Carkeek East
AM Class Weekly Newsletter
September 18 - 22
*Reminder: No School on Monday, October 2nd (Teacher Professional Development)

A few weekly highlights:

- We continued to familiarize ourselves with the classroom, our teachers and our classmates via our daily Message Board. Our class has done an incredible job getting accustomed to our “nature walls” and will soon be ready to move about the classroom without the flagging tape and cone reminders. We will continue to use our red/green rock system throughout the year to help students remember which areas of the classroom are available during the different parts of our daily routine.

- This week we welcomed two new students to our class - Nash & Josiah. Both students started early this week and have been a great addition to our class! Please join us in welcoming their families to our Carkeek East community.

- Some Highlights from Work Time:
  - The binoculars, magnifying glasses and tweezers from our Toy Area were favorites during work time this week. Students used these tools to checkout what classmates were doing across the classroom, investigate cracks and crevices in our many stumps and move tiny piles in the log area.
  - The Home Area continued to be a major attraction for our students this week. Students took turns using the pots, pans, mixers, whisks and various containers to make mulch meals each day. While some students transformed our laminated books into recipe books, others enjoyed using a small clipboard to take orders and serve their classmates and teachers.
  - On Wednesday and Thursday, we introduced playdough for the first time during small groups. Students each received their own set of scissors, a roller and a few cookie cutters. They then used these tools (and their hands) to create many different shapes. While some students focused on cutting many tiny pieces with their scissors, others created hearts, cars and pancakes.
  - On Friday, we welcomed Fall and celebrated the Equinox with our first cooking project - Applesauce making. Students chopped apples, while teachers used our camping stove to cook their bounty. After the apples were cooked, students got to use a masher and a crank mixer (just like the one in the Home Area) to complete the final step, turning their chunks into delicious applesauce. We then enjoyed our creation at snack time.

Hike Highlights:

- This week our hikes took us out of the classroom, down the hill and towards our “Salmon Spot” in the demonstration area adjacent to the Salmon Imprint Ponds.
- Early in the week we stayed closer to the classroom, investigating the small stream trail next to our main path. Later in the week we ventured down to the
benches next to the imprint pond, where we predicted what we might see when the salmon start arriving next month.

- This week we enjoyed our first encounters with banana slugs. Students were surprised to notice these interesting creatures on our trail. Ms. Tess introduced our first banana slug visitor and shared how to safely interact with this exciting wildlife in our environment.
- Finally, as part of our Fall Equinox celebration, we began our day with our first long hike. This hike, which lasted over an hour, took us to the trail across the street from our hill. Students excitedly observed Piper's Creek for the first time and paid careful attention to any new signs of fall, such as falling leaves and browning trees.

Parking Lot Safety
As you have likely noticed, the parking lot adjacent to our classroom can be very busy, particularly at pickup and drop-off times. Please help us keep our students and other park visitors safe, both as pedestrians and drivers. When crossing any road, please be sure to check for cars and verify your presence with oncoming drivers. Arriving or departing the park can be very exciting for kiddos and distracting for drivers.

When we cross the road on hikes we practice looking both ways to make sure that the road is clear and note that we make eye-contact with approaching drivers to ensure they are aware of our presence and are planning to stop for our passing.

Weather Wear
Layers & Accessories
As the seasons change, the temperature in our classroom can fluctuate greatly depending on wind, shade (via cloud or trees) and direct sunshine. This can make dressing and temperature regulation difficult for our young students. The best solution to this conundrum is layering and proper accessories. This week will bring higher temperatures, so many students may be most comfortable wearing a short-sleeved shirt as their base layer with a sweater or long-sleeved shirt for that early morning chill. As temperatures cool, please make sure to pack a winter hat and pair of light gloves. These accessories are a great option as they keep in body heat, while allowing students to wear lighter layers on their bodies.

Ages & Stages Questionnaires
Due: Friday, September 29th
This week we will be sending home two “Ages & Stages” Questionnaires for you to fill out. The questionnaires will walk you through a number of questions regarding your child and should take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete. These questionnaires serve as a powerful first-step in understanding how your child is progressing through their developmental milestones and will help guide our role in their development. Please complete the questionnaires this week and return to Ms. Erin or Ms. Tess by Friday, September 29th. Thank you for your assistance!
Thank you for taking the time to join our class’ closed Facebook group. We are looking forward to using this tool to share photos, classroom stories and other resources with your family.

We also hope you will use this group to build connections with other families, share tips and tricks, sales, and to swap and donate clothes to each other.

Until further notice, we will be limiting membership of this group to primary guardians of students in the class. Other family members or relevant adults are welcome to join our Remind group for important classroom updates.

We are thrilled to have so many family members interested in volunteering in our classroom!

If you are interested in joining us in the classroom, please take a moment to complete the Background Check form via the link below.

If you have already submitted your Background Check, please e-mail us to confirm your submission and provide more details on how you would like to be involved in the classroom.

On Monday, October 2nd school will be closed. Teachers will be attending our monthly Professional Development session. Please feel free to use our Facebook group to facilitate alternative care plans with your co-families!