Dear Blue and Red Room families,

Our final unit for the year was Birds, and as I sit and write this last newsletter, I can’t help but think how time has flown (pun intended... more to follow). We have grown so much throughout the year and the teachers have had the privilege of witnessing that growth in action as the children learned about our feathered friends!

Many books shaped our discussions, activities and explorations! “Birds” by Susan Canizares, “The Beak Book” by Pamela Chanko, “Hank Finds an Egg” by Rebecca Dudley, “Boo Hoo Bird” by Jeremy Tankard, and “Goodnight, Owl” by Pat Hutchins were a few pieces of literature that guided our learning. Non-fiction books provided us with information about characteristics of birds, such as having feathers, beaks and wings. Fictional stories gave us the chance to see the facts in context and recall our new knowledge!

The Blue and Red Rooms were full of artifacts, materials and learning centers that gave the friends the opportunity to experience birds and practice skills in a variety of ways. The children used tools such as pliers, scissors, eye droppers and spoons to emulate different beaks and their functions. We observed real bird nests with actual eggs and compared the size, shape and colors of the eggs, and contrasted the materials and designs of the nests. The dramatic play center turned into a bird hospital and the friends spent time caring for the birds. Using a checklist with pictures of wings, beaks, feathers, etc., the children examined plush bird toys and, in the process, reinforced what they learned about birds while practicing their interaction, cooperation, communication and motor skills.

All through the year, we stressed the idea of paying attention to the friends: to their bodies, to their words, to their surroundings. Looking for birds requires the same skill! When walking to the gym or the playground, we emphasized looking all around for signs of birds. We made bird feeders to hang so that birds such as sparrows, blue jays, grackles and starlings would come to us. The friends provided nesting material for birds in the form of string, yarn and ribbon hung outside the windows. The children decorated binoculars and used them outside to watch robins comb the field for worms.

Another amazing resource we took advantage of was the live webcam of the Pittsburgh Peregrine falcon nests. We watched the family as mom sat on the eggs, the eggs hatched, and mom and dad falcon brought food to the growing young.
SPREADING OUR WINGS AS WE EXPERIENCE NEW THINGS!

Ruth caring for an injured eagle.

Lillian (left) gluing wings to her colorful bird.

Raj playing a bird matching game.

Lucy (right) with her bird sculpture.

Branden watching the Peregrine falcons in downtown Pittsburgh.

“See any birds, Tristan?”

Zoe making a cereal bird feeder.

Emiah and the afternoon friends observing the eggs in the Kindergarten.

Lucy (right) with her bird sculpture.
NOW LET’S TRY THIS TODAY!

Lucy proudly displaying her birdhouse.

Ruth and Sam using tools that work like bird beaks.

Branden building a house for his bird friends.

Emiah’s turn during “Duck, Duck, Goose”.

Tristan discovering the properties of the poles of magnets in the Make Shop.

Raj looking at two of the newly hatched chicks.
As our year comes to an end, we want to take the time to thank everyone who has helped to make this year great! Thank you to Mrs. Hraber for the music classes, Miss Debbie the librarian, and Mrs. Wendolowski for the wonderful gym classes! Thank you to all the parents who shared their gifts and time in the classroom this year! Specific thanks to Wilder’s dad for reading a story to the Red Room. In the morning Blue Room, Claes’ parents helped us make baskets, James’ parents read a story for his birthday, and Tristan’s dad showed us a robot used in the basement of our building! In the afternoon, Holden’s mother decorated vases with the friends and Biel’s mother guided us through the process of making wooden boats.

Thank you all for sharing your child with us this school year!

Mrs. Tomer    Mrs. O’Neill    Mr. Salinetro    Mrs. Loomis

WE HOPE EVERYONE HAS A SAFE AND FUN SUMMER!!