



Important Dates

March 9th – Elementary School Info Session

For those of you that missed the last one, we will be having another session about the Elementary School in March. We'd love to see you there or have you help spread the word!

March 13th 5-8pm – Parent's Night Out

This evening out for parents was extremely popular last year, so we are happy to be bringing it back! Drop off your children for an evening of fun with Kerry, Brooke and Haley from 5-8pm...and don't forget to bring a packed dinner! All funds generated from this evening will be put towards our teachers attending the AERO conference in Albany, NY this June. Come support a good cause: minimum donation \$20.

March 22nd – March 26th – Spring Break (No School)

March 9th – First School (preschool) Info Session

This will probably be families' last opportunity to get on the wait list for this fall. We still have a few full-day spaces left, so please let your friends know!

Announcements

Fundraising Letter – We will be putting a letter in your cubby for our Elementary School fundraising campaign. We would greatly appreciate it if you would send it to any friends, family members or businesses that might be able to offer support!

Garden Survey – You will also soon be receiving a survey regarding our upcoming garden expansion plans. We would love to hear your ideas and find out your level of interest!

Thread Updates

Seeds! By Christy

This week at Patchwork we have been getting excited about gardens! In morning meeting the blue group has discussed the seasons, talked about seeds and how they grow using light from the sun (photosynthesis), fertilizer (manure) and water. Some people also mentioned worms they have seen in their gardens at home. We have also observed how tiny seeds and buds can produce beautiful plants and leaves. In addition, we talked about planting seeds and then waiting to harvest them up to 110 days. These topics are an exciting lead into the garden we are planning to have at Patchwork this season!



Artwork by Jack Kean.



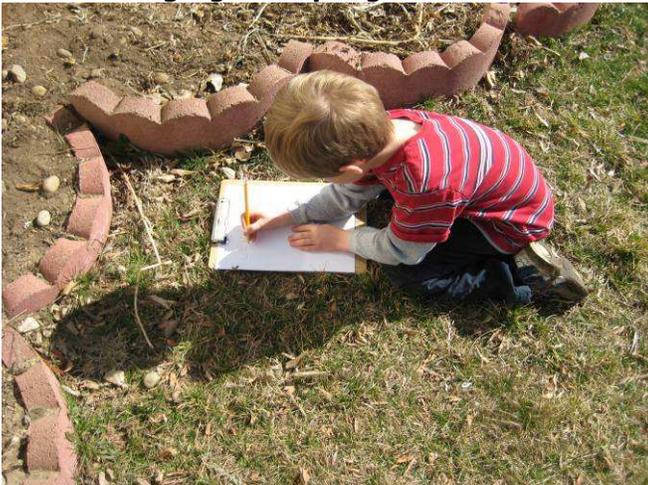
Checking out the Patchwork garden.

Nature Walks! By Kerry

As the weather has warmed, we have begun discussing the changing of seasons in our morning meetings. We have also ventured out for nature walks in the front yard. With clipboards and pencils in hand, the children roamed around recording any signs of spring. They documented their observations of melting snow, sprouting plants, and singing birds through pictures or words. Their obvious delight and curiosity about the natural world seems to be an emerging thread.



Documenting signs of spring.



Literacy and Handwriting Readiness By Wonshé

We have been introducing a variety of multisensory materials and activities to nurture readiness in early literacy and handwriting for the children. They have been learning to form letters of the alphabet using modeling clay and wooden pieces, straight and curved. From these letters we (teachers too) create words – our names. This simple yet engaging activity spawns many ways to experience letters, sounds, words and eventually sentences.

At present the children are learning to spell their own and each other's names using the letters they form, and continue to make observations while 'writing' their names. For example: Gray, Grace and Griffyn all begin with 'GR'; Rose, Avery and Henry each have an 'R' in their name; Alana, Evan and Layton all have an 'A' and an 'N' in their names; Matan, Maggie and Sam each have 'M' in their names; and the 'E' in Wonshé sounds like an 'A'. We introduced capital letters first – L, F, E, H, I, T, U, O, Q etc., which invite these kinds of observations and are easier to make than lower case

letters. There are also numerous opportunities throughout the day for open ended discovery as we find and use the letters of our names in images, words, and stories that we hear.



Lucy, Griffyn & Evan complete their names!



Other Happenings Expanding the Gardens

We are very excited to announce that the Patchwork School is growing...an urban farm! In collaboration with the CU Environmental Center, Transition Louisville and Community Roots, we will be converting the front yards of the First School (preschool) and the Elementary School into raised beds for gardening. By joining the Local Food movement, we are finding yet another way to be involved in our community, and creating an opportunity for our children to get very close to the source of their food! More information on CSA Shares (or a related system) will be available later on.

We've typically had a Landscaping and Gardening day every spring, as a fun family work day and potluck. This year, however, we're coordinating this day to be closer to Earth Day and REALLY need your help to make this happen! Let's do this the old-fashioned barn-raising way: everyone bring a dish to share (please consider

bringing extra for CU student volunteers) and tools (labeled). As the day gets closer we will compile a list of needed materials!

This is an exciting step for our community and we are looking forward to getting our hands dirty with all of you!

