Whole School Celebration!

Please have your entire family join us on Friday, May 18th from 11am to 1pm on the Children’s School playground (or inside in case of rain) for our Whole School Celebration of the 2017-18 school year. This event is scheduled immediately after the Kindergarten Graduation, which will be held in Margaret Morrison’s Breed Hall 103 at 10am.

We plan to have pizza, salads, watermelon, fruit popsicles, ice cream sandwiches, and water available in the Discovery Area. Please follow this link to volunteer for or donate food for this event: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1H82e8cfFlE3jH-EMbUb1EyqFsmKH3-qPQoLxXTDyAec/edit?usp=sharing

The Children’s School would like to thank the Baylassin family (Aras, PM 3s), co-owners of Gino Bros Pizzeria in Sharpsburg, for donating the pizza for our picnic! We appreciate you!!

May Dates:

- Wednesday, May 2nd through Friday, May 4th – Annual Conference of the International Association of Laboratory Schools (IALS) in Pittsburgh
- Friday, May 4th – NO SCHOOL for Children re: IALS Conference
- Thursday, May 17th - Last Regular Day for ALL Programs
- Friday, May 18th - Kindergarten Graduation at 10:00am in Margaret Morrison Room 103
- Whole School Celebration at 11:00am on the Playground
- Monday, May 21st through Thursday, May 31st – Professional Development for Educators
- Monday, June 4th – First Day of “Plants & Dirt” Camp
Summer 2018 Camp: **Plants & Dirt**

There are still places available in our June “Plants & Dirt” Camp so please contact Mrs. Rosenblum at rosenblu@andrew.cmu.edu if you would like to enroll your child. The camp staff will include Mrs. Bird, Mrs. Cherin, Mrs. Loomis, Mrs. Mack, Mr. Salinetro, and Miss Sines. If your child is registered for camp, please make sure Mrs. Rosenblum receives your final payment by May 18th. We will be greeting the children at the front of Margaret Morrison and taking them directly to the playground after a stop in the bathroom for toileting and hand washing. Also, please recall that the starting time for camp is 8:45 am. Children will need to bring a lunch, sunscreen labeled with their full name, and their bathing suits and towels. We also suggest hats because there is little shade on the playground. Remember a jacket for cool summer mornings.

Lost and Found

We have quite a collection of lost and found items. Please check the hallway cabinet for misplaced items or send a description of the missing item so we can check for you before May 18th. Unclaimed items will be donated to a local charity at the end of the school year.

Classroom Year in Pictures

Children’s School educators are collecting classroom photos into a Year in Pictures slide show as a gift for families. The photos are designed only for the personal use of families in private media contexts. Please remember that during the enrollment process, all parents & guardians signed an agreement that you will not post photographs of other people’s children or of adults besides yourselves on the web or in social media venues. You can find more detail on our social media recommendations in your Family Handbook. Please watch the backpacks during the last week of school for your gift!

Summer Play Dates

We will be planning summer play dates for each age group in August on our playground so that the students and families will have a chance to get to know each other before school starts. Watch for notifications to be sent via e-mail!
Garden Tending for Spring and Summer

Many thanks to Kensei Phillips and Stacey Biro for preparing our hillside garden for spring planting. Now that the weather is finally spring-like, it’s wonderful to see the perennials blooming! The children can soon begin adding annuals, including herbs and vegetables that are already sprouting inside.

During July and August, our garden will continue to grow but needs some friends to help with watering and weeding. If your family would be interested in adopting our garden for a week in July or August, please contact Miss Hancock at lh37@andrew.cmu.edu or 412-268-2198.

May Gallery Features

3’s Friends: Emma Grace K., Evelyn M., Marina S., and Nico W.


Kindergarten Friends: Evren B. and Avi P.

Apples for the Students Update

Thank you to all of our Giant Eagle Apples for the Students supporters. This year, Giant Eagle AFTS has converted the earned reward points into cash as opposed to using the points to purchase items from the Apples for the Students catalog. For the 2017-18 school year, our 254 supporters helped us to earn $453!! These funds will be allocated to the Children’s School “50 for 50” Anniversary Campaign.

It is not too soon to register to support us for the 2018-19 school year! Here’s how:
- Register your Giant Eagle Advantage Card® at GiantEagle.com/AFTS
- Enter our School ID #0151.
- Shop with your Giant Eagle Advantage Card®.

