



Highland Park Community Nursery School & Day Care Center

May 2009 News

Director's Comments

It is hard to believe the school year is almost over...unless you look at the very capable, comfortable, confident children in the classrooms! As the school year draws to a close, please take a moment to look back at the growth you have seen in your child since September.

You may be astonished to see all your children have learned, and how much they have grown physically, cognitively, emotionally and socially. In some areas, your children may not have come as far as you thought they would. Please keep in mind that all children develop at their own rate, which is usually not in a straight line, nor at a steady pace. Celebrate their growth, and try to be patient....the rest will come. If you have seen areas of regression lately, know this is very normal and predictable behavior in the last six weeks of the school year.

Endings are not comfortable for any of us, including children. Some may act out, while others may not want to come to school. But, the staff will help the children through this ending in a systematic way. At rug time, we talk about our year, both with words and with pictures. We talk about what we liked best and what we didn't like. We discuss all the things we can do now, that we could not do before. We take down all the artwork and send it home. We talk about how much fun we have had, and we discuss what each of us will be doing this summer when we aren't all together with this exact group.

Keep in mind that everyone ends differently, just as we all begin in our own way. There is no right way and no wrong way. Some of us cry, some of us get angry, some get anxious, and some linger. It is a process for the children and for us. We will all get through the end of school and move on to have a wonderful summer. It happens every year.

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Please know how much all of us at “Community” have enjoyed working with your child and with you. Early Childhood is a special time with so much growth and so much to celebrate. We thank you for sharing your children with us during this important time. If you are leaving “Community”, we hope you will visit often and let us know what you are doing. If you will be here for camp, we will look forward to a fun-filled summer. Some of you are taking the summer off, and you will be back in the fall. We will look forward to that new beginning.

I would like to thank Kim Matthews and the entire Board of Directors for the outstanding work they have done this year, both in guiding the direction “Community” will be taking, and in raising funds for the benefit of all the children at the school. They are a wonderful example of how much can be accomplished when talented and capable parents work together. They have done a phenomenal job by anyone’s standards.

And, thank you to everyone at “Community” who contributed in some way to making this the best experience possible for the children in our care. Whether you volunteered in the classroom, made a material or monetary donation, organized a class party or school event, washed smocks, built a bird feeder, edited the newsletter, provided technical support, carpooled, ran the benefit, created a montage of “Community’s” children, kept the books, distributed flyers or Scholastic Books, planted flowers, etc. etc. etc. – know your efforts were important to the success of the school and very much appreciated. Without the involvement of the families, “Community” would be a very different place.

A short time ago, you received an evaluation form in your child’s folder. Please take a few minutes and let us know what you liked about the year, and any suggestions you may have for improving the program. Thank you in advance for helping us better serve and support the needs of our young children and families.

Small World Photography has reported that the individual and classroom photos will be available before the ending of nursery school. Unlike family photos, these photos must be viewed in the office. If your child was in more than one group, you may stop by the office for additional group photos which were not included in your packet.

Our special thanks to Caitlin Schwenk for producing such an informative and professional newsletter every month!

Dates to Remember

Wednesday, May 6th

Doug Brush Percussion show 10:45 a.m. & 1:00 p.m.

Wednesday, May 13th

Blue Room p.m. Potluck Dinner 4:45 – 6:00 p.m.

Yellow Room fieldtrip to the Lamb’s Farm

Friday, May 15th

Blue Room fieldtrip to Heller Nature Center

Sunday, May 17th

Orange Room M,W, F Open House 4:30 – 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday May 20th

Board Meeting 9:15am

Monday, May 25th

Memorial Day – Entire School closed

Thursday May 28th

Orange Room T/TH Class Luncheon 11 a.m.

Friday, May 29th

Last Day of Nursery School classes

Wednesday, June 3rd

All School picnic at Sunset Park

Friday, June 12th

Last day of school year program for Kindergartners

Monday, June 15th

Summer Camp begins

Wednesday, June 17th

Board Meeting and Brunch 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Ice Cream Social (6:00 – 7:30 p.m.)

Thursday, June 18th

Rain date for Ice Cream Social

Finally, we hope to see all of you at our end of the year picnic in Sunset Park on June 3rd. More details will be in your child's folder.

Have a great summer!!

Jean Wallace-Baker

Board of Directors News

Thank you for your support of Community's Annual Benefit. With your help, we raised over \$28,000! That money is used for scholarships, faculty enrichment courses, art programs, diversity initiatives, school-wide social activities, playground & classroom equipment, the Community Family Center transition and much more!

