Continuity of Education Plan

Kindergarten Classroom
Margaret Shadick Cyert Center for Early Education
and Program for Collaborative Learning
AUN: 300021510

(Going forward, in this document, the school will be referred to as the Cyert Center)

Owner: Carla Freund (cfreund@andrew.cmu.edu)

Education Director: Sandra Johns
(sjohns@andrew.cmu.edu)

Address: Carnegie Mellon University
1060 Morewood Avenue,
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15213

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Phone: 412-268-2149
Website: www.cmu.edu/cyert-center

Goal of Plan:
The Cyert Center will provide continuity of education by connecting with children and families for enrichment and review, with many options available to choose from in the school’s E-Connections and Curricular Opportunities (ECCO) plan, during the period of time we are closed, beginning March 16, 2020 and to continue until we are able to return to school, with the date of return undetermined at this time.
Overview of Plan:

Resources, curricular experiences, and connections will be offered both synchronously and asynchronously.

Since our approach to education is in alignment with Developmentally Appropriate Practices, as defined by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, our plan involves supporting parents/caregivers by providing asynchronous enrichment activities that can be implemented at home with common materials, most involving active involvement and learning through play.

In addition, to help maintain relationships between the children and one another, as well as the educators, synchronous Zoom gatherings are offered for shared experiences and conversation.

Expectations for Teaching and Learning:

The flexible nature of this plan allows families to access and incorporate some or all elements. This affords families the opportunity to complement their home routine with programming in various increments of time, for example they may choose one activity that lasts 15 minutes, or incorporate all aspects and have several hours of experiences and activities, depending upon the child(ren)’s level of engagement and the availability for an adult to facilitate.

Communication Tools and Strategies

Email will be used to communicate with families, with weekly emails from the administration, focused on the closure, tuition, and the university’s guidance. The classroom educators will also email weekly, providing links for Zoom meetings and story times, as well as a set of curricular experiences that are further outlined in the “Resources” section at the end of this document titled the PreK/Kindergarten E-Connection and Curricular Opportunities chart.

Access (Devices, Platforms, Handouts):
Prior to the closure the administrative team surveyed educators to ensure that each of the three teachers had access to the appropriate technology at home, and the classroom laptop computer was made available for their use as well. The university’s desktop support staff are available for technical assistance and Carnegie Mellon also offers online tutorials for Zoom, Box, Google Drive and many other applications. In addition, the Cyert Center’s Studio Educator is available for phone consults and guidance with these tools.

**Staff General Expectations:**
All educators and administrators will continue to work a minimum of 37.5 hours throughout the closure and document their work via a “Remote Work Log” on a shared Google Drive document. Educators will be responsible for reading and responding to emails, participating in scheduled meetings, facilitating Zoom experiences with children, contributing to the weekly curricular experiences chart for families, and participating in professional development webinars, discussions and readings.

**Student Expectations:**
Because Kindergarten age students need adult support for both online and in-person programming, and most of the parents are navigating how to work from home and care for their children, participation in the ECCO Curricular Experiences will be optional. Families can engage their children in as many of the opportunities as they wish.

**Attendance/Accountability:**
Educators will monitor family participation and reach out to offer support if needed, as well as communicate this to the Education Director. Attendance will not be required and Zoom meeting and story times will be recorded to allow families to access them at a time that is convenient for them.
Good Faith Efforts for Access and Equity for All Students:
Educators and/or administrators will make every effort to connect with all children and families to offer continuity of education through the synchronous and asynchronous methods listed above. Family input will be solicited, in both narrative and multiple-choice survey form, and educators and administrators will respond to all feedback and attempt to resolve any concerns. Data from the first survey was compiled at the end of April and is currently being used to examine our curricular opportunities.

Special Education Supports:
The Cyert Center PreK/Kindergarten classroom has three children who receive supports for several different diagnosis, both at school and at home, with communication between parents, educators, therapists, TSS, BSC identified as critical. We will reach out to communicate with the families of these children to offer support, either through email or Zoom meetings, and include the specialists working with the children, when applicable. (Letter included in Resources section of this plan.) If the closing extends into the summer, the Education Director and/or Kindergarten educators will also be available to participate in meetings to help transition these children into the next school year.

