

Compass Chronicle

Online Middle School | September 2017

Welcome Back CCS! This newsletter is full of important information and exciting updates about our school. We will share the Compass Chronicle with you every month to help keep you informed and stay connected with us. Enjoy!



Welcome Back!

Welcome Scholars and Learning Coaches to the 2017-2018 school year, our best year yet! This is my third year as Middle School Coordinator at Compass Charter Schools and I am looking forward to another successful year. Teachers and school staff are excited to start the school year with specific goals to promote the academic and social development of our scholars. We have a wonderful school community, where staff members are available to help scholars learn and grow.

We are all here to support you and your family as we transition to the new StrongMind curriculum and PSP. If you haven't met one of



your teachers or attended a Learning Lab yet, you're missing out! Be sure to attend daily Learning Labs with your content teachers! Not only will you learn new material, but you will also get to participate in exciting activities and interact with your teachers and classmates. Trust me, you do not want to miss these! Check out the Learning Lab schedule to see when they meet each week and access them through your teachers' announcement page. In addition to Learning Labs, your teachers also hold Q&A sessions each week, where you can pop into their Adobe Connect rooms and ask questions on assignments and concepts that may be difficult for you or that you just need some help on. Here, you can get 1-on-1 assistance from your teacher. Don't miss out on these great opportunities to connect with our school community! We look forward to a year full of excitement, growth, and success! As always, feel free to contact me with questions, concerns, or comments. I am here to help!

Sincerely,

Melissa Blitzstein, Middle School Coordinator

mblitzstein@compasscharters.org

[@CCSMsBlitzstein](#)

What's New in Middle School?

This year, our Learning Lab schedule is broken down by subject and day so you will only have one Learning Lab and Q&A session per day. See the LL schedule for more details.

Our 6-8 Science Curriculum has changed! We are now using an integrated model, where scholars will see cross-cutting concepts for the different science disciplines across all three grade levels, including Earth and Space, Physical Science, Life Science, and Engineering. They may see repeated concepts from previous years, but they will be presented in very different modalities and in much greater depth. Our Science teachers are very excited about the change and look forward to diving in with scholars!

Middle School Learning Lab Schedule

	SS MONDAY	Science TUESDAY	Math WEDNESDAY	ELA THURSDAY	Elective FRIDAY
8:00 AM					
8:30 AM					
9:00 AM	6th Grade Q&A	6th Grade LL	6th Grade LL	7th Grade LL	6th Grade Elective LL
9:30 AM		7th Grade LL	6th Grade Q&A		
10:00 AM	8th Grade LL			7th Grade Q&A	7th Grade Elective LL
10:30 AM		8th Grade LL			
11:00 AM	7th Grade LL			8th Grade LL	8th Grade Elective LL
11:30 AM			7th Grade LL		
12:00 PM	7th Grade Q&A	6th Grade Q&A		8th Grade Q&A	8th Grade Elective Q&A
12:30 PM			7th Grade Q&A		
1:00 PM	6th Grade LL	8th Grade Q&A		6th Grade LL	6th Grade Elective Q&A
1:30 PM					
2:00 PM	8th Grade Q&A			6th Grade Q&A	
2:30 PM		7th Grade Q&A	8th Grade LL		7th Grade Elective Q&A

3:00 PM					
3:30 PM			8th Grade Q&A		
4:00 PM					

Also, this month all of our scholars and learning coaches are invited to enter the **CCS School Spirit Song Contest!** We are encouraging all of our families to write lyrics and make music to create our new school spirit song! [Click here](#) to learn more and enter.

Looking for additional resources to support your scholars? [Watch this cool TedTalk](#) on how to have fun with science. You can expect to see our science lessons looking a lot like this, this year!

For additional resources, visit our [Academic Resources](#) and our [Middle School YouTube Channel](#).

