

Construction Sparks Building Interest

Watching Carnegie Mellon's construction of the Highmark Center for Health, Wellness, and Athletics at the corner of Margaret Morrison and Tech Streets sparked the kindergartners' curiosity about the building process. The kindergarten educators supported the children's building explorations of structure, balance, and stability with different materials and challenged them to plan and construct towers. The next step was for them to learn about architects and try using 2-dimensional "blueprints" to represent 3-dimensional buildings. Thanks to Bob Reppe, CMU's Senior Director of Planning and Design, for an inspiring architectural tour of the campus. We appreciate the ways that this CMU expert enriched our kindergarten thematic study of Building by helping them identify architectural design features in campus structures. The tour ended where the children's interest began, at the construction site with a discussion of the design, building process, and machines.



April 2022 Dates

 $\begin{array}{l} \mbox{April } 2^{nd}-8^{th} \\ \mbox{April } 4^{th}-17^{th} \\ \mbox{April } 5^{th}-8^{th} \end{array}$

Friday, April 8th April 13th & 14th Friday, April 22nd NAEYC's Week of the Young Child Online Book Fair (Visit: childrensbookstore.com) Mrs. Bird will be attending the conference of the International Association of Laboratory Schools (IALS) in Alabama. Spring Carnival / PM Parent Teacher Conferences (NO SCHOOL) School Photo Days Parent Teacher Conferences (NO SCHOOL)

All these dates are posted on the FACTS Family Portal and our web calendar https://www.cmu.edu/dietrich/psychology/cs/.



Vision Screenings

The Blind & Vision Rehabilitation Services of Pittsburgh will provide free vision screenings on April 20th for children who were registered but not on site for the original screening date. Children are screened for visual acuity, muscle balance and color discrimination using a technique approved by the American Academy of Pediatrics. We will be working with them to ensure Covid-19 safety protocols are observed.

School Photo Days

This year, Van Dyke Photos will be on-site on April 13th to photograph the students, and April 14th is scheduled as a make-up date. We will work with them to ensure that Covid-19 safety protocols are observed. Ordering will be online, and instructions will be provided for our families through email. Feel free to send your children in their "picture clothes" that day and send "school clothes" separately. The teachers will help the children change after their photo shoot. Maggie Rosenblum would be happy to answer any questions and can be reached at <u>rosenblu@andrew.cmu.edu</u>.

June "Water" Camp Enrollment

There are still four to five spaces in the June "Water" Camp for each week of camp. If you are interested in enrolling your child, please contact Mrs. Yetter at <u>kyetter@andrew.cmu.edu</u> for registration guidance.

2022-2023 Enrollment Updates

Enrollment for the 2022-2023 school year is completely digital through the FACTS student information system. Currently, our Preschool 3's and Preschool 4's programs are full, with long waitlists. The Kindergarten program does have additional space. It can serve as a PreKindergarten year for children with late summer or fall birthdays, but children with birthdays in the first 2/3 of the year can go directly to 1st Grade from our Kindergarten. Please contact Mrs. Yetter at <u>kyetter@andrew.cmu.edu</u> if you know families who might want to enroll their children.

Finding Payment Summaries in FACTS

Periodically, you may need access to your family's Payment Summary. The Payment Summary shows the total paid for each student. You can select a year or a date range for the summary. It also includes the school's address and Federal Tax ID. While many expenses may not be applicable for tax deductions, some families keep a record of the expenditures with their taxes.

To do this, log in to the FACTS Family Portal and click on "Financial" in the lefthand menu. You will be directed to Tuition Management. Then follow these steps to print the payment summary:

- 1. On the home page, click **View Details**.
- 2. Click **View Payment Summary** on the details screen.
- 3. Ensure the correct **Calendar Year** or date range is selected.
- 4. Click **Print**.

Please contact Miss Hancock at <u>lh37@andrew.cmu.edu</u> if you need further assistance.

Children's School

Community Service: Packing Snack Packs

In April, we will be participating in a community service project to support the Jewish Family and Community Services (JFCS) Squirrel Hill Food Pantry. The food pantry provides after school snack packs for children in need. We will be collecting donations for the snack packs, and the children will be decorating paper bags and assembling the packs here at school before donating them to the pantry. If you would like to participate, you can donate based on the suggestions below. If you have any questions, please contact Kim Yetter at <u>kyetter@andrew.cmu.edu</u>.