EL Supports
Six of the twenty one families enrolled are bi or tri-lingual, but all have at least one parent that speaks fluent English. All children participate in English while attending the Cyert Center.

Gifted Education
There are not children in the classroom that have been formally identified as gifted, but our curriculum is designed to accommodate all levels of learners, with open-ended learning experiences that can be extended for those looking for challenges.

Building/Grade Level Contacts:
Please direct your question to the appropriate person, listed below:

Information
Person, Title, and Contact Information

Questions about operations and finance:
Carla Freund, Owner
cfreund@andrew.cmu.edu

Questions about billing and refunds:
Jennifer Fritsch Anderson, Business Operations
jf4h@andrew.cmu.edu

Questions about communications or Newsletter:
Morewood: Lindsay Bills-Cotter, Program and Communication Coordinator lmbc@cmu.edu

Questions about Audio/Video Library:
Suzanne Grove, Morewood Avenue Studio Educator suzannem@andrew.cmu.edu

Questions about an individual classroom’s E-Connections Plan or curriculum
Educational Coordinators

Questions specific to the PreK/Kindergarten classroom:
PreK/K - Niki Wise nikiwise@andrew.cmu.edu

Questions about overarching programing for preschool and Kindergarten:
Sandy Johns, Education Director
Sandy Johns sjohns@andrew.cmu.edu

Questions about kitchen-related resources:
Head Chef
Shawn Carlson shawnc@andrew.cmu.edu

Resource Links:
## PREK/KINDERGARTEN  E-Connections and Curricular Opportunities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OPPORTUNITIES</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>FORMAT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Curricular Experiences</td>
<td>Daily curricular plans with activities offered weekly</td>
<td>Google Doc “Curricular Experiences”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Social Emotional</td>
<td>Available by 6:00 Friday evening for the following week</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Gross and Fine Motor</td>
<td>Seesaw (Access sent through PreK/K)</td>
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<td>- Language</td>
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<td>- Social Studies</td>
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<td>- Creative Expression</td>
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<td>- Health and Safety</td>
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<td>Zoom Meeting Times &amp; Games</td>
<td>Our hope is that this will connect children, families, and educators, provide familiar classroom routines, and serve as an opportunity to continue to offer curriculum.</td>
<td>Zoom Meetings Times and games will be initiated by PreK/K individually</td>
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<tr>
<td>Musical Connections</td>
<td>List of songs with links to videos</td>
<td>Seesaw Seesaw (Access sent through PreK/K)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video/Audio Library</td>
<td>Individual recordings offering curriculum and connections</td>
<td>Unsearchable Youtube Playlist</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cyert Center Video/Audio Library</td>
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<tr>
<td>Resources for virtual activities</td>
<td>For example, The Pittsburgh Zoo, Yellowstone National Park, etc.</td>
<td>Weekly Newsletter, emailed on Mondays</td>
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<tr>
<td>Individual Parent Check-Ins</td>
<td>Opportunity to connect with parents experiencing unique challenges or needs (for example, mental health resources, guidance for dealing with the difficult topics of childhood such as illness, etc.)</td>
<td>Parent initiated, as needed by email or Zoom</td>
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<tr>
<td>Family-sponsored Interactions</td>
<td>For example, Individual remote playdates, informal meet-ups, and meeting times between families</td>
<td>Initiated by families; educators may or may not be a part of the interactions</td>
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**Sample Week:**

**PreK/K Curricular Experiences**
### Cyert Center e-Connections and Curricular Opportunities
*(Highlighted activities can also be found on your child’s SeeSaw page)*

