

# APRIL NEWS

Chesterbrook Academy Collegeville

## A Note From the Principal

As we enter the new month, the students and staff are welcoming the spring weather! The classes have enjoyed taking their learning outside when possible and exploring things in the warmth. Some outside favorites are looking at nature with all the leaves that fall onto the playground, looking out the worms after it rains, and the bubble machine. Quite a few classrooms have planted their own plants and the students have taken pride in watching them grow. All of the classes have continued their learning through stories, engaging projects, and hands on activities. The students are continuing their growth in vocabulary, recognition, and storytelling while progressing their fine motor skills. The staff is looking forward to the extended sunshine and continued growth as we navigate through April.

## Ladybug Day/Earth Day

Earth Day is on April 22. To celebrate Earth Day we will be having a Ladybug Day! We will have live ladybugs to be released and many ladybug themed activities. Unfortunately we can not have parents join us this year but we will be sure to take lots of pictures.

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## Camp

School Age camp (entering Kindergarten and up) has completed registration. If you have not registered your school age child please do so as spots are filling very quickly.

Preschool summer information will be out in the next few days, please keep a lookout for it.

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## Reminders

1. **Pick-Up**— It can be difficult to see inside the car windows at pick up time due to sun glare, weather conditions or someone wearing both a mask and a hat. Please try to use the sign provided so we can easily see who it is from a distance. This helps pick up to run more smoothly.
  2. **Sunscreen**— Children should come in with their sunscreen on. If you would like to send in sunscreen for us to re-apply in the afternoon, we will have the sunscreen permission form in the drop off line for your signatures. Please just let us know at drop off. Please be aware that we can not use spray sunscreen, it must be lotion. Sunscreen should be labeled with your child's name as it will remain at school.
  3. **The Week of the Young Child** will be celebrated the week of April 12th to 16th. We will be doing special activities each day that week to celebrate all of the children in our lives.
  4. **Classroom Zooms** - As part of the fun for The Week of the Young Child and to help our parents feel more connected to their child's class we will be having classroom zoom sessions on Family Friday, April 16. Most classes will do this around lunch time by a few may have a different schedule. A schedule will be sent out with each classes specific details.
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## The Importance of Routines for Preschoolers

As we continue to navigate the everchanging COVID-19 pandemic, maintaining a consistent routine for our students in a safe and fun environment is our top priority. Below are a few reasons why routines are important for young children and how we help achieve this in the classroom.

### **Children learn to manage themselves when they understand expectations in their environment and what comes next.**

An organized, clean and welcoming classroom is not only the foundation for quality teaching, but it also helps shape and define positive student behavior. Our classrooms have developmentally appropriate interest areas called centers that reinforce writing and other curriculum skills. In centers, teachers encourage student choice and exploration with the guidance of a visual center management system, which helps children know when they can move to a new center. This practice helps them learn routines, self-monitoring and decision-making. Other visual cues in our classrooms include footprint outlines to remind students where to line up, picture instructions of how to wash hands, and picture/word labels to help children know where each toy goes.

### **Children handle change best if it's expected and occurs in the context of a familiar routine.**

During times of potential chaos, a structured routine provides comfort, stability and a sense of safety. Transitions from one activity to another can be frustrating and stressful for children, because they take time and can involve waiting. To help ease transitions and help set expectations, our teachers provide verbal and non-verbal cues, such as songs or sounds. They may also wear a silly hat to attract attention or provide children with small toys, such as bubbles or action cards, to make the transition fun and engaging.

### **Routines help children demonstrate independence, while fostering feelings of belonging and self-confidence.**

Circle time is a part of our students' everyday routine that helps establish roles, reinforces learning, encourages student interaction, creates unity and builds relationships. During circle time, students select helper jobs such as flag holder, book holder or weather observer. These jobs help them actively engage in the activity and see themselves as important members of the classroom community. Teachers make children feel valued by acknowledging how the helpers are important to the circle time routine.

A grandparent of one of our students recently told us, "My granddaughter is only a toddler but it's clear that she understands her school routine. When she visits me, she stops at the coat closet until I hang up her coat. At lunch, she hands me her bib and says "up" to get seated in her highchair. After eating, she carries her dishes over to the sink and helps wipe off her tray. Thank you for instilling these routines with her. It makes our time together run smoothly!" What a great example of our classroom routines in real life!