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Special Points of Interest

- ◆ Virtual PreK Take Home Activity
- ◆ Calendar of Events
- ◆ Athletes As Readers and Leaders
- ◆ Family Lending Library



Discovering the Amazing Pomelo!

Such a nutritional and tasty fruit.



Small Prints

Why Ask Children “Why?”

We know how important language skills are to children’s academic and social success. As a result, we want to create language-rich environments in our classrooms and seize opportunities to build on the language children are exposed to at home. Staff uses specific teaching behaviors to support children’s conceptual learning as well as, to expand their language development. Through our daily interactions

with children, we want to expose them to a variety of language uses and forms such as, conversing, explaining, requesting, commenting, and predicting. You will observe us asking open-ended questions as a way to invite children to offer more elaborate answers. When we ask “how” and “why” questions we are intentionally encouraging children to generate ideas, convey information and reason out loud. These are questions we don’t know the answer to:

What made you to decide to make this?

How do you think you could do that?

What else can you find that works like this?

Suppose you wanted to...?

These questions encourage children to use language in more sophisticated ways rather than simply focusing on giving the correct answer or a short response.

Healthy Eats, Active Feet: our comprehensive health and nutrition program funded by Sequoia Healthcare District’s Healthy Schools Initiative

There is exciting new data from the Center for Disease Control’s National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey that the obesity rate for children between the ages of 2 and 5 decreased from 14% in 2003-04 to just over 8% in 2011-12. Nipping obesity in the bud at an early age means there’s a greater likelihood that children grow up to maintain a

healthy weight throughout their lives. The preschool years provide us with this special window of opportunity. Families and staff have observed first-hand the multiple benefits of our **Healthy Eats, Active Feet** program. Children are now trying new and healthy

foods, learning about the 5 food groups and what makes a healthy plate. Our motor education program to develop children’s locomotor skills, their cardiovascular endurance, muscle strength, balance and flexibility has also been invaluable.

Room A

Lyle, Lyle., Crocodile! The children in our classroom have been engaged in active, creative play involving teams and our teachers have been supporting the play by introducing traditional folktales with powerful images. Thanks to Gerald McDermott's "Monkey, A Trickster Tale from India" and Judy Sierra's "The Gift of the Crocodile, A Cinderella Story from the Spice Islands" the children love to perform dramatizations of these stories. This play flows into their large motor pursuits as they attempt to balance on stepping stones to cross imaginary rivers without being eaten by the crocodiles. Making for a truly integrated learning experience. This week, we will also introduce the children to the cumulative tale of pulling the giant carrot from the ground. It takes a team effort for the family to accomplish the task.

Our Mountain continues to delight the children with the emergence of mushrooms after all the rains. Everyday the mycologists investigate the humus under the trees for more mushrooms. If none are found, they make their own with twigs and eucalyptus pods and become the "protectors" of all mushrooms.

Creating a Humungous Crocodile



Room A Family Engagement

"Yum, yum!

Empty Yum!"

(None left.)

"Spinach is my favorite."

Farhan

Rana and Lamees graced our classroom with a demonstration of Jordanian belly dancing. It was such a fun way to engage in healthy physical exercise and the children loved adorning themselves with the jeweled dancing scarves!



Jing, Kaden's mother, read books to us in Mandarin at our Circle Time.

Lucina, Bella's mother, taught us how to brush our teeth properly and the children now have a renewed interest in engaging in this healthy practice.

Center Kindergarten Project

"The transition into kindergarten is an important time in children's lives and it influences their later school careers. Children's early schooling can be considered a critical period that sets the trajectory for their future school adjustment." (Belsky & McKinnon, 1994; Pianta & Walsh, 1996)

We believe that transition planning and preparation for everyone needs to start early. There are differences between preschool and kindergarten that pose challenges for the children. We will be reviewing books about kindergarten, having the children visit their "big school", listening to our kindergarten experts (alumni who graduated last year), and discussing the similarities and differences between preschool and kindergarten. We will also have an adult kindergarten panel for our parents to explore the transition experience for families.



