From the Director

Year-End Child Care Tax Statement

A child care and education tax statement will be sent electronically by January 31, 2017 to the employee on payroll deduction. Please contact Noah Fischer in the office of Human Resources and Payroll or by email Noah.Fischer@ndsu.edu or call him at 231-8965 if questions.

Kindergarten Transitions: Off to a Great Start

Date: Monday, February 5, 2018
Time: 7:00-8:00 PM
Location: EML Hall room 269

- How can I help my child have a smooth transition to kindergarten?
- How do I register my child for kindergarten?
- What are the expectations for my child in kindergarten?
- What are the best ways to communicate with my child’s teacher?

Please join us on Monday, February 5th to learn about kindergarten transitions. Nicole Braaten, an experienced kindergarten teacher from Washington Elementary, will answer your questions and share ways we can prepare your child for a smooth transition. All families are welcome to attend!

Four Things Kindergarten Teachers Want You to Know

Kindergarten teachers are passionate about partnering with the families of their students. When families and teachers work together, kids win! Here are four things that kindergarten teachers want you to know.

1. *Parents Play a Critical Role*- Kindergarten teacher’s value you as your child’s first teacher. Welcome your child’s teachers as an important partner in your child’s development. Share what you have discovered about how your child learns and include examples of times when your child has learned something new.

2. *The Value of Families and Teachers Working Together as Partners is Research-Based*. Research tells us that when families are involved, children do better academically and socially. Tell the teacher that you sincerely want to work with them to help your child learn and grow. Ask the teacher to offer specific ideas that will involve you in your child’s learning.

3. *Communication is Key*- Communication with families is such a high priority that kindergarten teachers are willing to use a variety of methods to correspond. Some parents prefer to connect via email or text, while others prefer a phone call or a printed letter in their child’s backpack. Ask the teacher the best way to access information about the classroom and the school. Share with the teacher you preferred method of communication.
4. *Teachers Want to Know What Makes Your Family Unique*—Learning about these qualities and values that make your family unique, improve partnerships. Tell your child’s teacher about unique characteristics of your family. Let the teacher know about family changes at home that may impact your child’s attitude and behaviors at school.

Building bridges between kindergarten teachers and families is an important step in supporting your child’s learning and development.

**Playdough Power!**

Squishing, rolling sculpting, modeling... young children love to play with playdough. Add some props from around the home and playdough play becomes a powerful way to support your child’s learning. This simple activity lets your child use their imaginations and strengthen the small muscles in the fingers—the same muscles they will use to hold a pencil and write. Using playdough with you or a sibling supports your child’s social skills such as sharing, taking turns, and enjoying being with other people. Playdough also encourages children’s language and literacy, Science and math skills—all at the same time!

Homemade or out of a can, playdough can provide hours of fun and learning at home. Besides the playdough, all you need are a clear surface, a few household items, and lots of time for fun. Here are some examples of around-the-house playdough props to add variation:

- Birthday candles
- Cookie cutters
- Combs
- Large buttons
- Feathers, leaves, twigs
- Plastic knives, fork & spoon
- Rolling pin
- Small toy people or animal
- Straws

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**Playdough Recipe**

- 2 cups flour
- 1 cup salt
- 4 teaspoons alum
- 2 cups water
- 1 Tablespoon oil
- Food coloring

*The Center uses this cooked playdough recipe as it is soft and stores well. Heat and stir constantly until mixture forms a ball. Remove from heat and knead. Keep in a plastic bag or air tight container. Hint—add food coloring to the water
Friday Fun at the Gym

As weather permits, the older children will continue to go over to the Benson Bunker Field House gym on Friday mornings from 10:00-11:00 to exercise, dance and run with the toddlers and preschoolers.

Goodbyes and Warm Welcomes

Eliza starts in the toddler room Feb 1st. Everly will begin her transition to the toddler room, with her first full day Feb. 16th. We wish both girls the best in their new adventures. We will miss them in our classroom!

A warm welcome to Maxine (5 months) with parents Mike and Carly, and Leif (11 months) along with parents, Matt and Kim to our classroom. Welcome to our BISON family!

Sign Language

Teachers and children continue to learn, use and expand on sign language for communication every day. Vivienne’s family donated a sign language book with picture cards that the children love to use. The Center has also purchased three sign language board books that the children have enjoyed exploring. They especially like the Animal Baby Signs book and learning the signs for cat, dog, fish and many more.

Wednesday February 14--Friendship Day!

Our classroom will be celebrating Friendship Day on Valentine’s Day. Your child is welcome to bring cards to exchange with their friends. More details to come.

