Happy New Year, Everyone!

We hope you had a restful and restorative winter break and that your family is energized for learning in 2020. Though we are just beginning our January studies of Rainforest in the Preschool and Ocean in the Kindergarten, it is time to prepare for the 2020/2021 school year.

**2020/2021 School Year Information**

**Preschool Enrollment and Re-Enrollment:** Acceptance packets for incoming 3’s and those new to our 4’s Program, as well as re-enrollment packets for those children currently in our 3’s program, will be sent on January 9th. Starting in September 2020, all children will attend in the mornings, and families will have the option of having their child dismissed at 1:00 pm or at 2:30 pm Monday through Thursday. Additionally, 4’s will attend school on Friday mornings until 12 noon. You will be asked to submit a $700, non-refundable deposit to reserve your child’s space for the 2020/2021 preschool program.

**Kindergarten Re-Enrollment:** We coordinate our re-enrollment for Kindergarten with the private school timeline, so packets will not be sent home via backpacks until January 31st. Our Kindergarten class is limited to 24 children. Based on the information we received during our fall Parent/Teacher conferences, we anticipate having spaces for all presently enrolled 4’s whose families have expressed an interest in our program. Nonetheless, we ask that you submit your admission documents and $700 deposit before February 28th. After that date, new applicants will be admitted.

**Open Houses:** Thursday, January 9th at 8 AM and 12 PM. These informational Open Houses are designed for prospective Children’s School parents and involve a presentation by Dr. Carver and observations in the classrooms. Current parents are welcome to attend. Please contact Mrs. Rosenblum at rosenblu@andrew.cmu.edu or 412-268-2199 if you have questions concerning the admissions process.

**January Dates**

- **January 9th** 8:00 AM & 12:00 PM – Prospective Parent Preschool Open Houses
  - Re-enrollment Packets Sent via Backpacks to Current 3’s Families
  - Acceptances mailed to Incoming 3’s and 4’s new to our program
- **January 14th** to **17th** – Speech & Hearing Screening Days
- **January 20th** – NO SCHOOL (Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday)
- **January 28th** – Vision Screening Day
- **January 31st** – Re-enrollment Packets Sent to Current 4’s Families
- **January 31st** – 9:30-11:00 AM – Educator / Parent Discussion re: PLANET EARTH
Transition to Longer Preschool Hours

In response to increasing demand for the preschool Extended AM program (80% of applicants compared to only 50% availability), plus requests from prospective families for even longer hours, we are transitioning our morning preschool to a 4.5 hour program and will offer an additional 1.5 hours as an option beginning in the fall of 2020. Everyone in the morning program will attend for 4.5 hours and bring lunch, but we will offer a 6 hour “full day” option that matches the kindergarten program timing. Nothing will change about our school’s philosophy, priorities, etc. We will still operate from September through May with a summer camp in June. Fridays will still be a half day for Preschool 4’s and Kindergartners, with everyone dismissing at noon. Our educators will then have team meetings and professional development time in the afternoon. Please feel free to contact Dr. Carver with questions or concerns.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Though we do not have school on the national Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday, our focus at the Children’s School is always on cooperation, acceptance, peace and caring for all people. If you want to talk about Martin Luther King, Jr. at home, some educators recommend starting with a discussion of heroes as people who are brave enough to make the world better. Preschool Plan-It (http://www.preschool-plan-it.com/martin-luther-king.html) suggests that you explain that Martin Luther King, Jr. was a hero. “He worked hard for peace--ALL people getting along and being treated the same.” Sometimes people are treated badly because they do not have the same color skin. Dr. King wanted to change that, and he shared his dream “that someday, ALL people would get along no matter what color their skin was.” Depending on your family experience, you can then talk about how to help make his dream come true.

Children’s School Spirit Wear ½ Price SALE

The University has issued new Trademark and Licensing guidelines for branded merchandise which has required us to update our logo. In preparation for the slight design change, we are having a ½ price sale on “old logo” items such as t-shirts, sweatshirts, and onesies.

- Toddler Tees $5.00
- Onesies $6.00
- Sweatshirts $7.00
- Hoodies, Adult & Child $10.00

Sizes and styles are limited. Please contact the Main Office if you are interested in making a purchase!
Invitation to Explore Planet Earth

“Advice from a Rock: Live in balance.
Stay grounded. Try your hardest.
Be well rounded. Never take life for granite.”