StrongMind

Don't forget to check your My Compass Course each Monday for the Monday Morning Update (MMU), which your teacher will post at 8am on Monday Morning. This will have important information and updates for the week, so be sure to check it! Also, don't forget to log your Subject Activity Logs and your PE Logs in your My Compass Course on Fridays. This has to be done each and every week so creating the habit early is a good practice.

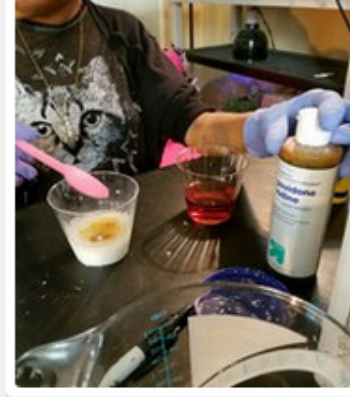


If you are having trouble navigating through StrongMind, we are here to help! You have many options to learn about the system:

- Read through your My Compass Course to learn about the StrongMind system
- Go to any teachers' Q&A session for 1-on-1 or a small group walkthrough of the system
- Book an appointment with your My Compass teacher to get a 1-on-1 walkthrough of the system
- Book an appointment with the Middle School Coordinator here to get a 1-on-1 walkthrough of the system

Science Class Experiment

This month Ms. Jessica Wood conducted an awesome science experiment with her Middle School scholars. The experiment tested the effect of iodine on starch. It was the first part of a larger science project about the process of photosynthesis. Ms. Wood and the scholars truly enjoyed conducting this experiment!



Coaches' Corner

We had a great time at our Back-to-School Picnics and a wonderful kick-off to the Coaches' Corner while we were there! Thank you to everyone who attended and helped lead the first session. We look forward to getting to know our wonderful CCS learning coaches more over the upcoming months during our online Coaches' Corner sessions.

We have some great topics already planned to get the year started but would also love to hear from YOU! So if you haven't already, please complete the quick survey by **Friday, September 22nd**: <http://tinyurl.com/Coaches-Corner-Feedback>

Have questions about Coaches' Corner? Contact Karle Roberts, Family Engagement Coordinator at kr Roberts@compasscharters.org.

Middle School Staff Spotlight

This month we are featuring Erin Thomson, a Middle School Math Teacher with CCS.



What are your primary responsibilities as a Middle School Math Teacher?

Erin: I assist scholars and provide them with resources to be successful in their math courses. I motivate them to learn and be excited about math, and I teach them to become independent learners and good citizens.

Is there anything special you would like to share about your family?

Erin: Both of my parents are retired teachers, my brother and his wife are teachers, my grandmother was a teacher, and they all love math! My husband, Riccardo, is an environmental engineer, who works with mud!

What is your favorite part about working at CCS?

Erin: I love working with scholars individually and getting to know them in my Adobe Connect room, through e-mail, chat, and phone calls.

What is your favorite thing to do outside of school?

Erin: I love spending time in the kitchen, searching YouTube for new recipes and experimenting with those new recipes!

What is your favorite thing about Learning Labs?

Erin: My favorite thing about Learning Labs is allowing scholars to turn their cameras and microphones on after being in the Learning Lab for a while. I like to see their faces, hear their voices and get to know them!

The Compass Blog



[Independent Study Programs Help Scholars Successfully Transition](#)



[A Word From Our CEO: Welcome Back!](#)



[6 Tips for a Successful College Visit](#)