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Emotional</strong></td>
<td><strong>Listen to Liz read “I Am Human” and respond to “What makes YOU human?”</strong></td>
<td><strong>Play a board game! This builds turn-taking skills and builds patience.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Reflect on kind moments (you can create kindness notes like we do in the classroom) read them as a family</strong></td>
<td><strong>Answering “What Makes You Happy?” Give personal examples and think of 10 things that make you happy</strong></td>
<td><strong>Use puppets to tell a social story. This can be about a problem or emotion you’ve noticed your child facing at home. As an added bonus, make your own puppets!</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Gross and Fine Motor</strong></td>
<td><strong>Create a Movement Challenge - How many ___ can you do in 1 minute? Add in any exercise/movement (jumping jacks, pushups, hops, etc). For an added curricular challenge, have your child write down &amp; tally how many they were able to do.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Nature Weaving - Create a weaving board (or use one from around your home). Take a walk and collect natural materials to incorporate in your weaving.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Make paper airplanes. This engages several fine motor skills. For more curricular connections, have your child build an obstacle course to fly them through.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Put together a puzzle as a family.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Animal Dance &amp; Freeze - Jack Hartman’s Freeze &amp; Dance song</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Language</strong></td>
<td><strong>When reading a book together, define &amp; discuss new vocabulary words you come across.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Pretend play! Bring out animals, people, stuffed animals, etc, and tell stories using these characters</strong></td>
<td><strong>“School and Into Nature: The Anna Comstock Story” - After listening go outside with a journal to record what you observe.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Tunetastic - explore telling stories using the app</strong></td>
<td><strong>Draw/paint a picture and tell a story about it.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Early Literacy</td>
<td>Read a recipe out loud with your child while cooking or baking. Have them look for Memory Words or other familiar words. (See Science connection)</td>
<td>Play an Uppercase &amp; Lowercase Letter Matching Game</td>
<td>Create labels or signs for organizing the house.</td>
<td>Identifying lowercase and uppercase letters in the morning message, in books, or on food packaging.</td>
<td>Word Hunt - search for memory words on a walk or in your home [this, by, are, is]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Early Mathematics</td>
<td><strong>What Time Is It?</strong> - Learn about the parts of a clock</td>
<td>Creating a calendar for the month of April-writing numbers for the days, sequencing numbers</td>
<td>Recording times using a stopwatch (running a certain distance, or how long you can balance on one leg).</td>
<td>Create a Map of Your Home</td>
<td>Designing your own board game; spatial reasoning, counting pips on dice, and moving the appropriate number of spaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Bake something together. Discuss how the ingredients work together? Or what might happen if you add too much or too little of something to your recipe.</td>
<td>Floating Egg Experiment - Explore whether or not an egg will float or sink in different liquids. Discuss why that happens.</td>
<td>What is Spring? Talking about signs of the different seasons.</td>
<td>Talking about the difference between land and sea creatures? What is George the frog?</td>
<td>Rainforest Layers - Explore the different layers of the rainforest and what animals live there.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>Thinking about past, present and future when talking about the previous weekend or plans for next weekend</td>
<td>Conversations about different languages - learning how to say “hello” or simple greetings in other languages</td>
<td>My House - Draw a picture of everyone in your house.</td>
<td>Learning about members of the community and their jobs</td>
<td>Look at a map of Pittsburgh, finding different landmarks and where you live. Take a virtual walk to some of your favorite places using Google Maps!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Creative Expression
- Making a chalk self portrait and drawing spots of emotion on chalk drawing
- Creating faces or structures using loose parts/open-ended materials from around the house
- Create a Nature Wand
- Design a Game - create a board game of your own
- Tracing leaves you find outside on a walk and coloring them in on a piece of paper/making a leaf collage

### Health and Safety
- Playing red light/green light and discussing safe ways to cross the street and the meaning of street lights
- Discuss first-aid and what someone might need in an emergency.
- Soap vs. Germs - pepper water and soap experiment (previously Good Foods song and activity)
- Creating agreements for different rooms of the house, similar to our classroom agreements - writing them together
- Discussing healthy food choices and how they can help your body grow and have energy

### Sample Parent Communication:

*Dear Cyert Center Parents,*

Thank you for your patience as we developed the Cyert Center “E-Connections and Curricular Opportunities” plan (attached). It was our intention to present the cohesive plan once all aspects were solidified, but we understand and heard your requests for more information sooner, which is why we have been rolling it out in parts.

