



For Immediate Release

May 25, 2021

Contact

Mark Connors, 843-762-2749

Media Release

Students in Ireland plan to relaunch Harbor View miniboat

Harbor View Elementary School

Gerrita Postlewait, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Karolyn Belcher
Chief Academic Officer

Michelle Simmons
Associate Superintendent,
Elementary Learning Community

Mark Connors
Principal

Charleston, SC – Nearly four years after a miniboat from Harbor View Elementary School landed in Ireland, a return journey to the United States by the *HVES Cruiser* is set to begin. The vessel is currently on display at the [Old Cork Waterworks Experience](#) in the town of Cork, Ireland. Students there are collecting artifacts and writing letters they will include in the waterproof compartment of the miniboat prior to the relaunch. Once the boat “sets sail,” [Educational Passages](#) tracks the craft in real-time so students from Harbor View, Cork, or anywhere else in the world can monitor the ship’s location.

The date for the launch has been not scheduled but is anticipated to happen within the next few months.

The mayor of Cork recently sent a video message to the Harbor View school community, and the Cork community, thanking the students from both areas for uniting the two cities and countries and inviting all to follow the continued progress of the *HVES Cruiser*.

The history of the *HVES Cruiser*

In 2017, Lisa Laughlin, a SAIL (Students Actively Involved in Learning) teacher at Harbor View, began working on this project with her students. They constructed the unmanned miniboat (approximately three feet in length with a small sail) with a GPS tracker in spring 2017 as part of the Educational Passages Miniboat Program. Students also placed letters (to children who might find the *HVES Cruiser*) inside the ship’s hull, along with artifacts, recipes, and written work from and specific to the Charleston area.

A parent from Harbor View, who served in the United States Coast Guard, offered to launch the craft in the Gulf Stream outside of the Charleston Harbor. After a five-month journey (154 days) across the Atlantic Ocean, the Harbor View community learned the *HVES Cruiser* landed in Ballycroy, Ireland.

A note attached to the hull of the miniboat directs the person who recovers the vessel to take it to the nearest school. Fortunately, a parent of a student at the Drumgallah National School found it washed up on the beach. According to the students there, the boat was damaged and the mast was broken, but the hull was intact.

The boat was transported to Cork, Ireland for repairs and now, a crest of the City of Cork is on the new sail for the ship. The *HVES Cruiser* was originally scheduled to be relaunched towards the U.S. in the summer of 2020 by members of the Cork community but delays pushed the voyage back to this year.

"We did a wonderful interdisciplinary study of research, writing, weather pattern study, as well as communicating with and learning about Ireland," explained Laughlin. "This is an ongoing, engaging experience for us at Harbor View. We can't wait to see where the wind and current take [the *HVES Cruiser*] next."

For more information, contact Lisa Laughlin at (843) 762-2749 or click on this [link](#) to learn more about the story of the *HVES Cruiser*.

###

About the Charleston County School District

Charleston County School District (CCSD) is a nationally-accredited school district that is committed to providing equitable and quality educational opportunities for all of its students. CCSD is the second-largest school system in South Carolina and represents a unique blend of urban, suburban, and rural schools spanning 1,300 square miles along the coast. CCSD serves more than 50,000 students in 87 schools and specialized programs.

CCSD offers a diverse, expanding portfolio of options and specialized programs, delivered through neighborhood, magnet, IB (international baccalaureate), Montessori, and charter schools. Options include programs in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM); music and other creative and performing arts; career and technical preparation programs; and military.