The Special Education Team

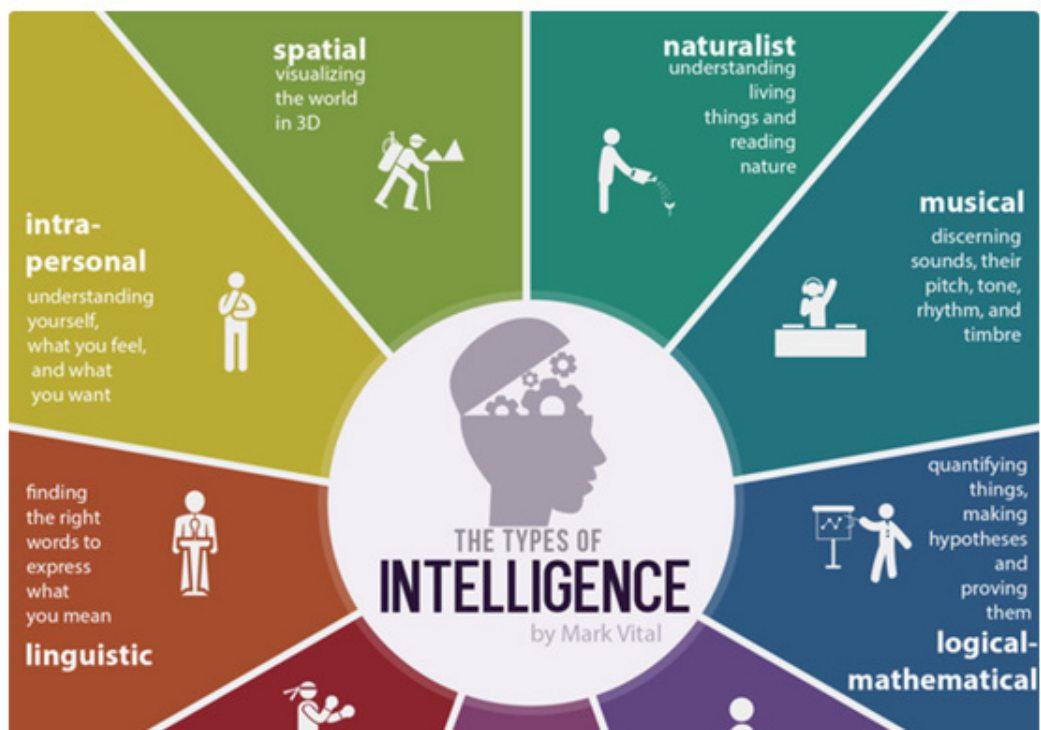
We are excited to be growing our Special Education team and we are ready to assist the scholars! As a kind reminder, we ask that scholars attend both their general education courses, learning labs, and their special education service meetings.

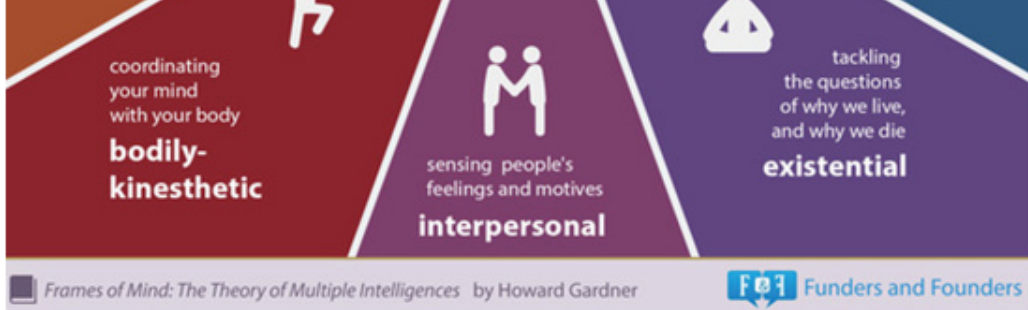


Please join us in welcoming **Lori Greenwell** to our Compass Special Education Team! Lori has a moderate/severe special education credential. She attended Cal Poly Pomona and received her graduate certification from U.H. Manoa in Hawaii. Lori loves her two remarkable daughters, Kalei and Amanda. Teaching has been her life long passion along with ranching. She also has many four footed members of her family. Lori feels fortunate to be joining the highly skilled Compass Charter Schools family and we are thrilled to have her as well!

