## Class Happenings

### This Week:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Small Group:</th>
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<td><img src="image1.jpg" alt="Small Group" /></td>
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<td>We began practicing to make a <strong>Plan</strong> for our learning during Work Time. One method we used to plan was the “Train”. We walked around the class and made stops at all the learning areas as a train. Students were able to choose which area they wanted to stay and play at for <strong>Work Time</strong>. We practiced <strong>Recalling</strong> what we did during work time using the same method we planned with.</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Work Time:</th>
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<td><img src="image2.jpg" alt="Work Time" /></td>
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<td>We explored our learning areas. Learning areas in both class spaces are: Art, Toys, Home, Books. In East we also have Blocks, Mulch, and Logs. In West we also have Mud, and Field. We got familiar with our <strong>Routine</strong>. We have made small adjustments to the routine as we figure out what works best for our class.</td>
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**Large Group:**

We practiced coming to circle as a group. We shared our names with the Name Game Song and our elephant puppet Wibbly Wobbly. We read three new stories and voted on which one to re-read on Friday. We used our bodies by pretending to be various animals.

**Hike:**

We went on very short and simple hikes to practice and learn how to hike together. We focused on staying together by playing “Red Light, Green Light” on the trails.

**Highlight:**

**Miss Rosie:**

We loved having Rosie join us for the first week! The students bonded with her right away, and her positive spirit and vast knowledge of the natural world enriched all of us! Rosie says: “I had a wonderful time this week with Carkeek Central! It was so much fun to get to know all the children, and to explore not one, but two classrooms together. I look forward to spending time with the Central class in the future if a substitute is ever needed!”
Other News:

- I sent each student home with a Name Card that includes their personal Letter Link. A Letter Link is a phonemic awareness tool to help students recognize the first sound in their name and “link” it to the letter. Please use the cards at home with your child to help them practice recognizing and writing their name. This card stays at home.

- Please make sure to label ALL personal items. Most importantly, please label backpacks and water bottles.

- **Immunization Records:** Must be on the state standardized form and *signed or stamped* by the doctor’s office as well as signed by a parent/guardian in order to be valid. I tried to touch base with all families who are not yet in compliance this week. If you are not sure if your students is complete, please check in with me. Please bring in completed forms as soon as possible.

Food For Thought:

- **Snack:** We do not have snack until halfway through our day. There are a couple reasons for this - it is very important to give students enough Work time (45-60 minutes), and we want to have enough energy to hike and thus don’t want snack to come too far before this part of our routine. *By the time snack time came this week, a few students were very hungry.* If your family tends to eat lunch early, consider giving your child a healthy snack right before school. Protein-rich foods satiate us longer than carbohydrates. A couple ideas for a good before-school snack could be hummus and veggies, or string cheese and apple slices.

- **Saying Goodbye:** It can be heart wrenching to see our children in distress when we leave them. Our natural instinct is to comfort them, and to reassure ourselves that they are okay by staying in the vicinity. However, this can prolong and heighten the emotional experience for our children. Research shows that it is best to clearly and lovingly say goodbye, reassure the child that you will return, and then leave in a timely manner. *Please do not try to slip away without telling your child you are leaving. This can be traumatic and create insecurity.*

- **Toys from home:** Some students brought toys from home with them to class this week. Comfort items can help children feel safe and adjust to new surroundings and people. However, personal items can very quickly cause behavioral upsets in the classroom,
especially when misplaced, or mistaken for a class item by a friend. My standard rule about toys from home is that they stay in our backpacks, or better yet, the car. Some of the most important lessons we learn in preschool are how to share and take turns. These skills are much easier to build when we are not worried about personal items. If your child needs a comfort item from home with them during the school day, please consider:

1) Is the item irreplaceable and a favorite? If the item is one of a kind and your child’s favorite thing, please encourage them to choose another less valuable item to bring. Alternately, leave these precious items in your car upon arrival and reassure your child that it will be there when you return.

2) Does the item fit in your student’s backpack, and is it light enough to carry on a hike? If not, please help your child choose another item that fits these criteria.

3) Is your child likely to be able to manage keeping their comfort item in their backpack without distress? If not, please consider keeping comfort items in the car.

- **Big Emotions:** Social-emotional development is the primary goal of preschool. This year we will do a lot of work on naming our emotions and calming ourselves down so that we can discuss and problem-solve. One method that I find very effective for managing emotions is the 5 Finger Positive Guidance Method:
  1. _Calm down (including yourself!):_ Meet the child at eye level, count to 10 OR blow candles on fingers slowly with deep breaths (one candle for each year of age).
  2. _Listen:_ Without judgement or additional comments/questions, restate what the child is saying, include feeling words in restatement (“You were Angry when Johnny took the car out of your hand.”)
  3. _Brainstorm solutions:_ Ask the child for suggestions before offering any yourself, wait..., and wait some more (we are teaching children how to resolve their own conflicts instead of depending on us for solutions).
  4. _Agreement:_ Should be reached by both parties; a win-win is a resolution in which _everyone_ is satisfied with the solution, but not necessarily getting everything they wanted.
  5. _Follow Up:_ With the child(ren) and thank them for helping to find a solution that worked for everyone!

Preschool is a safe place to express our emotions as long as we are following two basic rules: Be Safe & Be Kind. We will be firm in upholding our expectations and guidance of students in consideration of these rules - which are like the roots of our tree. As long as these values are firmly rooted, we can be flexible, like the branches of our tree, to meet the needs of the children where they are.
This coming week:

- We welcome Ms. Atty, who will be teaching with me in class.
- We will create our Class Rules
- We will brainstorm a Class Name (for example, Carkeek West is The Coyotes)
- Look for a Routine booklet to come home with your student later this week. This will be theirs to keep at home. Some ways to use it: encourage your child to read it to you, color it together and talk about the symbols, take it apart and hang it in order on a door or refrigerator.