Happy New Year, Everyone!

We hope you had a restful and restorative winter break and that your family is energized for learning in 2017. Though we are just beginning our January studies of Animals in Winter in the Preschool and Water in the Kindergarten, it is time to prepare for the 2017/2018 school year.

2017/2018 School Year Information

**Preschool Enrollment and Re-Enrollment:** Acceptance packets for incoming 3’s and those new to our 4’s Program will be sent on January 12th. Re-enrollment packets for those children currently in our 3’s program will be sent home in backpacks on January 12th. You will be asked to submit a $500, non-refundable deposit to reserve your child’s space for 2017/2018 by January 27th.

**Extended Program:** Spaces in our Extended Day Program are limited to 24 children, with preference given to children already in the program. These spaces fill quickly, so return your forms and $200 deposit promptly if you are interested. The $200 will be refunded if there is no space for your child.

**Kindergarten Re-Enrollment:** We coordinate our re-enrollment for Kindergarten with the private school timeline, so packets will not be sent home via backpacks until February 3rd. Our Kindergarten class is limited to 24 children. Based on the information we received during our Parent/Teacher conferences in the fall, we anticipate having spaces for all presently enrolled 4’s whose families have expressed an interested in our program. Nonetheless, we ask that you submit your admission documents and $700 deposit before February 17th. After February 17th, new applicants will be admitted.

**Open Houses:** Wednesday, January 11th at 12:00 pm and January 12th at 8:00 am. These Open Houses are designed for prospective Children’s School parents and involve a presentation by Dr. Carver and observations in the classrooms. Current parents are welcome to attend. Please contact Mrs. Rosenblum at rosenblu@andrew.cmu.edu or 412-268-2199 if you have questions concerning the admissions process.

**January Dates:**
- January 11th 12:00 PM – Prospective Parent Preschool Open House
- January 12th 8:00 AM – Prospective Parent Preschool Open House
- January 12th – Re-enrollment Packets Sent via Backpacks to Current 3’s Families
- Acceptances mailed to Incoming 3’s and 4’s new to our program
- January 16th – **NO SCHOOL** (Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday)
- Week of January 17th – Speech & Hearing Screening Days
- January 31st – Vision Screening Day
- February 3rd – Re-enrollment Packets Sent to Current 4’s Families
- February 3rd 9:30-11:00AM – Staff / Parent Discussion re: THEATRE
  (child care provided for Preschool 3’s and younger siblings)
Celebrating Collaboration

Our busy laboratory school benefits from the collaboration among our educators, between educators and families, with undergraduate and graduate students, with researchers and colleagues at CMU and beyond, and with community partners in diverse fields. As the painting to the right demonstrates, we are already teaching our young children both the value of collaboration and the skills necessary for positive and productive partnering.

As we begin our enrollment process for the upcoming school year, we especially recognize the value of partners who make our program accessible to children and families who cannot afford our tuition. These individuals and companies give $10 to $100,000, or maybe clip Box Tops so we can buy educational materials. Every contribution helps so we appreciate them all!

#givingCMUday

Six donors participated in the #givingCMU day on November 29, 2016. The Children’s School received $160 in donations. Thank you for your generosity!

EITC & OSTC Scholarship Updates

The Children’s School participates in the state’s Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) program as well as the Opportunity Scholarship Tax Credit (OSTC) program. In 2016-17, we have received contributions from The Buncher Company, UPMC, and Waste Management. Through EITC, eligible Pennsylvania businesses can earn tax credits while providing financial assistance for children to attend preschool, as well as grades K-12. More than one-third of our children receive scholarships, so this funding is essential to our school. Through OSTC, eligible Pennsylvania businesses can earn tax credits for contributing funds to provide tuition assistance in the form of scholarships to eligible K-12th grade students residing within the boundaries of a low-achieving school to attend another public school outside of their district or a nonpublic school. In 2016-17, The Children’s School OSTC Program is funding 32 students, Kindergarten – 12th grade, in 13 different schools throughout Allegheny and Westmoreland counties. If you would like more information or can help us to build a list of prospective businesses, please contact the Main Office.

Continue to Save Your Box Tops

Submit to the Children’s School office by February 15, 2017!!

