

Chesterbrook Academy News

Chesterbrook Academy

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'Tis the Season...

The holiday season is upon us and we are busy little elves at Chesterbrook Academy! We are starting off December with the gift of giving! If you are looking to donate to a good cause, please consider one of our charity events as an opportunity to teach our children about the importance of giving this time of year. We will be participating in "Toys for Tots" and a Pajama Drive with the Kathleen K. Henley Home in Fairfax. Please find more information about these organizations inside this newsletter! Thank you in advance for your generosity and participation in supporting the local community.

Links to Learning...

This month the children are learning about ***Celebrations and Cultures Around the World***. Throughout this month, they will be taught about "Winter Wonderlands", "Foods Around the World", "Holiday Traditions", "Music Around the World" and "Celebrating the New Year".

Wrapping up November...

Together, with our local Chesterbrook Academy schools, we collected almost **3,000 canned food** for Operation Hunger DC. Thank you so much for the support and giving! What a great way to start the season and to make a difference to local families who are not as fortunate!

Principal for the day: Benicio Parkins

We again want to thank our families for their participation at fall festivals. The Parkins family from PRE-K2 won Trunk-or-Treat and Benicio will be PRINCIPAL for the day on **December 9th**.

Benicio will be picking the PM snack, pick a holiday movie to watch with his friends, pass out the special project of gingerbread house making, and hang out and help Ms. Sydney in her office! ☺



- 12.04.15 "Toys for Tots" & Kathleen K. Henley Home in Fairfax Pajama Drive -**Collection Begins**
- 12.11.15 Parent Date Night! 6:30pm-10pm
- 12.14.15 Joy of Dance: Parent Watch Day @ 11:15-12:00pm
- 12.17.15 "Toys for Tots" & Kathleen K. Henley Home in Fairfax Pajama Drive **Collection Ends**
- 12.16.15 Cookies & Milk with Mrs. Claus-PM snack and story time
- 12.17.15 POLAR EXPRESS DAY- **PAJAMA DAY and PreK2 Field CBA Chantilly for Toys and PJ Donation Delivery!**
- 12.18.15 Holiday Parties/Gift Exchange Starts at 3:30pm **Holiday Recital: Intermediate, Pre-K & PreK2** - Starts at **3:30pm** & party to follow.
- 12.21.15 Winter Camp Week: Spirit Week Begins! (See attached)
- 12.24.15 **Christmas Eve- Operating Hours are limited-TBD**
- 12.25.15 **Christmas Day: CLOSED**
- 12.31.15-01.06.15 Ms. Sydney on Vacation
- 01.01.16 **New Year's Day: CLOSED**

We want to wish everyone a safe, happy holiday and new year!

Coming up... 

Attention Parents:

You are invited!

We have planned a special afternoon for our Holiday Recitals & Parties. On **Friday, December 18th**, all families are invited to come and join the celebration! There will be songs and snacks for the older children. The sign up for snacks will be on your child's classroom door. **The PRE-K2 will be having a multi-cultural themed potluck.** Intermediate, Pre-K & Pre-K2 are the only classrooms participating in recitals. Infant 1 & 2, Toddlers and Beginners are having parties and gift opening starting at 3:30 to celebrate the holiday. Please look out for information posted soon.

Also, the parking lot is usually full and we cannot have families parking in the fire lane or handicap spaces, so please be prepared to park across the street. Since space in the building is limited, we also ask families to bring minimal guests to the event.

We are pleased to announce that we have a special guest attending the recitals! We have Santa scheduled to visit the children on Dec. 18th! Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns. Thank you!

Pre-K2: Potluck

On **Friday, December 18th**, all PRE-K2 families are invited to come and join the celebration and bring in a dish for a multi-cultural potluck (**no nuts please**)! The sign up for food will be on your child's classroom door.

Please let us know if you have questions on ideas and if you would like to help the classroom that day!

Schedules & Hours of Operation...

We will be closed on Friday, December 25th for Christmas and Friday, January 1st, for New Year's Day. In addition, our hours of operation for Thursday, December 24th will be limited hours based on the enrollments for the day. As we prepare for the Holiday Season, please take a moment to let your teachers know which days your child will be here. There will be a **sign-up sheet posted** on their door for the week of Christmas and New Years. This will help us to staff accordingly and for teachers to see their families. Let us know if you have any questions!

Friendly Reminders:

VACATION REQUEST: If you will be utilizing your vacation credit, please remember that we need a two week notice to properly apply the credit. Forms are available at the front desk. Please let Ms. Jessica or Ms. Sydney know if you have any questions on this!

TAX STATEMENTS: Please look for a sign up at the front desk if you would like your 2014-2015 year to date tax form. We can send it electronically or have a printed copy once the last invoice is paid for the year. If you have questions, please reach out to management.