We sincerely understand how disruptive the Governor’s Stay at Home Order, closure of the Cyert Center, and intense social distancing has been for families. While the Cyert Center E-Connections and Curricular Opportunities (ECCO) plan attached to this email is not the same as the full-day, early education experience we are accustomed to providing, it is our intention to continue to provide families with resources, curricular experiences, and connections throughout the month of April. In alignment with CMU, we are evaluating operations on a month by month basis.

These connections and curricular opportunities are meant to be an optional resource for families. Families will access components of this plan in a way that is relevant to their own unique situations. As you well know, what’s most important to children right now is to feel safe and protected in their everyday lives. You know best about what your child(ren) needs to achieve that sense of security. We are here to support you however we can.

We are grateful to be in partnership with you throughout the upcoming weeks and feel certain the Cyert Center community will get through this challenge together.

*Best, The Cyert Center Staff*
Parent Survey Response Summary (April 29, 2020)

Count of So far, our experiences with [Curricular Experiences specific to my child's age-group]

- We often use it: 14.1%
- We sometimes use it: 48.9%
- We never use it: 20.7%
- We always use this!: 13.0%
- N/A: 3.3%
Count of So far, our experiences with [Live Meeting Times (Preschool & PreK/K only)]

- We never use it: 5.4%
- We sometimes use it: 10.9%
- We always use this!: 18.5%
- N/A: 53.3%

We often use it: 12.0%
Responding to initial questions:

**ECCO plan survey feedback**

Amount of Experiences Available on a Daily Basis

- **N/A**: 1.1%
- **We often use it**: 22.8%
- **We never use it**: 23.9%
- **We sometimes use it**: 35.9%
- **We always use this!**: 16.3%

Count of So far, our experiences with [Video/Audio Library]
Responding to initial questions:

ECCO plan survey feedback

Amount of Screen Time

- Exactly right: 58.7%
- Somewhat too little: 17.4%
- Far too little: 6.5%
- Somewhat too much: 15.2%
- Far too much: 2.2%
Count of [Amount of screen time]

- Far too much: 3.3%
- Somewhat too little: 8.7%
- Somewhat too much: 14.1%
- Exactly right: 72.8%

Responding to initial questions:
ECCO plan survey feedback
Amount of Synchronous, Real-Time Interaction
Good afternoon PreK/Kindergarten families,

Happy Earth Day!

As mentioned earlier this week, we are hoping to try using breakout rooms during our meeting time conversation tomorrow. We will begin our meeting time with the same format we’re currently using (greetings, meeting time song, morning message) and then I will separate the class into two breakout rooms. Liz will be leading the conversation in one group while Julia leads the conversation in the other group. Children will be separated into rooms at random. I will be going moving between both rooms so that we can offer back a meeting time recording that includes all the children. A few logistical things to know: when we invite you to join the meeting, you will have to accept the invitation. If you are not able to sit with your child during this time, maybe you can help them to know to accept the invite into the breakout rooms. 😊 We are hoping having fewer people sharing their ideas will give children more opportunities to speak and create less waiting time. Our goal is to spend about 10 minutes in these breakout rooms but will evaluate that length in the moment based on the engagement of the groups. We
will then come back together in one large group to summarize what each group talked about and say our goodbyes.

As we enter our 6th week of being apart, we wanted to take a moment to reach out. Seeing each other in passing in the physical spaces of our school lends itself to checking in with our Cyert community and touching base about questions that may arise. Know that, while we have shifted our work to our homes, these opportunities for connections can remain. We’ve been connecting with many of you in various ways and wanted to highlight the individual family check-ins listed in the ECCO plan. These check-ins are available (via email or Zoom call) per your request. They can be an opportunity to connect with educators to discuss:

- topics that we often touch base about during the drop-off and pick-up moments of the day
- developmental questions/concerns
- your child’s current interests

While these remote check-ins could never replace our in-person conversations, we are here for you.

Best,
Niki on behalf of the PreK/Kindergarten Team