Help us to reach our Box Tops goal of $1,000 for 2016-17! To date, we have raised $78.50! Box Tops for Education has helped America’s schools earn over $600 million since 1996. You can earn cash for CMU Children’s School by clipping Box Tops coupons from hundreds of participating products. Box Tops also offers easy ways to earn even more cash online at http://www.boxtops4education.com/. 
Stay Safe in Your Winter Wonderland!

For children, winter is not the end of outdoor fun. When properly prepared, children can enjoy safe and fun outdoor activities. "The inviting snow draws children to ice-covered lakes and ski slopes each winter, regardless of the frigid temperatures and the risks," says Heather Paul, Ph.D., executive director of the National SAFE KIDS Campaign. "Parents should watch their children closely, limit their outdoor playtime and make sure that they are dressed appropriately for the weather." Here are a few other winter tips to keep in mind:

- Parents and caregivers should inspect equipment and the environment for possible hazards before children engage in winter activities such as sledding, ice skating and skiing.
- Be aware that the increased use of hot tubs and whirlpools, as well as the danger of hidden bodies of water or weak ice, makes winter drowning a risk.
- If a child complains of numbness or pain in the fingers, toes, nose, cheeks or ears while playing in the snow, or if the skin is blistered, hard to the touch or glossy, be alert to the possibility of frostbite. Tell the child to wiggle the affected body part(s) to increase blood supply to that area. Warm the frozen part(s) against the body. Immense frozen part(s) in warm, not hot, water. Frozen tissue is fragile and can be damaged easily. Avoid warming with high heat from radiators, fireplaces or stoves, and avoid rubbing or breaking blisters.
- Slippery driveways and sidewalks can be particularly hazardous in the winter. Keep them well shoveled, and apply materials such as rock salt or sand to improve traction.
- Make sure children wear appropriate boots and brightly colored (not white) clothing while walking and playing in snowy conditions. Use reflective stickers on clothing for maximum protection, especially at dawn and dusk.

A Winter Reminder

On days when snow or ice may affect driving conditions, please listen to the radio or the television. If the Children's School should close due to the weather, we announce our school closing on WPXI, WTAE, and KDKA. They also offer a text service if you register on their web site. WTAE will also announce school closings on their web page: www.thepittsburghchannel.com/index.html. Because Children’s School educators and families live in diverse areas in and around the city, we cannot factor travel conditions from every location into our decision about whether to delay or close school. Between 5:30 and 6:00 AM, we listen to the news, determine what other schools in the city are doing, and make our best judgment on whether to have a delay or close school that day. In all cases when school is in session, we encourage parents to use their best judgment about whether the roads in your area are safe to bring your child to school.

Depending on the road conditions, we will choose from three options:

- **One Hour Delay**: During a one-hour delay, we will greet the Morning Preschool and Kindergarten Classes at 9:30 AM. This option enables us to conduct the morning preschool classes, while giving our educators and families time for the road conditions to improve. Dismissal will be at the normal times and the Extended and Afternoon Programs will be on normal schedule.
- **Two Hour Delay/No Morning Preschool**: During a two-hour delay, we greet the Kindergarten Class at 10:30 AM and dismiss at the normal time. The Morning Preschool and Extended Morning Programs will be canceled but the Afternoon Programs will be on normal schedules.
- **School Closure for all Programs**
Upcoming Screenings re: Ears and Eyes

This year, the Easter Seals Speech, Hearing and Middle Ear Screenings will be held at school during the week of January 17th – 20th. The cost of the screening is $20 per child. If you require a form, please contact Mrs. Rosenblum at rosenblu@andrew.cmu.edu or 412-268-2199.

The Blind & Vision Rehabilitation Services of Pittsburgh will provide free Vision Screenings on January 31st. Children are screened for visual acuity, muscle balance, and color discrimination using a technique approved by the American Academy of Pediatrics. If you would like your child screened, please obtain a form from Maggie Rosenblum.

School Photos – February 6th & 7th

January Gallery Features

3’s Friends: Jaycee N., Adam R., Cecilia T., and Claes W.

4’s Friends: Eli F., Julia L., Josie M., and Joshua N.