In preparation for our Whole School Unit exploring **Planet Earth**, we are planning an Educator / Parent Discussion on Friday, January 31st from 9:30 to 11:00 AM. We will experience our unit flow from exploring rocks and crystals, to learning about the rock cycle, to peering inside the earth to study caves, to considering the history of the earth with evidence from fossils, etc., to the ways we use rocks in our culture and art.

Preschool 4’s and Kindergarten children will be in school, and child care will be provided in the Red Room for 3’s and younger siblings. Because school will be in session, please park in the East Campus garage or at one of the metered spots near the school.

Barnes & Noble Book Fair

Thank you to all who attended our successful book fair at Barnes & Noble in December; we raised $359.85 to purchase new books for our library collection! A special thank you to all our volunteers: Silpa Swarnapuri, Dahlia Rao, Lisa Scott, Moeza Seager, Wes Conrad, Valentina Krauss, Laura Viccaro, Dahlia & Patrick Carrington, Jeff Stapinski, Mark MacWhinney, Melissa Lakhavani, Meghan Karolyy, Erin Burke, Jocelyn Mayr and Ashley Shorkey. Your help made this event possible, thank you! Also, many thanks to Mrs. Bird and her musical spouse, Mr. Bird, for leading our fun sing-along.

Upcoming Screenings re: Ears and Eyes

This year, the Easter Seals Speech, Hearing and Middle Ear Screenings will be held at school from January 14th – 17th. The cost of the screening is $25 per child. If you require a form, please contact Mrs. Rosenblum at rosenblu@andrew.cmu.edu or 412-268-2199.

The Blind & Vision Rehabilitation Services of Pittsburgh will provide free Vision Screenings on January 28th. Children are screened for visual acuity, muscle balance, and color discrimination using a technique approved by the American Academy of Pediatrics. If you would like your child screened, please obtain a form from Maggie Rosenblum.

School Photos – February 3rd (Makeup the 4th)
Benefits of Outdoor Play in the Winter

Thanks to Natalie Greene (Evelyn, K) for suggesting a wonderful article on the benefits of outdoor play in the winter, summarized in the associated graphic below. You can read the brief article, entitled “Bundle Up and Get Outside: Why Kids Should Play Outdoors in Winter” at https://www.fix.com/blog/keep-kids-playing-outdoors-in-winter/. The article was written by Caileigh Flannigan, “a Clinical Child Therapist and play practitioner who uses forms of play as a way to promote children’s development and emotional healing. She aims to spread the word about how important free play in natural environments is on childhood development, through her research in outdoor play and loose parts.”

Since we will soon be starting our Whole School PLANET EARTH Unit, time outdoors when there is minimal foliage would be a wonderful opportunity to observe the earth, starting with the rocks that are all around us.

- Where are rocks found?
- How are the texture, color, and shape of rocks different or similar?
- How do we use rocks in our culture? (roads, buildings, statues, cemeteries, jewelry, etc.)

Here are a few facts from Roma Gans’ “Let’s Go Rock Collecting” to share in your initial forays to find rocks:

- Rocks are the oldest things you can collect. Most are millions of years old!
- Rocks cover the whole earth, so everyone lives on top of rock.
- The granite in many buildings was once magma, or melted rock inside the earth. The crystals in granite are quartz.
- Limestone is used to make cement, which is mixed with sand, gravel and water in many concrete sidewalks. The marble of counters or statues was changed from limestone with pressure & heat.
- Similarly, slate used in many floors or patios was once a softer shale.
Stay Safe in Your Winter Wonderland!

For children, winter is not the end of outdoor fun. When properly prepared, children can enjoy safe and fun outdoor activities. "The inviting snow draws children to ice-covered lakes and ski slopes each winter, regardless of the frigid temperatures and the risks," says Heather Paul, Ph.D., executive director of the National SAFE KIDS Campaign. "Parents should watch their children closely, limit their outdoor playtime and make sure that they are dressed appropriately for the weather."