As a reminder, our Special Education team provides the following for our scholars with IEPs:

- **SAI sessions** from 9:30 am - 12:30 pm as assigned in math, written language, reading and transitional services. During these SAI sessions, scholars receive direct instruction to support their IEP goals.
- **Morning Starter** from 8:30-9:30 am for a daily check-in to support scholars in task management and executive functioning. Supported Learning is offered for scholars requiring additional scaffolding in their academic lessons.
- **Scholar Resource Center (SRC)** is open for "drop-in" support from 12:30-3:00 pm to assist with written assignments, projects, science labs, and math coursework.





Do you know your child's learning style? Each child has a specific mode or combination of modes in which they learn best.

- **Visual Learners:** learn best by seeing flash cards, visual images, matching games, pictures and diagrams, puzzles, watching someone do something, printed material, charts, pictures, posters, wall strips, desk tapes, video tapes, and computer programs.
- **Auditory Learners:** learn best by hearing and benefit most from cassette tapes, lectures, educational songs and rhymes, rhythm instruments, recitation, singing and reading aloud.
- **Kinesthetic Learners:** learn best by doing and touching from activities such as long nature walks, hands-on math and science kits, yard work, gardening, textured puzzles and manipulatives, typing instead of writing, drama, dance, lab experiments, and building models.
- **Social Learners:** learn best by interacting with others through one-on-one conversations, discussions, and group participation.

In addition to your scholar's preferred learning style, each scholar is believed to have multiple intelligences. It is good to be aware of your scholar's many intelligences. A good book to read on this topic is, "Multiple Intelligences: The Theory in Practice," by Howard Gardner. [Click here](#) to share a free quiz with your child to help them identify their own multiple intelligence, and enjoy [The Multiple Intelligences](#) song as well!





Counseling Team

As we begin this new school year with a fresh start, we want to highlight the importance of establishing some strong communication habits straight away! As school counselors, we are here for several purposes, but our main objective is to support your academic and personal success in any way that we can. In order to do this... WE NEED YOUR HELP!

Please utilize the following checklist as it will assure that you are giving yourself the best chance for a successful school year by using all means of communication that the Counseling Services team offers to you!

- Check your e-mails daily. Part of being a responsible virtual scholar is making sure that you are checking your e-mails at least twice per day. Put a reminder in your planners or Google Calendar to check your e-mails twice per day!
- Send us current and working cell/home phone numbers. We cannot stress enough how important it is that we are able to contact you and your learning coach at all times!
- Send us current mailing addresses. Similar to the importance of having your phone numbers, it is very important that we have your current and updated address.
- Sign up for Remind. Remind is an amazing tool that allows our counseling team to send you direct messages via the Remind Application straight to your phone. Simply follow the directions on your Remind e-mail invitation to sign up!
- **Follow your counselor on Twitter!** We will be constantly sharing vital resources via Twitter, so please follow both the counseling department's twitter, as well as your personal counselor's twitter: [@CompasCounselor](https://twitter.com/CompasCounselor)

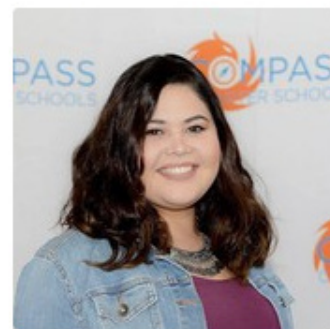
The counseling team looks forward to getting to know each of this school year, as we begin co-planning your current and future academic career!

Enrollment Team Staff Spotlight

This month we hear from **Vanessa Plascencia, Enrollment Coordinator**, at CCS.

CCS: What is one of your favorite parts about working on the enrollment team?

Vanessa: My favorite part about working on the enrollment team, and CCS overall, is that we have built such a unique family. Everyone supports each other and does their best to help support our scholars/ families.



CCS: How long have you been working at CCS?

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Vanessa: I have been with CCS for almost three years!

CCS: What drew you to work in education? Would you like to share your background in education?

Vanessa: I have always enjoyed helping others throughout my time in school. I have a great passion for working with kids and families to ensure that they receive opportunities to be successful! Previously, I worked for the Oxnard School District as a Paraeducator, Instructional Assistant, and administered CELDT testing.