 $\mathbf{3's}-\mathbf{S}nack$ pack sized bags of Veggie Straws or Popcorn

4's – Single Serving Boxes of Raisins (any brand)

K - Snack sized Juice or Milk Boxes (any brand)

Please make your contributions by April 15th.

Online Book Fair

This year, we will be hosting a second Children's School Book Fair from April 4th through April 17th to raise funds to purchase books for our library. We raised over \$700 during our book fair in the fall! The Children's School will receive a percentage of the purchase price for every book purchased during this time. During the book fair, a list of recommended books will be available to you, and our teachers will provide wish lists of books that can be directly purchased for the school. To access our book fair on the Children's Bookstore website, please follow this link:

https://childrensbookstore.com/welcome/?ref=6FERE9W

Please note that if you purchase books either before or after the book fair dates, the Children's School will still receive 15% of the purchase price. You can also feel free to share the link with family and friends so that their purchases support our school as well.

UPCOMING MAY BOOK DRIVE

While you are shopping at the book fair, you may want to know about our upcoming book drive. For the first two weeks of May, we will be collecting new and gently used books to support Jewish Family and Community Services (JFCS) Bridge Builders program. Bridge Builders is a remote, after school mentoring program for resettled refugee youth ages 5-15. They provide age-appropriate support in social emotional learning, English language and literacy immersion, and cross-cultural exchange. More information on the book drive will be coming in the May newsletter.

If you have any questions or for more information, please contact Kim Yetter at <u>kyetter@andrew.cmu.edu</u>.











Week of the Young Child

On April 2nd to April 8th, the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) celebrates The Week of the Young Child. This is a week to celebrate and support children and the adults who love, care for, and educate them!



Music Monday, April 4

Through music, children develop math, language, and literacy skills, all while having fun and being active! Check this article about supporting math readiness through music: https://www.naeyc.org/our-work/families/support-math-readiness-through-music

Click this link for ways to make your own musical instruments at home: <u>https://www.prekinders.com/musical-instruments/</u>

Tasty Tuesday, April 5

Cooking together connects math with literacy skills, science, and more while encouraging healthy nutrition and fitness habits at home and in the classroom. This article discusses the importance of a healthy diet for young children and offers some good tips for encouraging healthy eating habits: <u>https://www.naeyc.org/resources/blog/lets-eat-well</u>

Let your child choose one of these fun recipes that you can make together: <u>https://www.epicurious.com/archive/everydaycooking/family/cooking-with-kids-preschool-recipes</u>

Work Together Wednesday, April 6

When children build together, they explore math and science concepts and develop their social and early literacy skills. Read this article on ways to support your child's development through their play: https://www.naeyc.org/our-work/families/support-learning-with-play

This article gives a list of 50 fun things you can do with your child at home. You can write them each on a sheet of paper, put them in a jar, and pull one out when boredom strikes! <u>https://www.parents.com/fun/activities/50-ways-to-play/</u>

Artsy Thursday, April 7

Children develop creativity, social skills, and fine motor skills with open ended art projects where they can make choices, use their imaginations, and create with their hands. Are you looking for ways to fit more art into your time with your child? Try these tips:

https://www.naeyc.org/our-work/families/meaningful-art-projects-parents-can-fit-busy-day

Try a collaborative family art project! These interactive heart mandalas are beautiful! <u>https://artfulparent.com/heart-drawing-activity/</u>

Family Friday, April 8

Engaging and celebrating families is at the heart of supporting our youngest learners. NAEYC applauds family members' role as young children's first and most important teachers. Read about the ways parents are their child's first teacher: <u>https://www.naeyc.org/our-work/families/childs-first-teacher</u>

A great family activity for this Friday would be to attend CMU's Spring Carnival! There is something here for every member of the family to enjoy. More information can be found here: <u>https://www.springcarnival.org</u>

CMU Carnival Returns IN-PERSON!

CMU's oldest tradition, Spring Carnival, makes its in-person return April 7th to 9th on campus! This 3-day event features the famous Buggy races, amusement park rides, and booths created by various student organizations. This year's theme is "Ad Astra".

"Spring Carnival 2022 is headed to the stars with our theme, Ad Astra! Don't forget your spirit of exploration and discovery because we are inviting YOU to journey with us beyond galaxies! Midway will be transformed into an out of this world experience for visitors to embark on, Buggy will blast off through the hills, and for Mobot, well, the competitive venture is just getting started. Explore the boundaries of space, marvel at awe-inspiring celestial wonders, and accomplish colossal feats set forth for you at Spring Carnival 2022!"