Here are a few other winter tips to keep in mind:

- Parents and caregivers should inspect equipment and the environment for possible hazards before children engage in winter activities, such as sledding, ice skating and skiing.
- Be aware that the increased use of hot tubs and whirlpools, as well as the danger of hidden bodies of water or weak ice, makes winter drowning a risk.
- If a child complains of numbness or pain in the fingers, toes, nose, cheeks or ears while playing in the snow, or if the skin is blistered, hard to the touch or glossy, be alert to the possibility of frostbite. Tell the child to wiggle the affected body part(s) to increase blood supply to that area. Warm the frozen part(s) against the body. Immerse frozen part(s) in warm, not hot, water. Frozen tissue is fragile and can be damaged easily. Avoid warming with high heat from radiators, fireplaces or stoves, and avoid rubbing or breaking blisters.
- Slippery driveways and sidewalks can be particularly hazardous in the winter. Keep them well shoveled and apply materials such as rock salt or sand to improve traction.
- Make sure children wear appropriate boots and brightly colored (not white) clothing while walking and playing in snowy conditions. Use reflective stickers on clothing for maximum protection, especially at dawn and dusk.

A Winter Reminder

On days when snow or ice may affect driving conditions, please listen to the radio or the television. If the Children's School should close due to the weather, we announce our school closing on WPXI (https://www.wpxi.com/weather/school-closings/), WTAE (https://www.wtae.com/weather/closings#), and KDKA (https://pittsburgh.cbslocal.com/school-closings/). They also offer a text service if you register on their web site. Because Children’s School educators and families live in diverse areas in and around the city, we cannot factor travel conditions from every location into our decision about whether to delay or close school. Between 5:30 and 6:00 AM, we listen to the news, determine what other schools in the city are doing, and make our best judgment on whether to have a delay or close school that day. In all cases when school is in session, we encourage parents to use their best judgment about whether the roads in your area are safe to bring your child to school.

Depending on the road conditions, we will choose from three options:

- **One Hour Delay**: During a one-hour delay, we will greet the AM Preschool and Kindergarten Classes at 9:30 AM. This option enables us to conduct the morning preschool classes, while giving our educators and families time for the road conditions to improve. Dismissal will be at the normal times and the PM Preschool will be on normal schedule.

- **Two Hour Delay/No Morning Preschool**: During a two-hour delay, we greet the Kindergarten Class at 10:30 AM and dismiss at the normal time. The AM Preschool Program will be canceled but the PM Preschool will be on a normal schedule.

- **School Closure for all Programs**
Family Committee News

Teacher Appreciation from 3’s Families

A big thank you to our 3’s families, especially RaeAnn Shah, Silpa Swarnapuri, Lisa Scott, Ashley Shorkey, and Valentina Krauss for organizing the wonderful lunch from Girasole in December. What a special treat; thank you!

If you have questions about Teacher Appreciation or would like to join a Committee, please contact Beth Myers at ewmyers@andrew.cmu.edu.

Family Social Organization Fun in December

On December 6th, some Children’s School friends and their families enjoyed a Friday morning off school by jumping, running and playing together at Sky Zone Trampoline Park during toddler trampoline time. Lots of fun was had!

December 27th, the Children’s School family and friends gathered during the winter break to see Frozen 2 at the Waterworks Theatre. The children watched in excitement as the movie began and were respectful and attentive throughout the movie. It was some of the friends’ very first time in a movie theater! It was quite an enjoyable day.

Upcoming FSO Events

Art with a Coral Reef Theme

The FSO is back at Hatch Art Studio (6739 Reynolds St, Pittsburgh 15206) on Friday, January 10th from 12:30-2pm. We plan to design a process art experience around a coral reef theme. Payment of $25 / child (cash or check only) can be completed on site the day of the event. An adult should remain with the child(ren) participating. Check out Hatch at https://www.hatchpgh.com/. RSVP to Natalie Marshall (Camden, K) at bcnat1984@gmail.com to confirm your child’s participation.

Interest in Ice Skating??

The FSO is considering organizing a family ice skating event. If you are interested in helping, please contact Erin Beckner (Fitz, AM 3’s) at ebeckner@tuckerlaw.com.
Supporting Homeless Neighbors

So far, the Children School friends and families have requested 22 bags to fill for homeless neighbors in Pittsburgh. Items donated were delivered to the Hot Metal Bridge Faith Community (https://www.hotmetalbridge.com). Thank you, Natalie Marshall, for organizing this wonderful service project and to everyone who participated.

