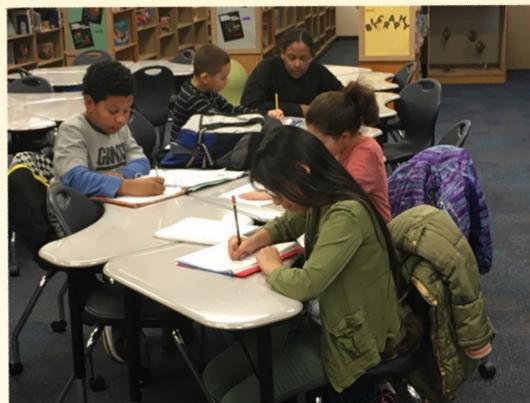
Overall, this first session was a success! Our 4th grade class has since partnered with at least four other classes at NKP to host #kidcamp and we continue to open our learning space to others to learn and grow together.



## Hackensack Middle School

### The Homework Club at Hackensack Middle School

On January 22nd, Hackensack Middle School launched The Homework Club offering students a quiet, structured and safe environment to complete their homework. The program takes place every school day (except Tuesdays) from 3pm-4pm in the Media Center allowing students access to computers and library resources. In addition to teachers who are volunteering to facilitate the program, students from the National Junior Honor Society are available daily to assist students who may need help completing their work. Thus far, the club has been a big success, with over 350 students participating over the past 2 weeks.



## Hackensack High School

### Making A Difference with the Interact Club

Hackensack High School has proudly brought back the Interact Club with the help of the local Rotary Club. The mission of the Interact Club is to make a difference in the community through service work. One of the club's members summed it up perfectly by unwittingly coming up with the slogan "Hackensack Interact Club: *Kids Who Care.*" In only a few short months, the club's membership climbed to over one hundred members strong and is quickly approaching more than 300 hours of community service. Interact students have helped out at a Muscular Dystrophy Association Muscle Walk, served food to the homeless at local churches, prepared sandwiches for the needy, provided child-care services during parent workshops at Jackson Ave School, and created holiday cards for patients in local hospitals. In order to support their efforts, they have begun fundraising with several events including "Pizza with a Purpose" which is an after school pizza sale held a couple of Wednesdays each month. Advisors Marissa Calfayan, Maria Rivera, and Jane Spielberger are proudly working with the membership to come up with more activities to help better our community. Be on the lookout!



## Early Childhood Developmental Center (ECDC)



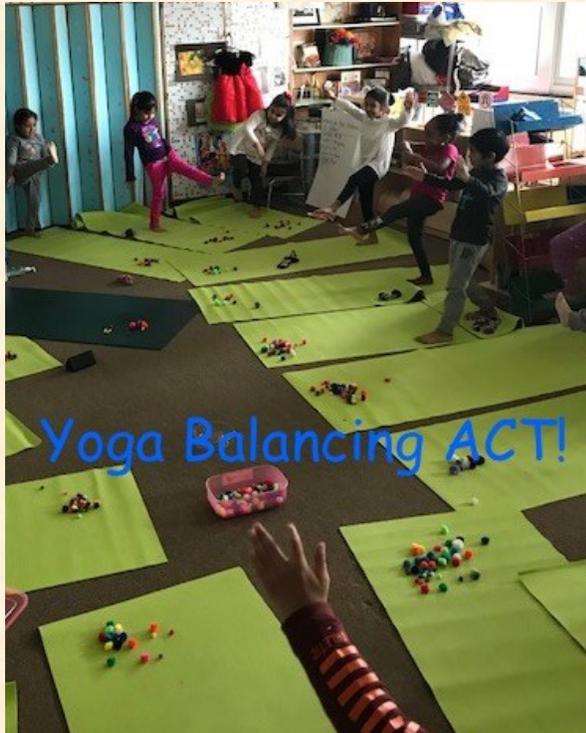
On January 26<sup>th</sup>, 2018 the Early Childhood Education Center held its annual Fashion Show to close out the clothing unit of study. Families were invited to come and get a glimpse at the hard work their children have been putting in. Students' projects were displayed throughout the gym. There were clothing lines that held different style shirt projects; some were tie dyed, some were painted and some even had crafts glued all over them. Life-sized washing machines were made from cardboard boxes and finished with paint. There was even a weaving loom that the students were able to weave their fabrics and gain a basic understanding of how clothes are made.

The highlight of the show was when every student had their turn down the runway! Each student walked down the red carpet sporting their favorite outfits. There were students wearing garments to represent what they want to be when they grow up, like a baseball player or an astronaut, others wearing clothing that represent their traditional culture like carnival clothes from the Dominican Republic, and others who wore clothes that had sentimental value such as a favorite shirt or clothes that resemble mom and dads. The fashion show was a great success.



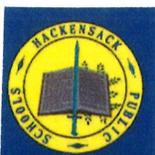
## Yoga comes to ECDC ~ with Ms. Montalbano

ECDC students in Ms. Montalbano's class recently took part in a *Kidding Around Yga* class. *Kidding Around Yoga* classes are designed to motivate children to be active, build confidence, and manage the wide range of emotions that they experience in day-to-day activities. *Kidding Around Yoga* classes incorporate cardiovascular conditioning, fun and original music, as well as teaching the traditional benefits of Yoga: meditation, breathing techniques, peace, and deep relaxation. All components are presented in a child-friendly way!



Pictured above: Students practicing different methods of pranayama breathing which are simply ways to control the breath. Also shown: Children engaging in partner yoga, balancing activities, meditation, Toe-ga (yoga for the toes), and the best part of the class, shavasana; the perfect balance between relaxation and meditation!

Announcing  
**Hackensack Public Schools**  
**Pre-K and Kindergarten Registration**  
**For Hackensack Residents Only**  
 Please see below for details



**HACKENSACK PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**Hackensack, New Jersey**  
**Early Childhood Registration**  
**2018-2019**

Registration for Hackensack's Preschool Program will begin on **Tuesday March 6 and continue through Thursday March 8, 2018** at the Early Childhood Developmental Center, 100 S. Main Street. Children must be four years of age by October 1, 2018 to participate in the half-day pre-kindergarten program. **Hours of Pre-K registration: 8 AM-11:30 AM and 1 PM- 3 PM.**

Kindergarten registration begins on **Tuesday, March 6, 2018** at your local school. Children must be five years of age by October 1, 2018 to participate in the full-day kindergarten program.  
**Hours of Kindergarten registration: 9 AM-11:30 AM and 1 PM- 3 PM**

**ESCUELAS PÚBLICAS DE HACKENSACK**  
**Inscripciones para Primera Infancia/Pre-Kinder y**  
**Jardín de la infancia/Kinder**  
**2018-2019**

Inscripción para el programa de medio día Pre-Kinder se llevará a cabo desde el **martes, 6 de marzo hasta el jueves 8 de marzo del 2018** en el edificio Early Childhood Developmental Center, 100 S. Main Street. Reglas de Inscripción para Pre-Kinder: Haber cumplido cuatro años de edad el 1 de octubre de 2018 o antes.

**Horário para inscripciones de Pre-Kinder: 8 AM-11:30 AM y 1-3 PM.**

Inscripción para el programa de día completo **Kinder** comienza el **6 de marzo** en su escuela Primaria/Elementaria local.

**Horário para inscripciones de Kinder: 9 AM-11:30 AM y 1-3 PM.**