Welcome to the PM Preschool! Beginning the school year was a very exciting time for the students and teachers in the PM Class. It was a busy month of meeting familiar and new peers for the children and the teachers. Our main focus during the first month of school together was to become comfortable with the new spaces, new teachers, new routines, new rules and new transitions. This time helped provide our friends with the security of knowing what to expect every day.

Friendship and Community

Our Favorite Theme Books

Circle time is a great time to hear stories that help friends learn more about our theme. This month our favorite books were:

- *Should I Share My Ice Cream?*, by Moe Willems
- *The Story of My Feelings*, by Laurie Berkner
- *We're Going on a Bear Hunt*, by Michael Rosen
- *Ish*, by Peter H. Reynolds
- *Weembrely Worried*, by Kevin Henkes
- *This Is Not My Hat*, by Jon Klassen
- *We Found A Hat*, by Jon Klassen

Mango Monkey Says…

You may have heard your child talk about “Mango Monkey” and his friends, “Andy The Alligator”, “Shy Squirrel,” “Sal Snake,” and “Cool Confident Cat.” They are all puppets we have begun to use at circle time. Mango Monkey helps to teach young children that we are all friends at school and we can learn and play together. The teachers began with talking about and using pictures of how we can be kind to one another at school. We talked about three Friendship Rules; 1. Use kind words such as: Please, Hello, Thank You, 2. Keep your hands and feet in your own space. 3. Everyone can be a kind friend and play. The teachers asked the children in their circle group, “What do you think a friend is? All the children had thoughtful ideas to contribute to the discussion. Mrs. Cherin and Ms. O’Neill will continue this theme throughout the year, using different puppets in scenarios to help the children learn how to respond effectively in social situations.
The Discovery Area and The Green Room

During the first week, the children had the opportunity to discover the different centers in the Discovery Area and in the Green Room. The **DISCOVERY AREA** is where we begin our afternoon together. This is where we go to explore water, sand, light, and magnets. These tables create opportunities for problem solving, cooperation, and collaboration. The children have also been painting at the easel and exploring various art materials on the tables. In the **GREEN ROOM**, the **DRAMATIC PLAY CENTER** was popular for housekeeping, taking care of baby dolls in a doctor’s office, and a post office. Puzzles, sorting by colors or shapes, and pegs are favorites in the **MATH** and **SCIENCE CENTER** and on the tables. On the floor, the train table and car garages with ramps and boats were also popular. The **LOOSE PARTS TABLE** provide the children endless opportunities to build on their play. Our friends enjoy playing in their environment by manipulating and creating with materials they can access independently.

Friendship

This month is about friendship and becoming familiar with the school setting as our community, so that is our focus! The children are adjusting to their new experiences and becoming acclimated to the Children’s School. The first two weeks were a time to become aware of new teachers and peers, as well as to learn to play and socialize in a larger group than family. This may mean actually talking to a classmate or playing beside a new friend, called parallel play. This time is also a learning experience for fostering their independence by following the routine when arriving and refining their self-help skills. Everything is new to your child and there is an adjustment period, which needs to take place. The children are adapting well and we are all becoming friends! Circle time is a time to gather everyone together to introduce a song, a dance movement/fingerplay, and a story. The teachers accomplish this by using puppets, props, and engaging stories, which helps pull the child into the group. At Circle time this month, we made a Good Friend List. The children were asked what qualities make a good friend. For example, someone that shares toys.
That’s Me!

During week three, we talked about one of the ways that we learn about each other is by exploring our faces to think about what all the different parts look like. We read *All About Faces*, by La Zoo, and explored our faces with mirrors. Each friend worked on a multi-step personal project. The first step was for each child to identify the first letter of their name and then use golf balls to roll paint colors on it in a box. For the next step, the children looked in a mirror and sketched the shape of their face with a pencil, followed by choosing a paint color to match their skin, after looking at the book, *The Color of Us*, by Karen Katz. The next week the paint was dry, and we picked Crapes colors for our eyes, our eyebrows and our lips. Next, we glued yarn on the top of the heads to match our hair too. Finally, our portraits were done! Everyone then had an opportunity to tell what they liked best about themselves. The project will be displayed for everyone to see at our **OPEN HOUSE** on October 23rd.

All About Families

The *family collage* pages began at home. Our friends worked on this project with their family by selecting photographs to include in their project. The children were proud to display their collages in their lockers and then share them with their peers at circle time. These activities were beginning practice for public speaking! The collages will be placed in a binder later in the year for everyone to review until the end of school when they will be sent home. The friends also named and counted everyone that lives in their home on a house-shaped chart.
Next our focus was how a community is a group of people living or working together in the same area. We talked about how people in the same communities might go to the same schools, shop in the same grocery stores and do the same things. They also help each other solve problems together. During Circle Time and in the Dramatic Play Center, we talked about jobs people do in our community and how we help each other. The children worked together in the kitchen to make kale chips for their snack.

Center Spotlight: The Dramatic Play Center

Dramatic play allows children to practice new situations or events. The friends are able to express themselves, be creative, develop their imaginations, and try new tools as they play. Dramatic play can also be used to introduce new concepts and reinforce others. It is a great way to build cooperation and communication between children while extending and building language arts, math, reading, writing, social skills, fine motor and gross motor skills. In September, the friends took care of baby dolls by feeding them and preparing tasty meals in a housekeeping setting, pretended to be doctors, and worked as postal workers.
The friends worked together to keep the trains moving.

Claire enjoyed lining up rows of Unifix cubes in a counting tray.

Ewan rolled and sliced through playdough.

Seiichiro and Satoshi partnered to fingerpaint together.

Zoyah used loose parts to design a flower garden.

Maddox and Claire constructed with Duplo blocks in the Make Shop.
Ewan and Claire molded, sliced and rolled with Floam.

Araad explored the mud kitchen on the playground.

Zoyah and Miranda enjoyed assembling body part puzzles.

Mary loves to play at the outside watertable!

Araad practiced his fine motor skills by stringing number and alphabet letter cubes.

Klemons took delight in climbing the Imagination Playground blocks!
Our Month in Photos

Albert and Zoyah poured sand into pretend ice cream cones.

August put together a maze of magnetic shapes.

Araad and Mary drew with tempera paint sticks.

Mary and Klemens climbed up and down on the playground.

Maddox celebrated his birthday with his mom, Julie, reading to the class.

Ewan painted his hand to make a handprint on his unique frame.
Mrs. Lauren Hraber (pronounced like “Harbor”) comes to the Children’s School every other Thursday. This month’s first music and movement concentration was learning how to keep a beat. The children were introduced to *Pete the Metronome*, a musical tool, and learned how to tap a beat by clapping, beating a drum, shaking maracas and sliding sand blocks. We also participated in a clapping song and singing our names. We ended our class with a fun parachute game!