Thank you so much to you and your children for your generosity and care you showed us in collecting so much for our care closet. Personally, I was floored when I heard how much you gave!!! Because of your kindness, folks in our community will have resources to keep safe and feel some comfort this winter. From me, the compassion team, and the rest of the folks at Hot Metal Bridge Faith Community, thank you so much. We hope you have an amazing holiday season and a wonderful new year!

Grace and Peace,
Ryan Lowe, Chairperson for the Compassion Team at Hot Metal Bridge Faith Community

You can still help throughout January! Contact Natalie Marshall (Camden, K) at bcnat1984@gmail.com to request a bag to fill. The bags will come home in your child’s backpack. When filled, you can return the bags to The Children’s School. This is an easy way to help those in need right here in our local community.

“Not all of us can do great things. But we can do small things with great love.” Mother Teresa

EITC and OSTC Funding Updates

As you know, the Children’s School participates in the state’s Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) program, as well as the Opportunity Scholarship Tax Credit (OSTC) program. In addition to the contributing businesses mentioned in the November 2019 Children’s School Family Newsletter, we received funding from Comcast Corporation in December 2019.

Through EITC, eligible Pennsylvania businesses can earn tax credits while providing financial assistance for children to attend preschool, as well as grades K-12. Through OSTC, eligible Pennsylvania businesses can earn tax credits for contributing funds to provide tuition assistance in the form of scholarships to eligible students K-12th grade residing within the boundaries of a low-achieving school to attend another public school outside of their district or nonpublic school. In 2019-20, The Children’s School’s EITC and OSTC Programs are funding 75 students, pre-Kindergarten – 12th grade, in 17 different schools throughout Allegheny and Westmoreland counties.

If you would like more information or can help us to build a list of prospective businesses, please contact the Main Office.
Family Spotlight: Our New Home

Pittsburgh was a part of our lives long before we moved here from Maryland. When Patrick and I met in high school, he was already an avid Steelers fan. The summer we got married, Patrick was actually living in Pittsburgh for an internship. He is currently an Assistant Professor of Human-Computer Interaction in the School of Computer Science at CMU. I worked with children with autism for 14 years as a teacher, clinician, and community activity coordinator. When we moved here in 2017, I decided to stay home with our daughter, Aria.

Aria was born in 2015, and she is the light of our lives. She is so effervescent, friendly, and smart. She loves to dance and is currently taking ballet classes that enable her to twirl all over our home. In the way that Pittsburgh has always been ever-present in our lives, at age three, Aria asked to go to school after watching an episode of the television series Daniel Tiger’s Neighborhood, the Pittsburgh based television program inspired by Mister Roger’s Neighborhood. I began to research potential preschools and came across a picture of a family friend from Maryland at the Children’s School. It was pure serendipity that a familiar face from Maryland led us to a wonderful school and community. We love the integration of basic disciplines into the exploration of a larger theme.

To say that we love the Children’s School is an understatement. Aria is in the mixed 3’s and 4’s PM Preschool Class with Mrs. Cherin and Mrs. O’Neill. She looks forward to seeing her teachers and friends every day and always comes home with a song she has learned. Every day is an adventure.

As a family, we enjoy reading books, playing board games, baking treats and dressing up. We love attending plays and visiting museums in our area. Our favorite is the Carnegie Museum of Natural History. When the weather is warm, we frequent the park and the multitude of family-friendly festivals in our area.
Investigating Shadows

One day in November, Atticus and Aras were arriving in the school’s main hallway on a sunny day and made an interesting discovery when they turned to enter the office. With the early morning light, their shadows crossed the whole room!

You may have noticed that young children are fascinated by shadows, and the sunny days of winter are wonderful opportunities to explore them, both indoors and outdoors.

The resources blog of our accrediting organization, the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) has a very interesting entry from 2017 on “What’s in a Shadow?”

https://www.naeyc.org/resources/blog/whats-shadow

Author Denise Nelson suggests first engaging with the children to determine what they already know about shadows so that you can more proactively extend their inquiry by silently affirming their experimentation, occasionally asking questions that focus their observations, when necessary providing materials that relate to the queries they pose. In December, the Children’s School educators turned our Make Shop into a studio for exploring light and color by utilizing old overhead projectors in similar ways to what was suggested on the blog.