Learning Dialogue Letters By Brooke

In preparation for the Learning Dialogue open house, we offered the children the opportunity to write to their parents. The children answered the question, "What do you want your parent/s to see when they come to school?" Most children first drew a picture and some continued by writing the answer. Joy was expressed in hand delivering the letters. Writing and drawing with the intent to communicate with our loved ones supports children's interest in literacy and provides another home-school connection.



Mirelle delivers her letter.

Planning for Art In The Schoolhouse 2010

This is a *Save the Date* and *Call for Artists and Musicians* for the 3rd Annual **Art in the Schoolhouse** at The Patchwork School. This year's event will be on Friday evening, Sept. 10th and Saturday, Sept. 11th, and will include the Grand Opening Celebration for the Patchwork Elementary School (opening August of this year).

If you are interested in an artist spot, or a chance to perform your music, please let us know by contacting one of our coordinators, Sarah Purdy at sfpurdy@aol.com.

All previous artists and musicians will be contacted shortly! Please join us for this exciting and community-run event...

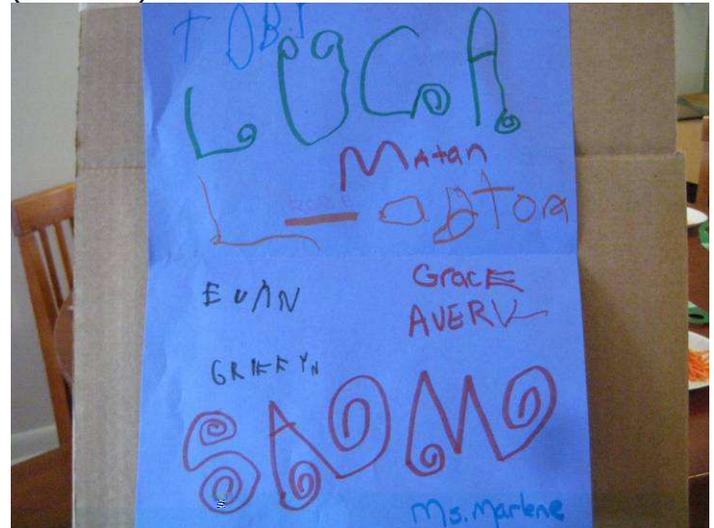
Healthy Habits

Fruit or vegetable?

Our nurse consultant, Marlene, did an offering about nutrition and talked with the children about eating a variety of different foods. She brought foods from each food group for them to taste. In addition, they talked about the importance of drinking plenty of water.



They then all enjoyed helping to create a thank you note (see below) for some donated water bottles.



Chew Your Way To Health

By Laura Ostrowski

We all know it's a good idea to chew our food -- frankly, because we don't want to choke on it. However, most people put food in their mouths, chew a few times and swallow -- as if seeing how quickly we can get it into our tummies. We have either unconditioned ourselves or have never developed a healthy chewing habit to begin with. Let's take a moment to find out why it's a good idea to liquefy your food before you bring it down the hatch!

Chewing food thoroughly can give us:

- **Better Digestion** by mechanically and chemically breaking food down, and stimulating the entire digestive process.
- **More Energy** by allowing the nutritional value of our food to be absorbed and converted into energy more easily. Sluggish digestion creates a sluggish body.
- **Stronger Bones** by converting acidic foods (like grains) to alkalizing foods with enzymes in our mouth (otherwise our body would have to buffer the acidic food we swallow by leeching minerals from our blood and bones).
- **A Clearer Mind** by bathing the brain with the right nutrients and creating a higher oxygen supply in the blood (slightly alkaline blood absorbs oxygen better).
- **A Stronger Immune System** by bringing the right size and pH of particles into our digestive tract to receive the right nutrients for health and to keep a balance of healthy bacteria in our gut (especially since 70-80% of our immune cells are found in our digestive tract).
- **Stronger Bones** by maintaining an alkaline pH so our body doesn't have to leech alkalizing minerals from our blood and bones to buffer the acidic foods.
- **A Healthier Body and Happier and More Productive Life** by utilizing the power and energy from our foods, having healthy body systems, and allowing us to slow down and enjoy not only our food but life around us too.

So how many times should you chew? First remember that carbohydrates that are higher in fiber we automatically have to chew more, as they don't just dissolve in our mouths. This is good. Experts say we should chomp and chew between 30 and 100 times. (Wow, there goes dinner conversation!) But if you don't want to count, aim to liquefy your food before you swallow. As Ghandi put it:

"Chew your drink, and drink your food".

Wake Me Up Irish Oats (Slow Cooker Style)

Want to wake up to a nice warm breakfast, already cooked? Try this out! We've been enjoying it during the cooler winter mornings.

1 c. Irish (steel cut) oats
5 c. water
dash of salt
1 tsp. cinnamon

Mix the ingredients together in a slow cooker before going to bed. Make sure it is on a safe counter top (tolerating the heat). Turn it on low and let it cook all night. Wake up to the smell of breakfast!

Top with your choice of: milk of choice, maple syrup, bananas (sliced), raisins, walnuts, flax and/or chia seeds (ground in coffee grinder or whole).

Artwork Spotlight Play Dough Offering

Jackson's mom, Ann, made colorful play dough with the children in the studio and they all enjoyed the tactile and artistic experience!



Jackson, Gavin, William, Matan, Annetta help mix!



We want to say a big thank you to all of the parents that have been volunteering their time to do offerings recently!