Dear Parents,

It is wonderful to welcome new and old friends and families to Extended Morning this year! Each day we have interesting circle times, work and play in the Green Room and Discovery Area, sing familiar and new songs, and enjoy having lunch together.

Our first focus book was Two Cool Coyotes by Jillian Lund. Frank and Angelina are best coyote friends. They are two cool coyote friends in a hot American desert. Frank is sad when Angelina moves away because nothing is as much fun without his friend. But then a new pup named Larry moves in and although different, seems to be a lot of fun. Larry helps Frank get over losing Angelina. Larry and Frank become two new cool coyote friends. Some of the favorite activities were chopping apples and mixing oatmeal and brown sugar to make apple crisp, photographing our friends dressed up as "cool cats", building cacti out of modeling clay and toothpicks, viewing real coyotes on the computer, and creating sand art with multi-colored sand.

Mouse’s First Day Of School by Lauren Thompson was the first book experience for the Red and Blue Room Extended Morning Friends. In the story, Mouse sneaks into a school backpack and enjoys a day of discovery in preschool. Some highlights of the week were mixing primary color paints to make new colors and create painting masterpieces, playing a Hide and Seek game with mouse puppets, and making grilled cheese sandwiches.

The next focus book was Corduroy Goes To School based on the familiar character created by Don Freeman. Corduroy is a bear whose day at school includes many of the activities that children experience at the Children's School. Playing outdoors, listening to stories and painting are some of his favorite things to do. Our activities included going on an imaginary bus ride, painting the first letter of our names, baking many kinds of muffins, and making button bracelets.
Franklin's Neighborhood by Paulette Bourgeois is about a turtle named Franklin, whose school project is to choose something about his neighborhood that he likes best and draw it. Franklin visits many places in his neighborhood and enjoys them all, but he especially likes talking to his neighbors. He decides to draw a picture of all of his neighbors for the school project. The activities included using the Dramatic Play Firefighter set-up in the Red Room, playing a Franklin computer game, cooking Shoo-fly Pie (Franklin’s favorite), and painting paper plates as turtle shells in the Discovery Area.

Our I’m In School/Community Helpers theme ended with the book All The Colors We Are by Katie Kissinger. The book showcases the beautiful diversity of human skin color, and helps children learn about skin by introducing the scientific process that gives us our skin color. Here are the basic ideas that the book presents:
- All living things have color: plants, animals and people.
- Pigment makes color.
- Melanin is the pigment that gives us skin color.
- All human beings have melanin in their bodies.
- Skin protects our bodies.
- Melanin's important job is to protect our skin from sunburn.
- We help protect our skin by using sunscreen.

We did several activities that celebrated all the wonderful tones and shades that we are. We put our hands all together in the middle of the circle to see and discuss the many similarities and differences. The children noticed many things such as bigger and smaller, lighter and darker, freckles and no freckles, nail polish and no nail polish, veins that stand out and veins that are harder to see. We also mixed paint to match the color of our hands and used the paint to make a self-portrait, used soap bubbles and wash clothes to give our baby dolls a wonderful warm bath, and compared the shades of our skin by photographing our hands. We are learning the signs for the color names and the word rainbow. Ask your child how to say red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple and rainbow in sign language.

We have really enjoyed our days of discovery in the Extended Morning Program!

Miss Furman, Miss McMichael,
Mrs. Opferman, Mrs. Tomer and Mrs. Bird