For more information, visit <u>https://www.springcarnival.org/</u>.

If you are interested in learning more about CMU Buggy, please enjoy this video: <u>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sMYVNk0axvQ</u>.

On Thursday, April 7th, the Buggy Design Showcase will happen in the large Cohon University Center gymnasium. As in prepandemic times, our children have been invited to see the buggies up close and personal. The Design Competition Committee has made pandemic accommodations for the safety of the children by opening the event to us in the morning before opening to the public at noon, with the buggy team members wearing masks while the children are present.

TRAFFIC ALERTS:

• April 1st to 7th: The Carnival midway is located in the CFA parking lot adjacent to our building. As a result, please be patient and use caution during

greeting and dismissal as there may be extra pedestrian and vehicle traffic in the area.

• Friday, April 8th: The Buggy races will begin at 8:00AM. The racecourse starting line is at the intersection of Margaret Morrison and Tech Streets, and the course loops around Flagstaff Hill past the conservatory, turns right up Frew Street, and finishes at the intersection of Tech and Frew Streets. As a result, all the streets around our building are closed to vehicular traffic for much of the day, which is the reason there is no school on Friday, April 8th. *If you have an in-person parent teacher conference scheduled for this day, you will receive an email with parking information soon*.







Arab American Heritage Month

April is Arab American Heritage Month. This month is an opportunity to recognize and celebrate the history and culture of Arab Americans. The recognition of this month is relatively recent. A bill to make Arab Heritage Month recognized on the national level was introduced in 2019 by Representative Rashida Tlaib and is still pending. However, in April of 2021 the US State Department officially declared April Arab American Heritage Month and President Biden was the first sitting president to officially recognize Arab American Heritage Month on April 19th, 2021. This article includes background information on National Arab American Heritage Month. https://www.insightintodiversity.com/national-arab-american-heritage-month/

The website <u>https://www.arabamerica.com/</u> was founded with the purpose of "promoting an accurate image of the Arab American community and the Arab world". Here, you can learn a new Arabic word each day, explore a library of Arabic recipes, and find many different online events celebrating National Arab American Heritage month.

Making a new recipe is always a great way to celebrate! Get cooking with your kids and try your hands at this recipe from Libya.

Bureek Batata - Potato Turnover

- 2 1/2 cups mashed potatoes
- 1 small onion, very finely chopped
- 1/2 cup chopped parsley
- 1 teaspoons salt
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon cumin
- 1/8 teaspoon cayenne
- 1 package egg roll wrapper (20 pieces)
- oil for frying

Thoroughly combine all ingredients, except egg roll wrappers and oil, then divide into 20 portions.

Place one portion of the potato mixture near the right-hand bottom corner of each sheet. Then fold the end of sheet over the filling, then fold in the sides and brush the farthest end with water and roll closed.

Fry in hot oil, then drain on paper towels and serve warm.

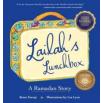
Reading books with diverse characters is always a great idea! The following books feature Arab and Arab American characters and themes and are great for reading anytime.



"Under My Hijab" by Hena Khan: This lovely book with rhyming text invites readers to explore and understand the hijab and Muslim women who choose to wear it.

"Travelling Man" by James Rumford: This book is an introduction to the journeys of the little-known 14th century Muslim figure, Ibn Battuta. He traveled for 29 years from Morocco to China.

"Lailah's Lunchbox: A Ramadan Story" by Reem Faruqi: With help from the school librarian and her teacher, Lailah solves a problem and learns that she can make new friends who respect her beliefs.



Looking for more great books? Explore this list: <u>https://www.pbs.org/parents/thrive/childrens-books-by-arab-american-authors-and-illustrators</u>

Happy National Arab American Heritage Month!

Family Spotlight: Future Family Band?

Happy April, Children's School Families! We are the Forbes family -Ariel, Brandon, Grey (7), Jasper (5), and Starla (3). Jasper is a member of the Kindergarten classroom, and Starla is in the Preschool 3's Blue Room. Ariel is a Children's School alum and is currently inhouse counsel at PNC Bank, after spending a decade as an attorney at Reed Smith. Brandon, who grew up in Tennessee and moved to Pittsburgh in 2009, currently works as the government affairs manager for Allegheny County's Department of Human Services. He has also worked for the City of Pittsburgh and as an adjunct professor at Robert Morris University. Ariel and Brandon played together in a band in Pittsburgh for years and are hopeful that they can get back into playing music as the children get older, or better yet, start a family band.





