



Important Dates

Wednesday, March 30th 7:00-8:30pm – Information Session

If you know a family that might be interested in enrolling, please let them know about this information session. This is an adults-only event with a short presentation and Q&A with the directors.

April 14th 7:00-8:30pm – Community Visioning Session & Learning Dialogue

In place of April's Learning Dialogue, we invite you all to join us for this opportunity to listen and have your voice heard regarding exciting, potential new programs at Patchwork. **Possibilities in the near future include: a Toddler Center, an Afternoon/Afterschool Program, a Summer Camp program, a Parenting Support Group, New Options for Homeschoolers, and more!**

As members of our community, we want to hear your questions and comments, so that together we can create the best possible community. If you are interested in offering your thoughts and support to Patchwork as we move forward, PLEASE come to this important meeting! In order to facilitate attendance, **children are welcome to come** with you to the meeting. If they aren't interested in hearing the presentation and discussion, we will be providing a space where we will care for them while you attend. Community members outside of currently enrolled students are also welcome!



Kebbeh & Elise are ready for Spring!

Tuesday, March 26th – Teacher In-service – No School

Saturday, May 14th 10:00am-3:00pm – End of Year Garden Party!

Save this date for our annual end of the year Gardening party! More details will be coming soon!

Thursday, May 26th – Last Day of School!



The gardening has begun!

Announcements

Gardening! – You may have noticed that the gardening is once again under way. Andi Johnson (Sophia's mom) has helped us get started with some fresh soil in the garden beds and a few seedlings. Let us know if you are interested in coming to help garden some day!

Summer Playdates – We have had a few people ask about summer playdates, and so we just want to let you know that they will indeed be happening again this year. There will also be a gardening option, as well, just as we did last year. You can be expecting registration information in your cubbies soon! Let us know if you'd like to help coordinate!

Shoe Boxes – We are collecting shoe boxes to make dioramas for our museum. Please bring some in if you have any!

First School Updates

Ms. Suzie's Music Offering

By Sarah Goldberg

We had a special guest musician come in to share music, song and dance with the Patchwork Community. All the kids circled around Ms. Suzie with bright eyes and smiles, excited for each and every song. Together, we sang songs about the colors outside, of the sky, snow, animals, trees and nature, about birds singing their unique songs for spring and about drumming. Together, we played drums, shakers, tambourines and musical instruments from all different musical genres. Together, we danced!

Discovery Zone

By Michele Leonard (Mitch got married!)

Please come in and explore our new "museum" in the yellow room of the school. You can dig for dinosaur skulls, search for insects, wonder at the wildlife displays, or learn about your body in our very own "Expedition Health" exhibit. Many of you will feel like you have been transported back to the Discovery Zone at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science. The children seem to really be loving this new space! Thanks again to everyone who helped contribute materials!



Grace digs for dinosaur fossils in the sand.



Wyatt helps clean the dinosaurs off.



Digging for Fossils outside!



Found one!

Blue Group Democratic Meeting

By Haley Sladek

As some of you might have heard, this week (right before spring break) the blue group had a democratic meeting in which they had a discussion about some problems that had been coming up in the student community, regarding children being excluded or hurting each others' feelings. The meeting was held right before lunch with members of the blue group and with Michele and Haley co-facilitating. In the meeting the students were able to first list off the **feelings** that had been coming up in the community. Second, we listed our **observations** of when and why those feelings come up in the community. And third, suggestions for what we **need** and what we **request** from each other in order to solve these problems. These four steps (feelings, observations, needs, and requests) coincide with Marshall Rosenberg's practice of Non-Violent Communication. This methodology is a helpful way of talking about the type of communication that we encourage at Patchwork, and can be a useful tool both at school and at home. It can also help us all to create a consistent community, where everyone seems to be speaking the same language.

After brainstorming in our meeting and then coming to consensus (yes, actual consensus!), everyone then practiced using the word "space" so that in the future, whenever anyone needs time away from a conversation or a group, they can say the code word "space" to leave momentarily and then return ready to communicate respectfully. This will certainly take time for everyone to learn to use regularly, and probably subsequent meetings, but even after this one discussion we have seen improvement. As a participant in this meeting, I am also impressed by the children's level of ownership, creativity, voice and their ability to listen. This meeting was held in the format of a "democratic meeting," as is done weekly at the Elementary School, requiring that a chair-person run the meeting, that everyone raise their hand to speak, and that each person is given time to finish each thought. This was a great step towards introducing First School students to this more formal structure, which can help deepen their understanding of community participation!

Elementary School Updates

Magic Show

By Brooke Bell

The elementary children have focused on our Magic and Mystery thread for the past few months. When we saw that they were interested in learning how to perform magic tricks of their own, we decided that one of the best audiences was right next door at the First School! The children prepared a schedule of tricks to perform that included disappearing pennies, unlocking brain-teasers, and magically moving a straw. The First School children were in awe of the performance, which occurred several times. The elementary children were given the opportunity to stand before their peers and demonstrate their skills. This opportunity was challenging for many, and led to children feeling confident in performing in front of a large group. It is amazing how the two schools support each other in their learning experiences.



Charlie makes a penny disappear!



William makes a ruler float in mid-air!



Elise, Emerson and Zidane try the straw trick.



Henry magically unlocks two metal pieces.



The First School audience is amazed!

Back to Robots!

By Amanda Easton

We have been exploring robots again at the elementary school. This has included making a robot from an Altoid tin, disassembling a Roomba, and creating a book about robots. It has been interesting to see all the ways that robotics are being used all over the world. We have learned about robots being sent to Mars, into volcanoes, used in medicine, and as toys. Here is some dialogue between two children during our conversation about our book (this is only a small sampling of some ideas that were discussed):

*Is this book going to be fiction or non-fiction?
Well, some real ideas and some fake.-Jackson*

*...
Somebody's going to lose an arm in our story-Jackson
I've seen a person with a robot leg-Jackson
Did she have skin over it?-Kebbeh
No-Jackson*

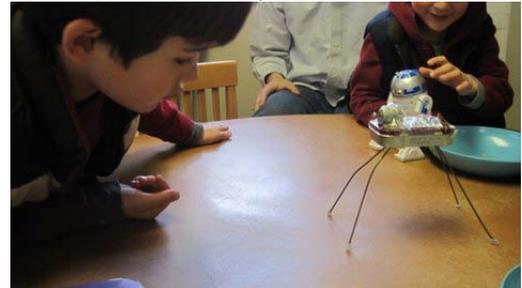
*...
This is actually not a true story because dragons aren't
real-Jackson*

*...
This robot goes into volcanoes-Jackson*

We proceeded to make a story about a scientist who built a robot, which led to amazing drawings of volcanoes. We continue to explore different ideas about robots and computers and how they are being used today.



Jackson and Henry see how it works.



The robot walks!



Kebbeh works on the story.



Checking out the Altoid-Tin Robot.



Sean helps make some adjustments.

Rocks and Crystals

By Christy Lochary

At the Elementary School last week we extended our interest in rocks and crystals by growing our very own. Gavin and Afi collected the starter rocks from our back yard, while the others gathered the safety goggles for our eyes. The most difficult part was making sure we measured out the exact amount of water to mix the chemical solution in. Once we poured the water solution over the rocks, we had to wait! Each day, more crystals formed as the water evaporated. After more than 10 days we are still monitoring results. Henry has suggested that we view the crystals under a microscope or magnifying glass to see them in detail. This experiment, in conjunction with the field trip we took to the mineral and rock shop last week has led to interesting conversations on crystal structures and how they are formed.