Kindergarten Friends: Norah G., Leeza K., and Atticus M.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Though we do not have school on the national Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday, our focus at the Children’s School is always on cooperation, acceptance, peace and caring for all people. One recent example is the “Peace” CD that the Preschool 4’s prepared for their families. If you want to talk about Martin Luther King, Jr. at home, some educators recommend starting with a discussion of heroes as people who are brave enough to make the world better. Preschool Plan-It (http://www.preschool-plan-it.com/martin-luther-king.html) suggests that you explain that Martin Luther King, Jr. was a hero. “He worked hard for peace--ALL people getting along and being treated the same.” Sometimes people are treated badly because they do not have the same color skin. Dr. King wanted to change that and he shared his dream “that someday, ALL people would get along no matter what color their skin was.” Depending on your family experience, you can then talk about how to help make his dream come true. For ideas about how to spend family time on MLK Day this year, see the events section of http://www.nextpittsburgh.com.
Family Spotlight: Our First School

I am Jaycee and I would like to introduce my family to you! My family consists of my daddy-John, my mommy-Jacky, my older beautiful sister-Joya, my younger brother-Jacob, and me!

My parents moved to Pittsburgh from Lebanon in 2006, so my daddy could attend his residency and fellowship. My daddy is a doctor. He is a stomach doctor. Mommy is a sociologist and she is the center of our household. Joya is 7 and she is in second grade. I'm 3 and I go to school in the Children’s School Red Room. Jacob is 1!

Joya, my sister, attended CMU for 2 years, and she always tells me how great our school is. Mommy and daddy are impressed with how far I've come since starting school. Although Jacob is still 1, he can't wait to go to CMU too!

We travel a lot and go back often to Lebanon to visit our family. I have a very big family over there! We spend our free time walking and exercising and doing lots of family activities. Daddy exercises a lot and so does mommy, so we also join them in the fun! We love to go try new restaurants and go to new places.

We all love Pittsburgh, our home town! We love CMU, our first school!

Lost and Found

We have accumulated quite a collection of jackets, barrettes and other items of unlabeled children’s clothing. If your child is missing anything, please look in our lost and found area in the hallway or send a note to your child’s teacher with a description and we will see if we have it!
Barnes & Noble Book Fair

Once again our Barnes & Noble Book Fair was great fun and we raised over $4,000 – more than twice as much as the previous year! This means that our library acquisition fund will receive at least $600 to purchase new books for our library collection! Thanks to the following volunteers for helping at the Welcome Table and the activity tables: Kara Van Houdnos, Jessica Simms, Liz Kramer, Jillian Jochum, Sarah Deutsch, Jeni Hergenreder, Pete Kurzweg, Mara Richardson, Jacky Melham, Beth Gusenoff, Christian Wanamaker, Karla Villatoro de Freidman, Lauren Douglas–Ricks, Lisa Lau, Natalia Skurman. Jillian Jochum shared the story of “The Gingerbread Baby”, and, as always, Mrs. Bird – accompanied by Mr. Bird – gave a wonderful musical performance.

Family Social Organization Fun

On Saturday, December 10th, friends and families of the Children’s School met at the Waterworks Cinema for a special screening of Walt Disney’s *Moana*. Families enjoyed snack specials and the cozy comfort of the theater’s new lounge seats Theater bliss was had by all who attended!

Afterwards, Kindergarten friends Ben, Jovie, and Isaac enjoyed a spontaneous post-theater lunch date!

We hope you’ll join the fun in January!
Family Social Organization for January

Please join friends of the Children’s School on **Monday, January 16th** for an afternoon of ice skating at **Schenley Skating Rink** in Schenley Park! There is NO SCHOOL on this day, due to the holiday celebrating Martin Luther King Jr. We will skate from 1:30-3:30pm. Fees are $3 for children and $5 for adults, and an additional $3 for skate rental. [http://pittsburghpa.gov/citiparks/schenley-skating-rink](http://pittsburghpa.gov/citiparks/schenley-skating-rink). Bundle up and join us on the ice! RSVP to Jessica Simms at jwo360@hotmail.com.