This fall, our family returned to Pittsburgh from Gibsonia where we lived on a 10acre farm with chickens, a big barn, and tons of deer and raccoons that made their way through our yard every day; it was more their farm than ours. While our new house was under renovation this fall and winter, we lived in two different apartments, in the Strip and downtown, over the course of three months. Apartment life with 3 children, a dog, a cat, and a pet fish was challenging in many ways, but they quickly adapted to sharing a room and are now expert elevator button pushers. We are relieved and thankful to have finally moved into

our new house in Squirrel Hill, which is also Ariel's old house because it is her childhood home. Best of all, we are 2 minutes from the Children's School!

Our family loves exploring the outdoors together on urban walks and scooter rides, playing sports outside in our yard, and board games inside when we have the time. In his free time, Jasper loves to play with Legos (especially Star Wars), enjoys swimming, soccer, and basketball, and is learning to play the drums. Starla takes dance and swimming lessons, and enjoys listening to stories, playing doctor and vet, and playing dinosaurs and "puppies" with her older siblings (with Starla the owner, Grey the puppy, and Jasper some sort of wild dog). Both Jasper and Starla idolize their big sister Grey (a first grader at ECS), and they can often be found listening to her read a story and following her lead during pretend play or while in the yard catching insects.

Our family also has an au pair, Direen, who is from Germany and is a great help with school greeting and dismissal. She is our family's third au pair (following one from South Africa and one from Mexico), and the kids have enjoyed making a friend who can teach them about a different culture and let them try yummy new foods (shockingly, their preference is for the candies).

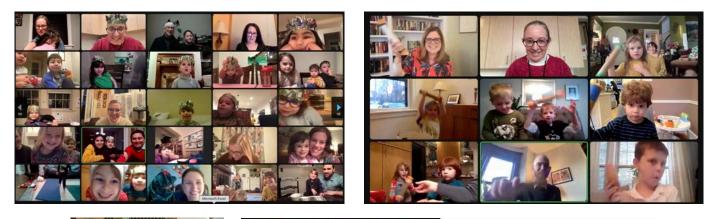
Next school year, Jasper will be joining Grey at ECS in their Kindergarten program, and we hope Starla will join them there after she has graduated from the Children's School. Jasper and Starla both love school, especially going outside with their friends and teachers. They are looking forward to Children's School summer camp in June and are hopeful to see many of their friends there too!



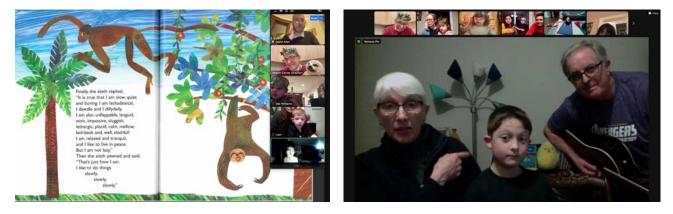


Family Rainforest Adventure

On Thursday, March 3rd, almost all our families joined our Family Rainforest Adventure via Zoom to celebrate our whole school unit. We started all together with a brief video tour of the collaborative Rainforest Murals throughout the school, along with some of our classroom activities. The children made rainforest crowns to wear, and then families separated into smaller groups by class to join six different activities in 15-minute intervals. Everyone had a chance to play Rainforest Animal Bingo, a Tree Frog Dice Game, and Red Card / Blue Card (a large motor game similar to Charades). They could also participate in Rainforest Yoga, create a Rain Stick to make rainforest music, and do a Rainforest Scavenger Hunt. Before saying good night, we reconnected with the whole school community to sing the Rainforest Animal Boogie with Mrs. Bird and listen to Mr. Allen read <u>"Slowly, Slowly," said the Sloth</u> by Eric Carle.







Preschool 4's 100 Day Celebration

Because of a few COVID-19 closures, the Preschool 4s friends celebrated the 100th Day of School a little later than the Kindergartners. The children made a poster with 100 collage items and a paper chain with 100 links. At home, they made collections of 100 items, with lots of very creative ideas! One sent a photo of 100 sticks, another of climbing 100 steps, another of a HUGE cookie with 100 M&M's. We saw collections of cheerios, cars, hair accessories, crayons, blocks, noodles, etc.



