

Dear Early Childhood Families,

Welcome to a new school year at Harbor Country Day School! It is with great pleasure that I announce to you all that I will now be leading the early childhood division. I am thrilled to be working and partnering with you throughout your journey in early childhood. There are many of you who I have known for some time and others who I will meet for the first time this September. I welcome you all and I am looking forward to getting to know and work with you throughout this school year.

I hope you are enjoying your summer and have spent some time creating special memories with your families. I was grateful enough to have spent some time in Cuba and the Bahamas with my husband. We enjoyed learning about the history of Cuba and its beautiful structures in addition to soaking up the sun on the gorgeous beaches of the Caribbean. While appreciating this time away, I couldn't help to think of how excited I am to be starting my sixth year at Harbor Country Day School. Now as I write, summer vacation is coming to a close, and before we know it, school will begin and Harbor will be seeing our happy children eager to be at Harbor. I am eager to meet our new students and greet our returning students. One of my favorite times in the day will be spending time in the classrooms and watching our students' active exploration on a variety of topics and skills.

As a teacher, and division head, I firmly believe that children learn best when actively involved in their learning. Our early childhood curriculum is one that supports that idea. In each of our early childhood classrooms, the students are exploring, discovering, and learning using a hands-on approach. As a first-year division head, one of the highlights of my day is going to be walking into each classroom and being greeted by students who are happy to show me what they are learning. The smiles on their faces when they proudly share their knowledge and understanding is always so heartwarming.

At Harbor Country Day School, we take pride in the fact that our students love to be at school. Each year we grow both as a community and as a school to make sure our students are receiving the best education possible. For instance, our Teachers College (TC) Reading and Writing approach continues to become stronger in kindergarten. Our teachers invested their time at the end of the school year by participating in a summer workshop with Lauren Kolbeck, a local TC developer. Lauren has helped to further develop this program based upon our school's needs. We are looking forward to continuing our work with Lauren as we strive to reach our academic goals this school year. Furthermore, our teachers gave their time this summer to join our initiative for a character development program led by Josh Hendrickson, founder and executive director of Project Presence. This work will be ongoing and integrated throughout our curriculum and community interactions to strengthen Harbor's social and emotional culture. We are also promoting healthy eating, beginning with healthy snacks, and will enlist your help and support!

As a reminder, please check the website for your child's school supply and uniform requirements, if applicable. This information can be found under the parent section in the Harbor Backpack at www.hcdsny.org/parents/harbor-backpack.

I look forward to meeting you at Back to School Night on September 6, at the All School BBQ on September 16, and at our first Early Childhood (PK3 through first grade) Parent Coffee on September 25.

I am very excited to begin a wonderful year of working with you, your child, and his or her teacher. The early childhood team firmly believes in the partnership between home and school and we will all work together throughout the year to develop a close working relationship. If you have any questions or concerns now or throughout the school year, please do not hesitate to reach out to me. My email address is: kgallo@hcdsny.org

Best Regards,
Krystina Gallo
Head of Early Childhood
Preschool 3s Teacher