Jump up for the opportunity to meet your Children’s School friends at **Gymsport Athletic Center** on **Saturday, January 21st** from 2-4pm. This event is for up to 30 child participants. Children’s School students get preference, siblings may attend if there are spots remaining. $15 per child. Please bring money in a marked envelope to the Children’s School after you RSVP to Sara Torretti at storretti@hotmail.com by Tuesday, January 17th. Gymsport is located at 98 Vanadium Road, Bridgeville, PA 15207. For more information and directions, please visit [http://www.gymsport.com](http://www.gymsport.com).

On **Saturday, January 28th** from 1-5pm, the **Chinese Lunar New Year Festival** will be underway at the Squirrel Hill Jewish Community Center (JCC), near the corner of Forbes and Murray Avenues. Enjoy performances by the Pittsburgh Chinese School Choir, Steel Dragon Lion Dancers, Oom Yung Doe, Yanlai Dance Academy, OCA Pittsburgh, Tsu Chi Academy, Pittsburgh Taiko Drummers, and more! Watch and learn with demonstrations of origami, dumpling making, and calligraphy. You’ll also find plenty of crafts for the kids, including making paper lanterns. This event is free, though food and various items will be available for purchase. No RSVPs required. Come welcome the Year of the Rooster!

**Winter Fun in and around the City!**

- With all of Pittsburgh’s hills, it’s no wonder sledding is a winter tradition for local families. Some of the best sledding locations in and around the city include **Frick Park Blue Slide Park** where Nicholson Street and Beechwood Blvd meet, **The King Estate** in Highland Park located at Negley Avenue and Elgin Street, **Flagstaff Hill** in Oakland between Carnegie Mellon University and Phipps Conservatory, **Mellon Park** near corner of Fifth Avenue and Beechwood Avenue, **Dormont Park** adjacent to Dormont Pool, and **Sunny Slopes** located at Sunny Slopes Rd and Ridge Rd in South Park.

- **Hot Chocolate in the city!** Who doesn’t love to escape the cold with a cup of hot chocolate? Head to one of these kid friendly establishments: **Dobra Tea House** in Squirrel (Dobra offers regular hot chocolate, as well as a dairy-free version), **Crazy Mocha** has many city locations (Carnegie Library Main is one of them!), **Espresso A Mano** in Lawrenceville, **Big Dog Coffee** in Pittsburgh’s Southside, **Tizzo D’Oro** at Carnegie Mellon University and in Highland Park, **Biddle’s Escape** in Regent Square, **Cannon Coffee** in Brookline, **Lili Café** in Polish Hill, and **Zeke’s** in East Liberty. Don’t forget the marshmallows!

If you would like to help plan events, please get in touch with Sara Torretti (storretti@hotmail.com) and Jay Miller (jaymiller01@gmail.com,) Isaac’s parents (K). We look forward to planning with you!
Enjoyable Extended Morning Open Houses

Thanks to everyone who visited the Extended Morning program on December 6th and 8th for our annual open house events. We enjoyed learning together in the Green Room and Discovery Area, having a sing-along with Mrs. Bird, and sharing lunch with all of you. Thanks to the children who lovingly made special treats for us all to enjoy!
Help Celebrate Our 50th Anniversary in 2018

In the year 2018, the Children’s School will be 50 years old! We are hoping to celebrate with alumni families as well as those who are currently enrolled. We are looking for volunteers to help plan celebrations, including a reunion party. If you are interested in helping with the preparation and/or if you have some specific ideas, please contact Maggie Rosenblum at rosenblu@andrew.cmu.edu.

January Donations to Assist Refugees

Jewish Family & Children’s Service (JF & CS) of Squirrel Hill has been resettling individuals and families who have fled their homes due to fear of persecution, imprisonment, or death simply due to religion, nationality, membership in a particular group, or political opinion. Individuals granted refugee status overseas are brought to the United States by the U.S. Department of State. At the local level, agencies like JF & CS then work to resettle refugees in our communities, providing for their basic needs and acculturation into our community and workforce.

JF & CS has resettled refugees from all over the world, but most recently they have resettled refugees from Bosnia, Burma, Bhutan, Iraq, Syria, and Sudan. Many enter the United States with little or no education. Some have spent their entire lives in refugee camps. It is not uncommon for families to get separated in the resettlement process, or to be currently grieving the loss of a loved one. The resettlement process, though necessary to keep individuals safe, can be quite traumatizing. The refugee population relies on the kindness of community members to help them make their new residence eventually feel like a place they can call home.