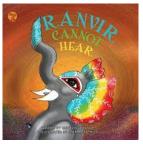
Celebrate Deaf History Month

The National Association of the Deaf (NAD) encourages everyone to celebrate and to recognize Deaf History Month in April. This month commemorates three major events in American History for the Deaf Community: The March 13,1988 Deaf President Now protest, the April 8,1864 signing of the Gallaudet University charter by President Abraham Lincoln, and the April 15,1817 establishment of the American School for the Deaf in Hartford, CT as the first permanent public school for the deaf. The NAD is working continuously to make Deaf History Month a nationally recognized event.

One great way to introduce the idea of deafness with children who may not be familiar is through picture books. For some helpful options, check this list of six children's books about hearing loss: https://www.hearinglikeme.com/6-hearing-loss-related-books-and-others-my-deaf-child-loves/

"Ranvir Cannot Hear" by Genevieve Yusuf is about a little elephant who goes on a journey in search of his hearing. Along the way, he meets others who can't do certain things, but they tell him about the things they CAN do!

YouTube also has some great resources for learning about deafness and American Sign Language. This video from ASL kids teaches how to sign the basic color names: <u>https://youtu.be/i9jsJbIUPek</u>. Here are links for two child friendly videos about American Sign Language from our YouTube channel with former Children's School Educator Beth Myers: <u>https://youtu.be/4WFzQhBs</u>



https://youtu.be/4WFzQhB3mmE https://youtu.be/ZJHGyYKyybY

Teaching children to recognize and appreciate differences like deafness can help them to understand that we are all unique and that it is our differences that make us special.

April 2022

Undergraduate Spotlight

During the spring 2022 semester, undergraduate employees are supporting the children and educators both in and out of the classroom. All adults working in the Children's School this year have up-to-date vaccinations against Covid-19 and participate in weekly Tartan Testing.



• Lily Hazam (First-Year, Undecided Major)





Hello! My name is Lily Hazam and I'm from Massachusetts, in a town not far from Boston. Here at CMU, I'm a freshman and am currently undecided, but looking into majoring in decision sciences and/or psychology. I enjoy working with people and learning about behavior. In my free time, I enjoy binge watching tv shows, hanging out with friends, crocheting, and listening to music. I've been at the Children's school for a little over a month now, working with the

Preschool 3's and 4's. It's been an incredible opportunity to work with such amazing kids, while getting a break from the big responsibilities of college. I specifically enjoy the welcoming community of the school, where everyone greets me and helps me find belonging in the classrooms. I look forward to spending more time at the school and getting to know the children better!



Undergraduate Researchers

The undergraduates in Dr. Lauren Burakowski's **Developmental Research Methods** class are working in small groups to conduct their final projects for the semester, and they are studying many educationally relevant early childhood tasks. Discovering the impact of the variables studied on children's learning can help adults choose better approaches for supporting their progress. Here are the topics:

• The Day & Night and the Happy & Sad Game (Preschool 3's & Kindergarten) The Impact of Music Complexity on Inhibitory Control in Preschool-Aged Children

• **The Birthday Party Game** (Preschool 3's & 4's) *The Effect of Positive Self-Affirmation on Mathematical Ability of Preschool Aged Children*

• The Coloring Game (Kindergarten) Gendered Color Bias in Children for Objects with Natural vs. Variable Colors

• **The Hungarian Board Game** (Kindergarten) *Assessing Foreign Language Acquisition of Abstract* and Concrete Words with Pictorial Visual Aids

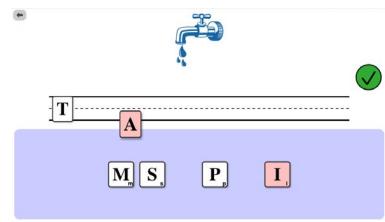
Children's School

Research Spotlight

The Spelling Game

The best way to learn to spell is through practice! But practice is most helpful when a parent or teacher is available to give feedback. Lots of apps exist to address this problem - helping young readers practice

spelling independently - but there has been little research on what the best design of these apps should be. Doctoral students from the Program in Interdisciplinary Education Research, Patience Stevens (Psychology) and Danny Weitekamp (Human Computer Interaction) have created an app that gives the child a word to spell, and then provides feedback on their spelling. They are interested in what kind of feedback is most useful: *whole-word* feedback (showing the entire correct spelling) or *incremental* feedback (just changing one letter to make the spelling more correct) so they have designed a study to compare the two



The Dream Machine Game

The Communication and Learning lab at Carnegie Mellon University is still seeking 3 and 4year-olds to participate in an online language learning study. They'll send families a **\$10 Amazon gift card** for participating. This is a 20minute Zoom study where children will be asked to help fix the experimenter's "dream machine" by naming pictures that appear on the screen. approaches. Kindergartners will use their app to practice spelling for eight 10-minute sessions, spread over four weeks. They will measure children's literacy skills before and after this intervention to see (1) if using the app improves their literacy skills and (2) which type of feedback leads to greater improvements in literacy skills. They hope that this study can improve the design of spelling apps to be as useful as possible to young readers!