Panel of Kindergarten Experts...letting Prekindergarteners know what to expect & showcasing their work.



Room B

Make an appointment. The doctors are in! Our classroom continues to be engaged in doctor and nurse play. The extended roles include patients, receptionists, firefighters, and ambulance drivers. Supporting the concept development of health care professionals, the campus nurse, Beth, came down to give our teachers flu shots while the children observed and asked questions. We also had a special guest, Elisabeth (Clark's mother). She shared information about her work as a pediatric flight nurse, showed photographs and the children were in awe of the visuals.

Dr. Gabriel Santos as the resident doctor and Emmanuel Sanchez writing out the prescriptions.



The children are also practicing their writing skills, writing prescriptions and filling out patient records. While in the examination room, the children are using new vocabulary "bandages, eye patch, stethoscope, brain, blood vessels, veins and lungs." They are demonstrating their new found knowledge of "noodles" (intestines) and how they help to maintain healthy bodies. Future plans include learning more about the anatomy and learning to grow germ cultures.

Room B Family Engagement

A big High Five to Angelica's father, Tony, for constructing individual wooden frames so the children could represent their hand prints.



Alumni, Carolina and David, Juliana's siblings, visited the classroom to read aloud to our children.

"The sun woke up. It has a light in his room and it woke up."
Elizabeth Butler

Center Spring VPK Take Home Activity

Create Play Dough Shapes! The purpose of this activity is to help your child identify shapes and make patterns. Shapes are one category of patterns and are the foundation for geometry. Help your child learn by identifying and naming shapes and comparing sizes. At the same time, they will develop the muscles and coordination in their fingers and hands they need for writing as they create the shapes and measure the ingredients to make the dough

Together with your child, measure all of the ingredients into a bowl and mix thoroughly. Sprinkle some flour on a table or countertop and knead the dough with your child until it's smooth. Now, it's time to make shapes! Use your hands to form shapes out of the dough and name each shape as you make it. Ask your child to make the same shapes. Count the sides and corners of each shape together. Try asking your children some open-ended questions as they explore such as, "Where have you seen this shape before?"



Crystal creates her own play dough shapes.

Mary Meta Lazarus
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We scored again!

Athletes As Readers & Leaders
are back by popular demand to
read aloud to our children.



Calendar of Events

**March 7 & March 14—Parenting Workshop Series:
“Plan, Shop, Cook and Save” 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm**

**April 9—Music Together Event to celebrate the
Week of the Young Child 3:30-4:30 pm**

April 23— Practice Fire Drill 10:30 am

April 16th— Graduating Class Photo 10:00 am

April-May— Teacher/Parent Conferences

May 5—Desired Results Parent Surveys

May 16—Crossing the Bridge Ceremony 3:30 pm

THANK YOU TO MIA, TRACK & FIELD AND WOMEN'S BASKETBALL AND RYAN, TRACK & FIELD

Check-Out the New Addition to Our Family Lending Library



Teachers get their flu shots from Nurse Beth while the children observe and learn

In our Family Lending Library, we have a wide variety of quality children's books for families to check out and read aloud together at home. We also have parenting books on a range of helpful topics such as, toilet learning, understanding children's response to separation & divorce, fostering children's healthy self-esteem, encouraging children's healthy eating habits and more. Thanks to one of our parents, we've added a new book to the library entitled **“Positive Discipline”** by Jane Nelson, Ed. D., a psychologist, educator and mother of seven!

Her book is filled with examples of positive discipline in action. It is “a treasure trove of practical advice”. The primary message conveyed is that the key to positive discipline is mutual respect, not punishment. Nelson encourages us to be firm and kind in our approach to limiting setting so children learn creative cooperation and self-discipline with no loss of dignity. Check out **“Positive Discipline”** and discover ways to diffuse power struggles, build on your child's strengths, hold children accountable and more...

A Fabulous Resource!!!