Please consider contributing a few items from the list below to our January donation drive for refugees served by JF & CS. If you would rather contribute money, we will accept checks on behalf of JF & CS. Please have checks made payable to Jewish Family and Children’s Service, with Refugee Resettlement written on the memo line. Place your check in an envelope marked JF & CS Refugee Donation. Money is welcome and will be directed to the most pressing need at the time!

**Tangible Goods to Donate** (Please donate new items only.)

- Diapers of all sizes/baby wipes
- Laundry detergent
- Bathroom/kitchen cleaning products
- Water glasses
- Tea cups/mugs
- Paper toiletries/paper towels
- Feminine care products
- Dishwashing liquid (for washing dishes by hand)
- Sponges
- Cutlery
- Kitchen utensils

Please bring your donations to the Children’s School during the month of January. If you have questions concerning donations, please contact Sara Torretti (Isaac’s mom, K) at storretti@hotmail.com. Contact Leslie Aizeman of JF & CS at laizeman@jfcs.org if you would like more information on how you can volunteer or contribute donations on behalf of the refugee population in Pittsburgh.
Undergraduate Spotlight

• **Chie (Chee-ay) Wach** (Kindergarten and Children’s School Library)

As a Freshman last year, I was continually charmed and intrigued by the students of the Children’s School each time I saw them on the playground, in front of Margaret Morrison, or holding hands in a long, cheery line around campus. Their innocent, sometimes rambunctious presence was a breath of relief in an otherwise stressful campus. While working directly with them this semester, I have been even more delighted with their energy, vivacious personalities, and remarkable abilities that impress me every day. During the few hours that I spend with them each week, I have been privy to charged debates on how to spell ‘kangaroo’, daring innovation in contemporary animal portraits, and the most enthusiastic dance parties I’ve ever witnessed, on or off campus.

As a Creative Writing and Physics double major, I enjoy balancing very different interests, but my experience at the Children’s School is one of my most important experiences here. Upon entering this job, I expected a fun opportunity to play with a bunch of cute kids; I was met with an advanced environment that vastly exceeded my expectations. The teachers take advantage of every situation to make each the best possible experience for the children, and the result is a remarkably intelligent, affectionate, fun-filled classroom. It is an essential faction of my experience as a Carnegie Mellon student, and I look forward to many more semesters learning with and from these friends.

Early Childhood Practicum Students

From January 23rd through February 3rd, we will host two early childhood practicum students from Duksung Women’s University (Seoul, South Korea) for an International Practicum Program. The Campus School at Carlow University, the Falk School at the University of Pittsburgh, and the University Child Development Center will each also host students also, with the total group including 7 undergraduates. We look forward to learning more about the initiatives our South Korean colleagues are leading in early childhood and in reflecting with them about the cross-cultural similarities and differences in our values and approaches related to educating young children.

Undergraduate Na Hyun Lee (left) will work with the Preschool 4’s Team, and Undergraduate Ree A (Leah) Ju (right) will work with the Kindergarten. Na Hyun was last year’s President of the Student Council and has volunteer experience as a tutor for children of North Korean defectors in Seoul. Leah went to school in the US during 8 years before college, and she is now the Student Body President for the Early Childhood Department at Duksung. We look forward to our children learning from these pre-service teachers from South Korea!

Thanks to the Mingo family (Atticus, K) for offering housing to these visiting students. If you are interested in helping with other aspects of hosting (e.g., welcome bags, meals, etc.), please contact Dr. Carver at sc0e@andrew.cmu.edu to discuss options.
Research Spotlight

The Moving Eyes Game

The world around us is complex and maintaining focused attention can sometimes be challenging, even for adults. The goal of this collaborative project with Dr. Anna Fisher’s and Dr. Erik Thiessen’s research groups is to investigate the developmental course of deliberate selective attention and to examine factors that play a role in attentional selectivity at different points in development. In this project, researchers ask children to play a game in which they see several objects moving on a typical computer screen and landing on one of the thirty-six screen locations. Children are asked to watch a particular object while ignoring the rest of the objects. When the objects stop moving and disappear from the screen, children are asked to indicate the grid in which the object disappeared.