Here is the link for families to register for a timeslot: https://www.schedulista.com/schedule/communicationandlearninglab/4o0qq-6v0lh

If none of the available times work, or if anyone has any questions or concerns, please contact Megan Waller at <u>callab@andrew.cmu.edu</u>.



Director's Corner: Community Relations

As we draw near to the end of our NAEYC Accreditation series, I reflect on the Children's School's approach to quality standard #8: **Community Relationships**, and the many reciprocal benefits of our integration into the Carnegie Mellon learning community. NAEYC's standard for Community Relationships includes three levels of relationships: 1) raising awareness and accessing community resources available to educators and families for promoting young children's health and well-being, 2) enriching the curriculum by accessing cultural and arts



resources with the children during school and encouraging families to access them within the community, and 3) "acting as a citizen in the neighborhood and the early childhood community" to contribute our resources - including expertise – to local, state, and national early childhood enhancement and advocacy efforts, particularly for quality professional development.

• We work closely with Carnegie Mellon's Police and Environmental Health & Safety departments regarding security and fire safety issues, and we partner with the university nutritionist regarding food handling and the health center for training to administer medication to children, as well as for the educators' annual flu shots and now COVID-19 vaccination and Tartan Testing.

• For families, our administrative team recommends community resources related to health and wellbeing, school choices and transitions, scholarship funding, developmental diagnostics and therapy, and dealing with family challenges, grief, etc.

• The Carnegie Mellon campus and Schenley Park provide numerous opportunities for enhancing our program via walking field trips, access to musicians and artists (such as our Artist in Residence, Isla Hansen), and opportunities for inspiration by interaction with undergraduates who have diverse majors, interests, and talents.

• In addition to sharing information about university events intended for families (such as the upcoming carnival), we also utilize our whole school newsletter, classroom blog, and email distribution list to notify our families of enrichment opportunities (such as the recent advertisement for swimming lessons and the monthly online heritage exploration resources).

• Our citizenship efforts are among the strongest aspects of the Children's School. In addition to our reciprocal relationships with the Psychology Department faculty and researchers, we have educators in leadership roles in the Pittsburgh Alliance of University Schools (PAUS), the National Coalition for Campus Children's Centers (N4C) and the International Association of Laboratory Schools (IALS). Mrs. Rosenblum just attended the virtual N4C annual conference, Dr. Carver is on the leadership team for the IALS Research Collaborative, and Mrs. Bird serves on the IALS Board and will be attending the annual conference in person next week.

• Because CMU provides so many infrastructure resources for our school, we have a generous professional development budget and enough educators so that there is coverage for those participating in conferences, collaborative projects, etc. The Psychology Department also supports an administrative team with more depth and breadth than most early childhood programs.

As you can imagine, building and extending these relationships increases our exposure to resources and opportunities, which then enhances our efforts and effectiveness connecting with the community. Our experience with the pandemic has accentuated the importance of these reciprocal campus and community connections when the learning curve for everyone was so steep. At all times, we are grateful for the partnerships that enrich the Children's School for all our learners.

A	pril					
Sun	Mon	Тие	Wed	Thu	<i>Fri</i> 1	Sat 2
3	4 Online Book Fair through Apr. 17th Visit:	5 Mrs. Bird @ IALS	6	7	8 NO SCHOOL PM - Parent Teacher	9
10 3's Theme: Insects	childrensbookstore. comNAEYC's Week of the Young Child11	Conference in AL –	13 School Photo Days	14 School Photo Days	Conferences CMU Spring Carnival – 15	16
4's Theme: Pond K Theme: The Great Outdoors	April Safety Week	19	20	21	22	23
				Music with Mrs. Hraber	NO SCHOOL Parent Teacher Conferences	
24	25	26	27	28 Music with Mrs. Hraber	29	30
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