CCS: Is there anything unique about you that you'd like our families to know?

Vanessa: I am the oldest of three children. My siblings and I are around ten years apart.

CCS: What is one random fact about you that we should know?

Vanessa: I love pineapples. Someone here at Compass explained to me that pineapples are a symbol of being welcoming. I think that represents who I am as a person. I welcome everyone and look forward to creating a bond with each person I meet.

CCS: What do you love most about working at CCS?

Vanessa: I love working collaboratively with everyone at CCS to ensure that we make the best decisions for each and every one of our scholars!

CCS News



[Compass Charter Schools \(CCS\) Hosted Back-to-School Picnics to Start the 2017-18 School Year](#)



[Compass Charter Schools \(CCS\) Adopts a Houston School in Need Following Hurricane Harvey](#)



[Compass Charter Schools \(CCS\) Announces August Winner of its #CCSFirebird Photo Contest](#)

EVENTS

September

- Sept 16th ~ Heal the Bay at Torrance Beach (Register by Sept 12th)
- Sept 20th ~ LA County Fair (Register by Sept 12th)
- Sept 22th ~ Club Rush (Scholar Clubs Kick-Off) - Virtual Enrichment Event
- Sept 25th ~ Fresno Chaffee Zoo (Register by Sept 11th)
- Sept 26th ~ Fleet Center (Register by Sept 18th)
- Sept 28th ~ The Sawdust Factory (Register by Sept 13th)

October

- Oct 12th ~ San Diego Zoo (Register by Sept 25th)
- Oct 13th ~ Big Fresno Fair (Register by Sept 28th)
- Oct 16th ~ Magic Mountain Homeschool Day (Register by Sept 29th)
- Oct 17th ~ Fine Art Class at Mission:Renaissance (Ages 5 to 12) (Register by Oct 2nd)
- Oct 19th ~ Time Travelers Education Day at Fresno Civil War Revisited (Register by Oct 2nd)
- Oct 19th ~ The Autry Museum (Register by Oct 3rd)
- Oct 20th ~ Monterey Bay Aquarium (Register by Sept 28th)
- Oct 23rd to 27th ~ Spirit Week
- Oct 23rd ~ Amy's Pumpkin Patch (Register by Oct 9th)
- Oct 24th ~ Pa's Pumpkin Patch (Register by Oct 9th)
- Oct 25th ~ Underwood Family Farms (Register by Oct 10th)
- Oct 26th ~ Hillcrest Family Farms (Register by Oct 11th)
- Oct 27th ~ Oma's Pumpkin Patch (Register by Oct 12th)
- Oct 31st ~ Harvest Celebration (Register by Oct 17th)

November

- Nov 1st ~ San Diego Archaeological Center (Register by Oct 17th)
- Nov 2nd ~ Lost Realms Pets (Register by Oct 18th)
- Nov 2nd ~ Moorpark Zoo Presentation and Tour (Register by Oct 18th)
- Nov 3rd ~ CCS Scholar Talent Show
- Nov 7th ~ Museum of Tolerance (MS & HS Only) (Register by Sept 15th)
- Nov 9th ~ Legoland (Register by Oct 11th)
- Nov 14th ~ The Discovery Center - Fresno (Register by Oct 30th)
- Nov 16th ~ Long Beach Airport Tour (Register by Nov 1st)
- Nov 29th ~ Bates Nut Farm (Register by Nov 14th)

To view more information and register for CCS events, visit our website calendar:

<https://www.compasscharters.org/calendar/>



Comments



Share Your Story!

Are enjoying the educational experience at Compass? Tell us! We want to hear from you. Why did you decide to join the Compass family? Or, what do you love most about being part of our community? Share your comments and all of your wonderful experiences at Compass with us! [Click here](#) to share.



Compass Charter Schools

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Visit our [website](#) for more information about our academic programs. Or, contact Melissa Blitzstein, Middle School Coordinator, at mblitzstein@compasscharters.org.

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