Every child will play the Moving Eyes Games twice, tracking either many objects or just a few objects at a time. During some sessions the objects they need to ignore may all be the same, while at other times they may be all different. Children’s performance in the Moving Eyes Game will help researchers to map the developmental course of selective sustained attention and improve their understanding of this basic cognitive ability required for successful performance in many everyday tasks.

Observations for Psychology Assignments:

Students from Dr. Sharon Carver’s Child Development class will conduct periodic observations throughout the spring semester to observe specific differences between preschoolers’ and kindergartners’ development. Their focus will be on the Seven Essential Life Skills Every Child Needs, based on Ellen Galinsky’s 2010 book Mind in the Making. This book is a readable synthesis of early childhood research on the natural maturation of

• focus and self-control,
• perspective taking,
• communicating,
• making connections,
• critical thinking,
• taking on challenges, and
• self-directed, engaged learning.

Galinsky notes that all seven skills are rooted in the prefrontal cortex of the brain, the locus of executive functions that help us “to manage our attention, our emotions, and our behavior in order to reach our goals” (p. 4). She also provides excellent tips for practical ways families can foster each of the seven essential skills during early childhood. The related web site, https://www.mindinthemaking.org/, also provides numerous valuable parenting resources.
Director’s Corner: Why Theatre?

As you’ve undoubtedly noticed from Fall 2016 communications, we’ve been experimenting with theatre arts this year and encouraging families to do the same. This emphasis is preparing for our Whole School Theatre Arts Unit in February, which will culminate in our Family Theatre Arts Festival on Thursday, March 9th from 4:30-6:30pm. We chose this theme because people of all ages, cultures, and ability levels can enjoy participating in or watching creative dramatics.

During early childhood, theatre arts experiences can promote growth in all six of our developmental domains. Of course, the unit fits best with our emphasis on Artistic Expression and Appreciation. The children can experiment with different roles, create and enact stories, learn to use their movements, voice, and props to represent aspects of the setting and story, etc. In addition, theatre arts production can help children develop the following aspects of our other categories of objectives:

- **Self-Esteem & Independence**: self-description & sharing personal stories, pride in accomplishments, expressing & reacting to emotions, self-care skills, etc.
- **Interaction & Cooperation**: taking turns, following directions, understanding others’ perspectives, being a leader and a follower, negotiating conflicts, respecting differences, etc.
- **Communication**: listening skills, speaking to a group, reading signs & symbols, using pictures and print to convey a message, using body language to help communication, etc.
- **Discovery & Exploration**: visual perception, spatial skills, planning skills, measurement, scientific concepts and process involved in technology, problem solving, etc.
- **Physical Capabilities**: fine motor skills involved in using technology tools, eye-hand coordination, gross motor movement, body awareness and coordination with others, etc.

The Children’s School’s individualized approach to helping all children progress in all domains will enable us to tailor the specific theatre arts projects to each one, including those with special needs and English as a second language.

As a NAEYC Accredited Program, we commit to providing young children with diverse topic area learning and vocabulary development opportunities (2.D.04). While a Theatre Arts exploration most naturally fits within NAEYC’s “Appreciation of the Arts” category (2.J.01) and includes “Arts Terminology” (2.J.04), the kindergartner’s recent dramatic play about Native Americans clearly supported their learning in “Social Studies” and “History” (2.L.11). Similarly, the Green Room friends’ interactions with architects and subsequent play in their “architect studio” enriched both their “Social Studies” (2.L.11) and “Skills for Artistic Expression (2.J.05). Dramas involving this month’s Animals in Winter and Water themes will of course build “Life Science” concepts (2.G.02a), while scenery and sound effects design could enhance both “Earth Science” and “Physical Science” concepts (2.G.02b and c respectively), as well as “Scientific Terminology” (2.G.08). Preschoolers will be able to apply concepts of structures and stability from the Building unit when constructing the actual sets.

So, both in terms of general skill development across all domains and conceptual knowledge in a range of topic areas, Theatre Arts has it all. Besides, creative drama is FUN! What a wonderful way to enliven the cold winter months. We hope you’ll join the process so that we can together learn creatively and constructively in 2017.