

February

TEACHERS' BLOCKS

Murnie Leary

Director

This is the time of year when parents ask about our curriculum. Our teachers' knowledge of children, their development and how they learn is the key ingredient in curriculum planning. We know that children should have opportunities to learn through hands-on, open ended activities that encourage exploration. Our programs use a themed approach to curriculum. Some themes have included fairy tales, space, dinosaurs, and countries around the world. You may have noticed the teachers mentioning these themes in their monthly blocks. This approach allows for learning experiences to be developed across all areas: literacy, math, social studies, art and music. For examples, in the 4- and 5-year-old classes, the fairy tale unit includes planting beans for beanstalks, which involves counting, observation skills, what plants need to grow, and measuring. The classes read a variety of fairy tales, comparing and contrasting different versions of the same story, retelling the story, which requires sequencing, and writing and illustrating their own fairy tale. "Every teacher's goal is to help children move forward in their educational journey. An intentional teacher has a map (knowledge, development and needed information) and a plan for your child." (Ann S. Epstein, 2007, NAEYC). We are so fortunate to have caring, professional teachers at our school.

Mrs. Young & Mrs. Brown

5 day 4-year-olds

We are looking forward to Valentine's Day stories, projects and fun! Lots of heart-shaped animals, collages, paintings and cards will be made. We will read The Valentine Bears by Jan Brett as well as Love, Splat, by Rob Scotton. Discussing our feelings and caring for others will be a focus for this month. We also have been counting the days until our 100 day celebration. We are getting close, so it looks like the first week of March we will reach 100!! We are playing in our post office this month and learning how to write our classmates' names. We have also practiced writing our numbers. Progress reports will be available after February vacation and conferences will be held in early March, date TBD. Please make sure your child brings the "red bag" every day with snow pants and boots. The weather can change rapidly, or the playground can be wet and muddy. Thank you for your help.

Mrs. Murphy & Mrs. Laine

3 day 3-year-olds

February is here and with it brings the conclusion of our Things That Go unit as well as our celebration of Valentine's Day. The children enjoyed making hot air balloons, painting with monster trucks and learning a new traffic light song. We read many transportation themed books and incorporated recognizing shapes, numbers and letters into our activities. On Wednesday, February 14 the children will exchange valentines and make sugar cookies. Please send your child to school with a valentine for each classmate (no candy or food attached please). When we return from February break we will begin our Animal Hospital unit. The house corner will be transformed and the children will all have the opportunity to be veterinarians for the sick and hurt stuffed animals in need of care. Thank you for remembering to send the red bags each day. Even when there is no snow on the playground, the children wear their snow clothes for warmth during outdoor play. It's great to be able to get them out in the fresh air this time of year. The end of March and beginning of April will also bring Special Person Day and spring conferences. More information on these two events will be emailed in the next couple of weeks.

Mrs. Fox & Mrs. Sweeney

2 day 3-year-olds

January was a quick month for us with two snow days! We kept busy with studying winter and things that go! We sang winter songs, made snow flakes and did some ice experiments. The “things that go” theme is always a crowd pleaser everyone shared about bus, plane or train rides they have been on. The children loved playing in the classroom school bus. The children are sharing more at meeting time about the different books we read. You can really notice them growing up. They are also becoming more self-sufficient and they are reaching out more often to classmates to play and chat. February will be a fun month: pajama day, delivering valentines, vacation and then we go prehistoric studying dinosaurs. Remember - come in and visit or bring a snack anytime!

Mrs. Warren & Mrs. Ross

4 day 4-year-olds

We had so much fun on Pajama Day! We ate pancakes, played with our stuffed animals, decorated pajamas and nightgowns, listened to the book “The Napping House” while sitting on a big cozy quilt. We loved eating pancakes for snack! We spread butter, poured syrup and cut our own pancakes independently. Some of us even ate three big pancakes! Our study of Fairy Tales will end this week with a culminating activity of drawing a picture of our favorite fairy tale. We will start to think about Valentine’s Day and themes of love, kindness and sharing. We will decorate mail bags for our valentines, trace and cut folded hearts, paint a watercolor heart, print with heart shapes and read Valentine stories. We will be delivering our own valentines to each of our friends during class time. At the end of the day, we will have the opportunity to open them together. It is exciting as each child reads their valentines and thanks their friends! A detailed letter about Valentine’s Day will be sent home this week. After February vacation, we will be “blasting off” to start our “exploration” of space. We will be very busy!

