KINDERNEWS

The Kindernews is the Children’s School kindergarten class newsletter published to keep our families and friends updated on what is happening in the kindergarten classroom. The Kindernews is filled with photographs of your children working, learning and playing together. The Kindernews features your children as artists, inventors, explorers and authors. The Kindernews also addresses the philosophy behind the activities that engage your children. Along with our kindergarten classroom website (emukindergarten.weebly.com), it is a link between our classroom and your home. We hope you enjoy!

Our 2018 school year began with getting acquainted with our classroom, the routine, the other friends and teachers. The children all know our morning routine of checking for notes in backpacks, hand washing and answering the Question of the Day. We became familiar with the classroom routines of freezing when the lights go out, coming to the teacher when the bell rings, walking in a line, pushing in our chairs, etc. The children learned our “necklace or chair system”, which helps us to monitor the amount of space available at a center.

We spent time in each classroom center to learn how to appropriately use the materials there. The children were given time to explore the materials freely. We learned where the materials live so that we can all share in the responsibility for cleaning up our space. During lunch and snack, we are responsible for cleaning up our table space and taking care of the trash. The children are being introduced to time management and independence. Giving a two minute warning and providing a mailbox for them to keep unfinished work allows them to keep track of their own progress.
We have spent an enjoyable September getting to know the children. Our first project was having the children create their self portraits using a variety of mediums. They used paint, crayons, and playdoh to produce a version of themselves. Self portraits are a great way for the children to express various aspects of themselves and their identities beyond the surface of their physical appearance. Self portraits can teach students to draw beyond just what they think they see, but to draw what is really there.

All students were given a mirror to observe their facial features and look for small details. For this portrait, we concentrated on form and shape. The children concentrated on using the correct color of markers to draw the outline of their head and bodies. They added facial features and detail to their clothing.

KINDNESS IN KINDERGARTEN

Each year the class takes the Kindness Pledge by adding their handprint onto our class collage. Each morning during circle time, we renew our promise to be kind by reciting this pledge, “I promise to try my best to cooperate with others, use kind words, be responsible and stay safe.

Ariana and Kyan working on their handprint.
We continued getting to know each other by sharing stories about the most important people in our lives, our families. The children began the week drawing a family portrait. As we shared these portraits with the class, we began to notice similarities and differences. We had a great discussion about the most important part of families; no matter how many people or animals are in a family, they all love us!

After discussing who makes up your family, the children naturally began talking about their homes. Using black marker and watercolor, the children drew and painted a picture of their homes. The children were then given the task to build a home for their family members. “Your family needs a house to live in. Can you build one?” Using a variety of building blocks the children used their problem solving skills and imagination to plan, measure and construct a house to fit all the members of their (doll) families. It was interesting to watch the children engage in this task. Each child was able to house their families but no two homes were alike!
The children continued to get to know each other through the month. To help with the process, we created Kindergarten Bingo. The game gave added practice in helping the children to identify the friends by their names and faces.

We used the children’s pictures to create our ABC patterns. We also practiced each others’ names by showing their pictures as we line up from the rug.

After we had practiced drawing ourselves, we moved on to drawing a friend’s portrait. One child was the artist using the easel to draw the model - focusing on detail. When the portrait was complete, the model and artist switched places. It was interesting to hear the conversations taking place. The children really concentrated on their works, taking particular care to draw their models in the correct clothing and always with a smiling face!
COOPERATION IN KINDERGARTEN

During the last week of September, the children worked with a partner to construct a new “friend” for the class. Each child chose a classmate to work with and had to discuss and agree on the characteristics of their new friend. They talked about physical features such as eye and hair color and had to agree on which color to use. They used paper, markers, tape, staplers and glue to design and create clothing. The children worked hard cooperating with each other to create these new friends. Many kind and encouraging words were overheard as the friends came to life.

As we continue to get to know each other and our shared space, we are constantly working on our cooperation skills. The children practiced listening and cooperating while working on a painting project. Each child was given a cup of paint and told to paint until the music stops and then listen for the direction. The children added paint to the canvases while singing and moving to the music. When the music stopped, they froze and followed the directions such as trade paint colors or move to a different table. The children did a wonderful job listening, cooperating and following direction. The morning resulted in five beautiful cooperative paintings that we will display!
GRAPHING

We continued to get to know each other by graphing our eye and hair color, as well as how many children there are in our family, how we get to school, and how many letters are in each first name. Graphing is an important math tool. It can be a simple way to introduce broader concepts of greater than/less than, or most and least. Being introduced to graphs at an early age can help children to understand important mathematical concepts such as sorting, organizing, counting, comparing, and analyzing.

KINDERGARTEN COOKING

Tuesday is cooking day in the Kindergarten! This month we have been working on our chopping and cutting skills. We began by chopping our favorite fruit to make fruit smoothies. The next week, we sliced oranges and used the juicer to make fresh squeezed orange juice.

Next, the children used a food mill to make homemade applesauce. They were fascinated by how the machine separated the seeds and skin from the sauce.

KINDERGARTEN FRIDAYS

September was a beautiful month to enjoy our Fridays in Schenley Park. Our first Friday was exploring the grassy area near the pond. The following Friday, we spent the morning on top of Flagstaff Hill exploring the area and appreciating nature.