STAFF: December Vacation Notice
Many staff will be using vacation time during the month of December. We will be doing our best to accommodate classrooms with teachers that will meet the needs of the children. We will try to keep consistent schedules and teachers. Please Email Jessica or Sydney with any questions or concerns during this time.

EMAIL NOTIFICATIONS:
With the future possibility of inclement weather and for safety reasons, please update your email address if you are not getting our e-notify emails or if you would like to add another address.





Local Community Charity Events...

During this holiday season we will be partnering with our local Chesterbrook Academies to participate in local charity events. Please read a little more about each wonderful organizations below! If you are interested in donating, we are encouraging your family to pick one of our charity events as an opportunity to help our children learn about the importance of giving to others during the holiday season. All donations will be collected from December 4th-Morning of December 19th

Pajama Day and PreK2 Field Trip...

On December 17th our school will be celebrating our success of giving by wearing our pajamas to school!!! We will have a "Polar Express Day" and our PreK2 children will hand deliver the donations to the Chantilly Kids Campus and participate in the event festivities!

We will have cookie making and golden tickets for the day for the PREK2 classrooms.

•Please make sure you still have appropriate attire for outside playtime-NO SLIPPERS please!•

Things to come...



- A friendly notice that Ms. Sydney will be on vacation from December 31st to January 6th. Please let me know if you need anything before I go!
- If you are interested in scheduling a meeting with your teacher about your LTL first quarter progress reports, please reach out to Ms. Sydney or Ms. Jessica and we will arrange a time that works best for you and the classrooms.

Toys for Tots

If you would like to participate in this toy drive, please bring a new, unwrapped toy to the school and collections will be gathered at the lobby of the school under the Holiday Giving Tree.

Pajama Drive

Every child loves to curl up and dream in a warm pair of pajamas during the winter months, but some children are less fortunate. Please donate a NEW pair of pajamas in our pajama box at lobby under our Holiday Giving Tree.

All donations will be given to the Kathleen K. Henley Home in Fairfax.

http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/factsheets/kk_h_familyshelter_factsheet.htm

Kathleen K. Henley Home:

The shelter provides a safe, temporary home for families, where they can receive help to assess their needs and develop a plan to locate permanent housing as quickly as possible. The shelter is an integral part of the county's [10-year plan to end homelessness.](#)

We would like to express our gratitude in advance for the support of our local communities and schools!
- Thank you!

Exploring Holiday Traditions from Around the World

The holiday season is here, providing a wealth of opportunities to enrich the children's understanding of diverse cultures and traditions around the world. In addition, our students will share their own traditions with others.



Below are age appropriate activities that we use in the classroom, as well as activities for you and your child to do at home.



BEGINNERS (ages 2-3):

In the classroom: As they near the age of two, children begin to recognize the sights and sounds of holidays celebrated by their family. Parents visit our classrooms to share holiday traditions, including unique books, songs and activities.

At home: Gather family photos and point out traditions, such as unwrapping presents, eating holiday dinner at grandma's house, and making a snowman. Encourage your child to talk about what he sees in the photos.

Recommended reading: *Children Around the World Celebrate Christmas* by Christine Tangvald, *Happy Hanukkah*, *Corduroy* by Don Freeman, *My First Kwanzaa* by Karen Katz

INTERMEDIATES (ages 3-4):

In the classroom: Children sing holiday songs from around the world and are introduced to holiday symbols that they may see in their communities, such as Christmas trees or Hanukkah menorahs.

At home: Take a drive with your child or bring him to various holiday festivals in your community. Encourage him to look for and identify holiday decorations.

Recommended reading: *Christmas Around the World* by Calliope Glass, *Hanukkah Hop* by Erica Silverman, *Lil Rabbit's Kwanzaa* by Donna Washington

PRE-K/PRE-K2 (ages 4-5)

In the classroom: After learning about holiday traditions around the world, our older preschoolers identify countries on a globe. For example, they might learn about Diwali, the festival of lights, and then find India on the globe. They might make tamales, a dish often served on Christmas, and then find Mexico on the globe.

At home: Ask your child to help you prepare your family's favorite holiday foods. Talk about the long-standing traditions in which these foods are rooted. For instance, you might explain, "I used to bake cookies for the holidays with my mom. Now we can start baking cookies together!"

Recommended reading: *Children Just Like Me: Celebrations* by Anabel Kindersley, *Light the Lights: A Story about Celebrating Hanukkah and Christmas* by Margaret Moorman, *The Story of Kwanzaa* by Mary Washington

Exposing children to various holiday traditions helps them build strong social skills, establish a sense of self, and respect the differences of others as they transition into elementary school and beyond.