Dear families,

For the past month, the Green Room Friends have been focusing their attention on building. Before the unit began, Louise Sturgess visited from the Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation to discuss how buildings in Pittsburgh have changed over the years. She brought posters and a giant building puzzle. It was a great way to begin the building unit.

We spent the first days of the building unit exploring the basic concepts of building. Circle discussions and activities centered on balance, tension, gravity and compression. The friends enjoyed walking across the balance beam and playing balancing games like Coco the Rocking Clown. The friends stretched rubber bands on geoboards to make shapes and used full body shape shifters to stretch their bodies and the bands. Working at the woodworking center was a wonderful and popular way for friends to understand the basic concepts of building. The friends even learned to balance and walk on the stilts they made!
After learning about how buildings stay up, the friends began discussing and doing activities about construction. In circle time, the friends heard stories about construction workers, construction vehicles and construction tools. Some of our favorite stories included Building a House by Byron Barton, Construction Zone! Noisy Trucks at Work by Charles Hofer and Good Morning Digger, by Anne Rockwell. The friends’ favorite construction activities included making construction hats, making and decorating dump trucks, and constructing buildings with a variety of building materials including the addition of the imagination playground.

Design was also an important topic during this unit. The friends enjoyed hearing stories about architects, the planning that comes before the building, and different types of buildings. Roberto the Insect Architect by Nina Laden, A Day in the Life of an Architect by Mary Bowman-Kruhm and Block City by Robert Louis Stevenson were popular during circle time. The friends painted large paper bags to resemble their houses. The bags had holes cut in the top so the friends could actually wear their house! The friends designed windows and doors to attach to the outside of their house. Michael’s Mom talked with the children about what an architect does, and she helped design the block city in the Green Room!
The Building Bonanza was a great way for families to come to the school to see what their child has been doing for the past month. It was wonderful to see parents building with their children in the Imagination Playground. Everyone created interesting things with the architecture blocks, and the huge Pittsburgh walk-on map was a nice place to stack boxes and buildings.

The friends have been busy working in their letter journals! This month, we met Mr. L with lemon lollipops, Mr. D who loves to dance, Mr. G who has gooey gum, Mr. C who wears a colossal cap and Mr. K who loves to kick.

This month in gym, the friends have been working on their soccer skills. The friends began by sticking tape on the inner edge of their shoes and tapping the ball with the tape. Each week the friends built on this skill and are now dribbling the ball with the inside and the outside of their feet. They are also kicking the ball with their laces.
Birthdays and Special Events

This month Grace celebrated her Birthday and was joined by her family. Kabir’s Mother and grandfather visited to share a story first in Gujarati then translated to English.

The morning friends visited the design studio and had the opportunity to see animals made from recyclable materials. Then the friends chose their favorite, and they were able to make a paper replica of the animal with the help of the design students.

The librarian visited this month, and the friends enjoyed the interactive story telling.
The hundredth day of school was incredibly exciting. The friends have been counting since the beginning of the year and, when the day finally came the Children’s School was in celebration mode. The friends made a colorful chain with 100 links, they hammered 100 nails into a board, they made 100 day party hats and they made a snack bag with 100 little treats inside. The friends enjoyed seeing the 100 cupcakes they helped make with 100 lit candles inside. We sang a happy 100th day song.