Thank you for your support of Community,

Kim Matthews
Board President
matthews5@comcast.net

Community Chat

Saying "Good-bye" to Three Community Staff.....

In addition to saying "good-bye" to many of our parents and students who are moving on to kindergarten, first grade or another community, we are also saying "good-bye" to three of our staff who have collectively given almost 60 years of service to Highland Park Community Nursery School and Day Care Center.

Lisa Adelmund, a teacher, designated director, and grant writer has taken a grant writing position in her home town in Iowa where her family resides. She began her new position after the first of the year.

Shannon Bronstein, the assistant to the director, and her family will be moving to the UP of Michigan when their son, Charlie, graduates from Highland Park High School this month. They will be joining Laura and Megan Bronstein who are students at Marquette. Shannon and her husband, Lee, will officially begin their new positions in June.

Kathy Martinez, our parent coordinator and teacher in the Yellow Room, will be leaving at the end of the school year (after 31 years) to provide home childcare for her infant grand daughter, Matilda, and Matilda's infant cousin.

While we cannot imagine "Community" without them, we wish them all the best in the next chapter of each of their lives. They will each be remembered for their special contributions to the children, families and staff at HPC.

Swine Flu update

Please be aware that our center may close if the local authorities feel it is necessary. Please be thinking of an alternative child care plan should school closures be necessary.

All School Picnic

Wednesday, June 3 will be HPCN's annual All School Picnic from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. Bring your family and a picnic supper to the large shelter on the hill at Sunset Park and join the festivities. Water and ice cream treats will be provided. See you there rain or shine!

Tips for Eating Out with Kids

1. When you can, stay clear of the kids' menu. Instead, order appetizers or half orders, split a meal between children, or give them some of yours off the regular menu.
2. If you must order the chicken fingers, get a side of vegetables or fruit.
3. Stay away from the soda. Get kids used to ordering milk or water.
4. Set a good example. Make sure that you, as parents, order healthy things when eating out.
5. Set guidelines for ordering before you go.
6. Become familiar with the menus of restaurants you frequent. Most places have a website with their menu available these days.
7. Use the opportunity of eating out to try new things. You might be surprised that the kid who won't eat broccoli at home might just eat it when out.
8. Go for balance. Try to choose a lean protein, fruit, or vegetable, and a whole grain.
9. Ask the wait staff not to bring bread to the table before the meal. Kids will fill up on bread and end up not eating their dinner.
10. Try a salad with protein and a lot of vegetables. Then ask the server to go light on the lettuce. If you can get the salad chopped, this might be a good option for children on finger food. If you order dessert, get something for the table to share.

Classroom News

Blue Room AM

We can't believe that this year is already coming to a close!! It seems like just yesterday that the children were entering the Blue Room. We have really enjoyed watching your children grow throughout the year. We have seen them grow physically, socially, and emotionally. Physically, the children are inches taller than they were in September. It has been fun measuring each other throughout the school year. The children have learned about the give and take of friendship and what makes a good friend. They have also learned to use their words to express how they feel. Please continue to encourage these skills as your children continue to grow.

This month we learned about the holidays: Easter, Passover, and Mother's Day. We have started identifying signs of Spring, and learned about a healthy diet and Nutrition. For Easter, the children painted eggs and went on an Easter egg hunt. For Passover, the children made Charoset and ate it as a special snack with Matza. The children have been having fun sighting signs of spring on the playground and out the Blue Room window. We made a raindrop mural that is located outside the Blue Room. The children made grass; umbrellas, flowers and birds to add to the mural. The children learned about the different food groups and what is good for their bodies that helps them grow. Our field trip to Sunset Foods was very exciting! We went on a tour of the store and even saw some behind the scenes preparations. The children were taken into the basement where they saw the large refrigerators that store the huge cheeses!! We sampled cheese and fruit and saw where the ice cream was kept. A special thanks to Kim Mathews for accompanying us on our trip. Currently, we are observing 10 caterpillars that will turn into chrysalises and then butterflies. Ask your child what changes they have seen each week.

Please remember to join us for a special day at Heller Nature Center May 15th. All children are welcome to attend even if they do not usually attend class on Fridays. Drop off is at 9:30am at Heller, and pick up is 11am also at Heller.

