

We've Begun!

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We've Begun! Make way for the big machines! Make way for the teachers! Make way for the students! Holland Hall's Primary School is under construction!

While the outside of our division's campus is filled with the sounds of machines, the inside of our building is filled with the sounds of learning. Children are getting to know their new teachers, grasping their new classroom's routines, and exploring various learning materials. They are settling down to the business of discovering, practicing, and applying their knowledge.

In the three-year-olds' classes, we're making handprints for a friendship chain and matching pictures of various construction tools. The four-year-olds are using construction vehicles in the large sensory table, being introduced to have-to jobs, and the five-year-olds will have a community reader visit to share a favorite story. Junior kindergarteners are introducing themselves to each other by completing a variety of activities that focus on them and their families.

Our kindergarten students are learning how to tell a story using sequence words such as first..., second..., and then..., last/finally... They are also practicing how to communicate please and thank you in sign language. First graders are learning how to build good reading habits by thinking about caring for books and the classroom library, learning how to be a productive reading partner, and exploring the many different math manipulatives they will use this year. Second grade students are being introduced to how we use spelling boxes to independently practice our spelling words and beginning to work in their math journals. The third grade will be building bigger numbers and counting using Base 10 blocks and are embarking on the study of cursive with the letters c, a, and d.

Of course, our Specials Teachers' classes are also buzzing with activity. PE challenges will focus on various locomotor skills to work out aerobically, and there will also be some upper body and abdominal strength building activities. Some Spanish classes are continuing their acquisition of skills through their calendar times and others will be ready to learn about the planets or about migrating butterflies during art and music classes. Music classes are reviewing various rhythmic and melodic elements. Our art classes are focusing on shapes and patterns, and the first graders are going to be identifying the shapes and patterns they see on the construction machines outside. Then they'll be making their own two-dimensional machine that will tie into the concepts of shape and pattern.

As you can see, we'll be embracing the changes around us by incorporating aspects of our construction project into our curriculum while still focusing attention on those concepts and skills that are so important at each grade level. It's been too quiet without these sounds of learning on our campus this summer. I'm so happy to hear them again.