One additional resource Nelson suggests for promoting additional exploration is the shadow episodes and related video clips available online from the public television preschool series, “Peep and the Big Wide World.” Both the blog and the videos emphasize the depth of science, language, and math concepts that children can learn in the context of their shadow explorations, especially when adults encourage them to continue exploring over a series of days and to reflect on what they are learning. Consider comparing and contrasting shadows made by different people / objects, chalking shadows outdoors at varied times of the day to notice the change in positions, and noticing the difference in shadows on sunny vs. cloudy days. Here’s what happened the day, at about age three, when my first granddaughter discovered her shadow on a sandy playground near her home. I hope you enjoy exploring with your children!
Undergraduate Spotlight

Please join us in welcoming early childhood students from Duksung Women’s University (Seoul, South Korea) for an International Practicum Program from January 24th to February 10th. The Campus Laboratory School of Carlow University, the Falk School at the University of Pittsburgh, and the University Child Development Center will each also host students, with the total group including 12 undergraduates. We look forward to reflecting with them about similarities and differences in our values and approaches for educating young children.

**Ga Yeon Hwang** will be interning with AM Older 3’s in the Blue Room and then transition to the PM Preschool for the afternoon. Ga Yeon describes herself as an open-minded optimist who was raised by an early childhood educator. She has done puppetry for young children and has also been a “Flower Interpreter of International Horticulture” in Goyang, Korea. Ga Yeon is a junior interested in learning how early childhood educators in America handle diversity in terms of both culture and ability.

**Hye Jeong Kim** will join the AM Young 3’s in the Red Room and then visit the Kindergarten in the afternoon. Hye Jeong describes herself as an empathetic listener. She is curious and enjoys travel. She lived with her family for a year in Canada, so she has experienced different education systems in the past. She is a musician and has volunteered in a kindergarten and an orphanage with many preschoolers. Hye Jeong is a junior and is interested in learning about effective interactions styles.

**Han Sol Lee** will serve as the intern in the AM younger 4’s and continue with the PM Preschool for the afternoon. Han Sol describes herself as a positive person with a warm heart. She has a black belt in Taekwondo and has been sharing her skills with children for several years. She has also volunteered with children who have challenging family circumstances. Han Sol is a junior purposely seeking a practicum experience outside of her comfort zone, and she is interested in learning about children’s play in America.

**So Yun Park** will be interning in the Kindergarten for the whole day. So Yun describes herself as outgoing person who loves to laugh, enjoys walking, and loves to try new restaurants. She is a first-born who learned a lot from playing with her distinctly different younger brothers and then founded a high school club to learn about early childhood education. She has done summer internships in early childhood programs and is interested in comparing and contrasting learning theories in practice.

Thanks to Janice and Randy Bryant (Grandparents of Ezra, AM 4’s) for hosting Hye Jeong and Han Sol. Thanks also to Estelle and Steven Cherin for offering hospitality to Ga Yeon and So Yun. If you are interested in helping with other aspects of hosting (e.g., meals, shopping excursions, trips to a museum, etc.), please contact Dr. Carver at sc0e@andrew.cmu.edu to discuss options. All of the students are interested in learning about family life in Pittsburgh, especially for those with young children, so having an opportunity to spend time with you would be a gift to these young educators.
Research Spotlight

Congratulations to Graduate Student Cassie Eng!

Ms. Eng’s first professional paper, entitled “Contingent Responsivity in E-Books Modeled from Quality Adult-Child Interactions: Effects on Children’s Learning and Attention” and co-authored by Anthony Tomasic and Erik Thiessen, was published in the December 2019 issue of Developmental Psychology. Congratulations, Cassie!

As you may have guessed, Cassie conducted all of the studies reported in this paper at the Children’s School. Current AM 3’s student, Jackson, and his mother Emilie, who works in the Psychology Department, were the models for related articles posted on the CMU and Dietrich College web sites.