The Itsy Bitsy Monkey (sung to the Itsy Bitsy Spider song)

The Itsy Bitsy Monkey
Climbed up the coconut tree.
Down came the coconut
And hit him on the knee.
OWWW!!!
Out came a lion,
Shaken’ his mighty mane,
And the itsy bitsy monkey
Climbed up the tree again!
MSUM Practicum Students

Our classroom will welcome two MSUM Practicum students this month. McCall Brown and Amanda Kulzer will each complete a 40 hours experience with the children. They will be responsible for planning and implementing developmentally appropriate toddler activities and learning to meet the individual needs of each toddler. Hayley and I will introduce McCall and Amanda to you once they begin in the classroom.

Friendship Day

Wednesday, February 14th is “Friendship Day”! It is a day when we recognize each other as our friend and celebrate a day together. Traditionally children bring valentine cards to exchange with all the children within our classroom. This tradition is completely voluntary. If you choose to bring cards to exchange, please put only your child’s name on the card. The children who have cards to exchange will distribute their cards with their parent or teacher. The children will make a “Friendship Snack and Beverage” to share at snack time. More information will be coming with details regarding both the snack and the beverage! If you have any questions about Friendship Day please ask them Mary or Hayley.

Child Transitions

Ephrem and Kate are transitioning to the preschool classroom. Ephrem began his transition on January 18th and will be a full time preschooler on February 1st. Kate will begin her transition on February 2nd and will become a full time preschooler on February 16th.

We would like to welcome Eliza, with parents Aaron and Jess and Everly with parents Adam and Bethany to our classroom! We are excited for you to join our classroom!

Preschool Happenings by Monica & Robin

Welcome Courtney!

We are excited to have welcomed Courtney Jones into our classroom as a student teacher this semester. She will be working Tuesday & Thursday mornings through March. In April, Courtney will work and play with the children full time Monday through Friday. Courtney is a student in the Early Education Department at MSUM and has already completed one student teaching in a community toddler classroom.

Sad Goodbyes to Our Friends

We are sad to say goodbye to Suzy and family. They are moving to a different state and have already left for their new home. Layne and his family are also leaving our Center mid-February. We will miss both of our friends and wish them the best in their new adventures.

“You’re off to great places! Today is your day! Your mountain is waiting, so get on your way!” Dr. Seuss
Welcome New Preschool Families!

We are excited to welcome BACK two former preschool families to the preschool room. Ephrem is a full time preschooler February 1st. We’re thrilled to welcome back his family, Jeanne, Oliver & Sister Piper. Kate is beginning to visit our room this month and will be a full time preschooler Feb. 16th. Her family is Nikki, Bobby & Brother Max. A warm welcome to our new families!

Movin’ & Groovin’

Each Wednesday from January 31st – April 11th the HNES 257 students and instructor will be Movin’ & Groovin’ with the preschoolers starting at 9:10 AM in FLC 319. This exercise science class provides students with hands-on teaching opportunities to encourage active movement and build strong bodies through physical activity. The children and teachers will go to our large motor room, FLC 319 in two groups for about 20 minutes per group.

Friendship Park Field Trip--Sledding Hill

On Friday, February 2 (Weather Permitting) the teachers and children will take the city bus to Friendship Park in North Fargo and try out our sledding skills. If the weather is cooperative, we will leave at 9:15, take bus #13 to Northport Hornbachers, walk the path to the park and spend about 35 minutes sledding. We will return by bus to NDSU at approximately 11:15. Please join us if you can!!!!

Friendship Day

On Wednesday, February 14th our classroom will celebrate Friendship Day. We will focus on what makes a good friend, why we need friends and how we show someone they’re special to us. As part of this celebration we will:

- **Pink, Red & Hearts Day:** Encourage your child to wear their red, pink, burgundy or hearts clothing.

- **The children** **WILL NOT** be exchanging Valentine cards or treats with their friends. Our curriculum will concentrate more on actions of friendship, kindness and love.

- **Friendship Fruit Salad:** Each child is asked to bring one whole fruit to prepare for our fresh fruit salad. Please try to bring a fruit that starts with the same letter as the child’s first name. Teachers we will be using that for a teaching opportunity. (Ex. Monica – mangoes).

Chinese New Year Celebration

On Friday, February 16th we will celebrate the Chinese New Year. A few of our parents are working together to help make this an educational and fun celebration for the children. More details about this celebration to come.

Monica on Vacation

Monica has an exciting opportunity to travel to France and Italy with her sister February 26th – March 9th. Michele and students will be working extra hours in our classroom during her absence. Monica will post for parents a list of her substitutes and their hours. She has promised the children to bring back photos and worldly trinkets for them to explore.