We would like to thank all our parents for a great year! We have really enjoyed working with you and your children. Thank-you Cynthia Murphy for being our Head Room Parent! You did a wonderful job! Thanks to all the parents who helped in our classroom and/or contributed to our class parties and field trips. It was so nice to see so many parents at the Highland Park Community Benefit. Thanks to everyone who put in so much hard work and planning time. The Benefit was a great success due to all of you!! We wish everyone a happy, healthy, safe summer!!

~Ms. Mueller and Mrs. Stuart

Blue Room PM

As we reflect on our newsletter last month, we are amazed at where our study of maps has gone. If you remember, we began making maps of the classroom and drawing maps showing our way to school. As we researched and continued to study the world atlas, we followed the interests of the children. Large scale objects are of great interest to young children. As teachers we had expected this project to move in one direction, the interest of the children after Spring Break led us back to the world atlas.



We continued to add places we had visited onto our map of the USA. Many children were interested in tracing the US map and painting their maps. Finally, we found the children were interested in special landmarks on the US map and so we traveled to the art studio to make 3D relief maps.

As the date for Earth Day approached on our calendar, we decided to explore the possibility of creating our very own classroom Earth. We were able to locate a 30" balloon to use paper mache to form the model. We next decided to trace the continents from the atlas and use the shapes as tissue mosaic to look like the atlas.



Come drop by the Blue Room to see our beautiful Earth!

Laura Weinberg & Lynn Darin

Green Room

We are very excited to be taking a field trip to the Kohl Children's Museum on Monday May 11th. We have been studying the 5 senses in preparation for the special class that we will be taking at the museum. It was especially fun to take a walk around our school to search for different sights, sounds, smells, and things to feel. And what lucky timing that they were doing construction just at the top of the hill when we were looking for special and different sounds!

We are also excited to have an old friend, Mrs. Garcia, coming into the Green Room to substitute for Mrs. Fitzsimmons when she has her baby. Mrs. Garcia was a teacher in the Green Room last year and it has been fun to have her visit with us a few times before Mrs. Fitzsimmons goes.

We are looking forward to a fun summer together. We will be walking to the library one day a week and will also be swimming and attending special cultural arts programs. Even though Preschool for All does not take place during the summer, we still ALWAYS welcome parents in the classroom.

Kindergarten Enrichment

We had a busy April in the Kindergarten Orange Room. We began the month by celebrating the change of season. We have been talking about and observing spring. Look for our "April Showers Bring May Flowers" bulletin board. We made kites, ducks with umbrellas, raindrops, and flowers. We have taken a couple trips to Sunset Park to enjoy the spring weather.

We took our field trip to Lincoln Park Zoo on April 29th. Thank-you to all the parents that accompanied us on our trip! It was a blast!! Prior to going on the trip, we revisited our zoo unit. We looked at zoo books and discussed what animals we anticipated seeing. Each child chose an animal to draw and guessed where they would find their animal at the zoo. After the trip, each child drew a picture of an animal in their observed habitat and wrote a sentence. We then assembled the animals and habitats in our own zoo map. Look for our zoo map outside the Orange Room. This was a very exciting event for our class!!!

We have begun our wedding unit. Ms. U and Mr. Q will be getting married since they go together in words to make the "qu" sound. The wedding preparations are underway! We have made wedding chains and bells to hang from the Orange Room ceiling and loft. The children have made the wedding invitations and sent them to each other. Next week we will be making

wedding outfits, flowers, grab-bag gifts, and a specially designed wedding cake! This is a very exciting time for everyone!

Our Kindergarten picnic for the children will be held on Wednesday May 27th during lunchtime. We will have pizza, fruit, and ice cream. At the picnic, we will recognize each child for their accomplishments and hard work in the Kindergarten Orange Room. (There will be an all school picnic for children and parents on June 3rd at Sunset Park from 5:30 to 7:00.)

Thank-you to all the Kindergarten parents for a great year! We have really enjoyed working with you and your children very much. We have had an awesome year!!!

~ Ms. Mueller and Mrs. Baldwin

P.S. A special thanks to Mrs. Avila for her help with our Highland Park Community benefit project.

Orange Room Tuesday/Thursday

First we would like to extend a heart felt thank you to Caitlin Schwenk and Teresa Anliker for their hard work on our benefit project, the picnic table!! It was adorable and the children had fun helping!