Mrs. Downes and Mrs. Reilly

Lunch Bunch Extended Day
Wednesday

Our Wednesday lunch bunch is an enthusiastic group of learners! The children know the routine and are always curious as to what the activity is. It is a joy seeing their creations and listening to the children talk with each other and the teachers! A few of our recent activities have been works of creative art using recycled household items (so fun watching their imaginations at work), decorating mittens with bingo markers and pompoms, making “snow” using shaving foam, cornstarch, glitter and mint, and working on fine motor skills using scissors and fasteners (not as easy as it sounds.) Each activity is complimented by a book read aloud. Enjoy February vacation, and we look forward to seeing our friends after!

Mrs. Young and Mrs. Brown

Extended Day Enrichment

Wednesdays: We have continued to enjoy literature and music or a craft. We made light-up candles for Jack Jumped Over the Candlestick, and small pizzas for the book Pete’s a Pizza. We are making banana muffins for the story If You Give a Moose a Muffin.

Thursdays we have enjoyed science experiments including 3 different ways to make “snow.” We have also mixed ingredients to make a “lava lamp” and saw how salt melts ice. We love to experiment with lots of different ingredients.

Mrs. Sweeney & Mrs. Read-Brown

Lunch Bunch Extended Day
Thursday

It has been a fun few weeks with the children. We are watching new friendships develop. They really enjoy having lunch together! The children are having a great time playing fire fighters, cowboys and cowgirls. We have had fun creating winter art projects. The time flies by and we enjoy every minute with the children.

Mrs. Carroll & Mrs. Read-Brown

2 day 3-year-olds

For the past few weeks, the children have had a wonderful time learning how to care for others, specifically animals, when our house corner was transformed into the HNS animal hospital. This month, we are going to return our focus to caring for *people* and how to show kindness and love. The theme of kindness is the ongoing prevailing theme in our classroom and last month, we placed a *Kindness Counts* poster in our room. Whenever a teacher “catches” a child performing an act of kindness, that child is asked to place a sticker inside the large heart on the poster to represent his or her act. Our goal is to fill the heart and then begin filling the letters of the words “Kindness Counts”. Already, half the heart is filled! Conversations about how to make others feel happy and loved are also ongoing. The children put kindness into practice by giving compliments, using respectful body language (e.g., facial expressions and eye contact, giving personal space, sharing), and of course their actions. We will practice some very simple ways of doing this - through conversations, compliments and sharing, to name a few. They will also do this through various projects this month including cards, pictures, necklaces, and a very special item that will remain a surprise. We will have a celebration in honor of Valentine’s Day and the children will be able to use their growing awareness of print by distributing their Valentine cards to classmates. This activity emphasizes and supports the children’s ability to recognize and write the letters in their own name and perhaps those of some of their friends. It’s just one of the many opportunities in our room where they can practice letter skills. When we return from the February vacation, we will begin a unit on fairy tales. Not only will we learn what common threads they share as we read them, we will also incorporate some real science that will take us into this imaginary world.

Mrs. Carroll & Mrs. Christino

3 day 4-year-olds

During the month of February, we will continue to think and talk about, as well as perform, acts of kindness. The theme of kindness is the ongoing prevailing theme in our classroom and last month, we placed a *Kindness Counts* poster in our room. Whenever a teacher “catches” a child performing an act of kindness, that child is asked to place a sticker inside the large heart on the poster to represent his or her act. Our goal is to fill the heart and then begin filling the letters of the words “Kindness Counts”. Already, half the heart is filled! Conversations about how to make others feel happy and loved are also ongoing. The children put kindness into practice by giving compliments, using respectful body language (e.g., facial expressions and eye contact, giving personal space, sharing), and of course their actions. This month one of those actions will be in the form of creating several Valentine projects. These include cards, heart-shaped water colors, friendship jewelry, and a very special item that will remain a surprise. For our Valentine’s Day celebration, the children will be able to use their growing awareness of print by distributing their Valentine cards to classmates. This activity emphasizes and supports the children’s ability to recognize and write the letters in their own name and perhaps those of some of their friends. It’s just one of the many opportunities in our room where they can practice letter skills in addition to the writing corner, on the easel, at the book corner, during story time, at the coat hooks, reading the names from the light person bag and much more. The most important message we hope to convey to the children this month is that while February is the month where love is officially celebrated with a holiday, we should try to act like **every day** is Valentine’s Day! When we return from the February vacation, we will begin a unit on fairy tales. During this unit, we will learn what common threads they share and even write our own class story.