Be sure to invite other family members and friends to support us too!!
FSO Fun for Families

Many thanks to Jocelyn Mayr and Sarah Hummel for co-chairing our FSO Committee this past year! The co-chairs and committee have organized a wide variety of engaging experiences for families and helped promote community connections. If you would be interested in helping with this committee for the 2018-2019 school year, please contact Mrs. Rosenblum.

On Saturday, March 3rd, several friends collaborated on cooking a delicious afternoon snack at Gaynor’s School of Cooking. We starting by rolling out cookie dough to make heart shaped cookies with crushed candy pieces in the center. Then, half the friends coated chicken fingers with breading, while the other half made delicious honey butter. And finally, there was lots of chopping of fruit and brushing butter on tortillas to make fruit salsa and cinnamon chips. We all got to enjoy our tasty creations together and take home the recipes to make again at home. Thanks to all who were able to join us!

On a rainy, cold and windy March 30th, two boatloads of Children's School families bravely took a Just Ducky Tour through downtown Pittsburgh. We started at Station Square and waddled our way downtown. To ensure our safety, we were unable to go into the river due to the high water levels. When the dam is open, the water travels at 8-9 knots and the Just Ducky boat only travels at 4-5 knots. We did, however, adventure down to the river walk to learn many interesting facts. There was a lot of quacking, and children even had a chance to "drive" the boat!
Children’s School families visited the **Squirrel Hill Food Pantry** on Friday, April 13th for a wonderful volunteer activity. The children (and adults) had fun decorating brown paper bags with colorful designs. Then, we took a tour of the pantry, learning about the items available, such as matzah and diapers. One child even noticed that the rutabaga was on the wrong shelf in the cooler! We had lots of fun trying to assemble the snack bags in an orderly fashion. The bags were filled with items that Children’s School families donated. Thanks so much for your 42 pounds of donations!

On Friday, April 20, Children’s School families visited the **Pittsburgh Zoo and Aquarium** for *Wild Earth Day*. We saw lots of wild animals, snacked at The Islands, enjoyed a talk with the shark keeper, made a craft, and played in Wild Kingdom. There was a small group of families but the enjoyable event lasted long. Some families stayed for close to six hours!

---

**One More FSO Opportunity**

**Flight Trampoline Park**

On **Saturday, May 12th**, please join the FSO at Flight Trampoline Park from 10:00am - 11:00am. This will be our last event of the year! Flight Trampoline Park offers a large trampoline area for children taller than 46 inches, as well as a Kiddie Court for children under 46 inches with small trampolines, a bounce house with a slide, and a foam pit. While we are there on Saturday, May 12, children under 46 inches, will be allowed to jump on the "big" trampolines from 10:00am - 11:00am. **During that time, children taller than 46 inches will not be permitted to jump on the big trampolines.** (Most of the Children's School friends are under 46 inches, meaning this rule should only affect older siblings.) After 11:00am, children taller than 46 inches will be allowed to jump on the big trampolines and children smaller than 46 inches will only be allowed in the Kiddie Court area. Cost is $9 per child, per hour. Each family will be able to pay separately as they arrive for however long they’d like to stay. Please tell them you are with the CMU Children's School to get the $9 price. All children will receive a pair of "flight socks", included in the price. All families will have to sign a release before their child can jump. Please RSVP to Jeni Hergenreder at jhergenreder@gmail.com. For more information or to complete a release online, please visit: [www.flighttrampolinerpark.com](http://www.flighttrampolinerpark.com). RSVP to Jeni by Friday, May 4th so she can give the trampoline park an estimate of how many participants we’ll have. We hope to see you there!
50th Birthday Party for the Children’s School

On Sunday afternoon, April 8th, over 225 people helped us celebrate the 50th Birthday of the Children’s School by sharing memories, playing with some Children’s School favorites like blocks and playdough, and having some traditional birthday party fun with “Pin the Candle on the Cupcake”, singing happy birthday, and blowing out the candles. Many thanks to all who joined the celebration! Visit the Dietrich College News page at https://www.cmu.edu/dietrich/news/news-stories/2018/april/childrens-school-birthday-party.html for a photo collage of the event.

Former Educator Visits

On April 17th, former Children’s School educator, Pauline Dhellemmes-Dempsey, visited the Children’s School. From 1989-91, Pauline taught the Older 4’s in the West Room (now the Green Room). Pauline, who hails from Ireland, is a trained Montessori teacher and resides in France with her husband and 3 children. Miss Hancock and Mrs. Bird enjoyed reminiscing with her and learning about the Bilingual Montessori 3 to 6-year-old class that Pauline currently teaches.