Over the last month we have been working with Mrs.Lowery in the art studio on our bird nests and recently our eggs to fill them. Working with clay has been a wonderful exploration for our fine motor skills and sensory development. This small group works well together; commenting on each other's work and supporting each other through problem solving.

We have done some seed sprouting for spring and we are enthusiastically observing the changes the seeds have gone through each week.

Our Mother's Day projects are nearly done; the children are excited to surprise their Moms.

Our last day for the Tues/Thurs class will be Thursday, May 28th. On that day we will have a special Open House Lunch for families. This will include a pizza lunch. We will begin our Open House Lunch at 11:00. Please save the date, an invitation will arrive shortly!

Mrs.Darin and Mrs.Magnani

Orange Room Monday/Wednesday/Friday

The bird project in the MWF Orange Room has been a rich experience for all involved. The teachers marvel at the children's ability to identify many different kinds of birds, not only on sight but also by call! Over the past several months, 14 different kinds of birds have appeared to feast on birdseed and suet outside of the classroom window. It's an exciting day when a new bird appears and we all scramble for the bird book to learn its name! We've done all sorts of bird related activities which include making birdfeeders, painting bird shapes with tempera and watercolor, writing and reading bird stories, creating birds' nests, and molding birds out of clay and painting them like our favorite birds. Soon each child will create his/her own unique birdhouse or bird feeder out of recyclable materials. On Sunday, May 17, 4:30-6:00 p.m., the MWF Orange Room families are invited to an Open House and Potluck dinner to celebrate our bird project and to enjoy time together.

Mrs. Carlson, Mrs. Darin and Mrs. Weinberg

Yellow Room

This month we will continue learning about different types of animals; domestic pets, farm animals, and wild/zoo animals. We are going on a field trip to The Farmyard of Lambs Farm to continue our exploration of animals. How do we take care of animals? How do they help us? Where do they live? What do they eat?

We will extend the exploration of animals into ocean life; plants, mammals, fish, shells, etc. We will end the year discussing camping and summer. What are some types of vacations? How is summer different from winter? What do we wear in the summer?

The end of the school year is fast approaching and I would like to thank all the yellow room parents for all their support, participation, and making my first year at Community a success!

Thanks,
Kelly Noonan

Art Studio

Hi Everyone,

Well, my first school year as Community's art teacher is coming to a conclusion. Its be a wonderful experience and I can't wait to see what the summer brings. Yes, I'll be around a bit for camp.

I've been assisting both the Orange Room MWF and T/TH with their bird exploration. In the MWF classroom I worked with the children painting their birds. In the T/TH classroom we've completed making clay nests and clay eggs. I'm sure all of you will enjoy the finished product, the children worked very hard.

In the AM Blue Room I've been working with the children on their ever evolving mural. We've added buds and blooms to their tree. Some children created rain clouds and others worked on rainbow clouds. Isn't it a wonderful feeling to walk underneath them in the hall outside the Blue Room? Keep your eyes open for a very large piece of group art culminating their butterfly exploration.

In the PM Blue Room I've been assisting the teachers in the children's continuing exploration of maps. Each child has joined me in the Studio to create a relief map. We discussed different types of maps and then each child created a list of five items to include on their map. They could use pretty much anything in the studio to represent those five items. Its amazing how many different items can be used to represent roads, river, streams and even a rocket ship!

The Green Room children created a mosaic violet out of purple, yellow and green papers. Each child had a black and white print of a violet. They then used ripped up bits of purple paper to fill in the purple petals. Once completed they moved on to create the yellow middle and green leaves. In the end their black and white violet turned full color. Most recently they created a beautiful mother's day bouquet using our bountiful supply of wallpaper.

The Yellow Room children also created the same mosaic violet as the Green Room. Now they are

working on a simple weaving project. Each child has an 8" x 8" piece of cardstock which they've cut notches in. Next they wrap the cardboard with a variety of colorful yarns to create a pattern.

The Kindergarten Enrichment children have moved on to exploring wire. Presently we are just playing with wire to see how it works. Each child has created their first initial (2-D) using both multiple pieces of wire and just one piece of wire. Next we will move onto adding other materials to our wire and possibly a small wire sculpture (3-D). I hope all of you have had a chance to view the Iggy Peck Architect exhibit featuring each child's architectural creation.

Thank to everyone who donated materials to the Studio! This has been a wonderful year and I look forward to many more!

Happy creating!
Heather Lowery

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Newsletter Deadline

This will be the last newsletter of the 2008-2009 school year. Have a safe and happy summer!