**Director’s Corner: Millennium Innovators**

As we turn our calendars to the year 2020, it’s hard to believe that it’s been *twenty years* since the Y2K scare at the turn of the 21st century. Nothing much came of the so-called “millennium bug”, but the intense global reflection spurred by fear of the world as we know it ending may have prompted increasing commitment to improve life on planet earth.

The eight anti-poverty United Nations Millennium Development Goals were set in 2000 by the 191 UN member states with a target date for achievement by 2015.

- to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger;
- to achieve universal primary education;
- to promote gender equality and empower women;
- to reduce child mortality;
- to improve maternal health;
- to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases;
- to ensure environmental sustainability; and
- to develop a global partnership for development.

These big, hairy, audacious goals (or BHAGs, see Built to Last: Successful Habits of Visionary Companies" by Jim Collins and Jerry Porras) were long-term, inter-related goals meant to motivate societies across the globe to mobilize focused action. Clearly, significant progress has been made, but unevenly across regions and countries, so the UN’s 2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set “a shared vision of humanity and a social contract between the world’s leaders and the people” that involves a broader set of goals with emphasis on addressing climate change.

Carnegie Mellon’s Sustainability Initiative “is building upon two decades of an engaged effort in support of the broader definition of sustainability afforded by the SDGs. Our university's focus includes education, research, and practice in building environmentally sustainable, peaceful, just and inclusive communities.” The current CMU undergraduates, graduate students, faculty, and staff members are among the innovators excited and energized by the 2015 Goals, and the children now learning at the Children’s School will receive the baton as the next generation of innovators who will strive for the goals to be set in 2030.

So, as this new year dawns, let’s ask ourselves what type of home, school, and community life and learning will help motivate and mobilize these young innovators to improve life on earth for their own and future generations. At the Children’s School, we promote positive and productive learning for all members of our learning community by proactively creating a professional climate of hospitality, communication, trust, teamwork, and flexible problem solving. Our developmental objectives focus on building general living and learning competencies, our inquiry learning techniques facilitate experimentation, and our thematic units encourage deep investigations, all of which foster innovation. Next month’s Whole School Unit on PLANET EARTH is designed to promote children’s interest in understanding and caring for the globe that is our home. We hope you and your whole family will engage in the learning process with us as partners in raising these young innovators.
### January

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Preschool Theme:</strong> Rainforest</td>
<td><strong>Kindergarten Theme:</strong> Coral Reef/Ocean</td>
<td><strong>Winter Break</strong></td>
<td><strong>No School</strong></td>
<td><strong>HAPPY NEW YEAR 2020!!!</strong></td>
<td><strong>8:00AM &amp; 12:00PM</strong></td>
<td><strong>Prospective Family Open Houses</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Children &amp; Educators Return to School</strong></td>
<td><strong>Speech &amp; Hearing Screening</strong></td>
<td><strong>Undergraduates Return</strong></td>
<td><strong>Jan. Safety Week</strong></td>
<td><strong>Music w/ Mrs. Hraber</strong></td>
<td><strong>Music w/ Mrs. Hraber</strong></td>
<td><strong>Practicum Students from Duksung Women's University Arrive</strong></td>
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<td><strong>NO SCHOOL: Martin Luther King Day</strong></td>
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# The Children’s School Snack Menu

*Subject to change based on birthdays & special events*

*Gluten and dairy free options available*

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<td>Tortilla Chips &amp; Salsa</td>
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<td>Wheat Bread &amp; Sun Butter</td>
<td>Milk/Water</td>
<td>Rice Krispies</td>
<td>Animal Crackers</td>
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<tr>
<td>No School</td>
<td>Goldfish</td>
<td>Celery sticks w/ Cream Cheese &amp; Saltines</td>
<td>Pineapple Tidbits &amp; Cottage Cheese</td>
<td>English Muffins w/ Jelly</td>
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<td>MLK Day</td>
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<td>Mini Bagels &amp; Cream Cheese</td>
<td>Milk/Water</td>
<td>Mixed Fruit Cups &amp; Ritz Crackers</td>
<td>Teddy Grahams</td>
<td>Cucumbers &amp; Pita Bread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milk/Water</td>
<td>Milk/Water</td>
<td>Milk/Water</td>
<td>Milk/Water</td>
<td>Milk/Water</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**January 2020**