Save the Date – Ice Cream Social

Please join us on Wednesday, July 18th from 5:30-7:30PM on the Children’s School Playground for an Ice Cream Social. The cost is $5 per person to benefit the Children’s School “50 for 50” Campaign. As part of our 50th Anniversary Year, we set a goal to raise a minimum of $50,000 for the Children’s School. The Birthday Party basket raffle raised $261. All of the funds we raise will provide resources to enhance the learning experience for the constituents of the Children’s School, such as playground shade and bike track resurfacing, educational programs, learning materials, and technology updates, etc. If you would like to contribute to this fund, please visit the “Ways to Give” page on the Children’s School website or call CMU’s Annual Giving Office at 412-268-2021.

50th Anniversary School Spirit Gear

In honor of the Children’s School 50th Anniversary year, special 50th Anniversary School Spirit wear is available to order. Please use the enclosed order form if you are interested in purchasing any items. We take cash or checks made payable to CMU Children’s School.
Week of the Young Child Celebration

On the beautiful morning of Wednesday, April 18th, preschoolers and kindergartners from the Children’s School and Cyert Center for Early Education met on the Children’s School playground for a collaboratively planned Week of the Young Child Celebration. The children enjoyed all regular playground activities and also got to have a snack and play some games that were designed for the 50th Birthday party, such as a Frisbee toss and a 1-50 scavenger hunt. Thanks to Mrs. Rosenblum for planning such a wonderful way to help the Carnegie Mellon community celebrate early childhood.

Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day

On April 26th, the Children's School afternoon preschool friends hosted ten 8 to 11-year-olds as part of Carnegie Mellon’s Staff Council sponsored "Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day". The children shared snack and played games on our playground for 45 minutes. We made some new friends and got to visit with some old friends.

Tree Planting to Honor Arbor Day

On Thursday, April 26th, CMU Facilities Management and Campus Services (FMCS) planted a Willow Oak tree outside the gate to the playground. The children were invited to attend the tree planting as part of the campus Arbor Day Celebration. Dan Covato and Steve Weale planted the new tree. Thank you to Dave Wessell, Head of CMU Groundskeeping, and Barb Kviz, FMCS Environmental Coordinator for the beautiful tree!!
Hi! We’re the Heinz Family—Chris, Sasha, Jack, and Sloan (also known as Sloan-e-baloney). In August 2016, we moved from New York City to Pittsburgh. It was a big, but welcome change for all of us. Jack and Sloan said goodbye to yellow taxis, elevators, and the food delivery guys and hello to a messy SUV, stairs, and chickens at their grandmother’s farm in Fox Chapel.

Sloan (4) is finishing her second year at The Children’s School. Her big brother, Jack (7), is at Winchester Thurston School. I (Sasha) am a Developmental Psychologist, but work in private practice with adults. One day, I found myself obsessing over the comparative developmental benefits of the sippy cup vs the straw cup and, for the sake of everyone’s sanity (especially my children), decided to stop consulting with parents about their children’s development. Chris works at PNC, where he manages the external Fintech investment program. The children are extremely perplexed as to why his job doesn’t include tickets to Pirates games. They have a point.

Moving to Pittsburgh has been a new adventure for the entire family. We (Chris and Sasha) both grew up in Washington, D.C. Believe it or not, we went to the same elementary school and the same high school but did not know each other until we met in New York in 2001. We always thought we would one day move back to Washington, D.C., but a gorgeous late May weekend in 2015 convinced us that Pittsburgh was the perfect place for our family. We spent one year living in Fox Chapel and have now moved to a house in Squirrel Hill, which is delightfully close to both schools.

To say that Sloan loves The Children’s School is a huge understatement. In the Red Room with Mrs. Tomer, Sloan had her first taste of school, and it was pretty darn delicious. This year, Sloan is in the Green Room with Mrs. Opferman, who may indeed be one of Sloan’s best buddies. She can't wait to see her friends and teachers at school and, of course, get dirty in the mud kitchen. When asked what her favorite thing about The Children’s School is, she replied, “The block center and the art table!”

We adore The Children’s School and pinch ourselves that Sloan has been lucky enough to be part of such a deliberately creative, warm, thoughtful, and positive environment. Plus, her grandmother gets to brag to all that her granddaughter goes to CMU—and does she ever!

We wish all of you a very happy (and sunny) summer and cannot wait to be back in September.

The Heinz Family
Exchange Magazine Cover Story

Dr. Carver had the honor of writing the cover story for the May / June 2018 issue of Exchange Magazine, which provides support for “early childhood education professionals worldwide in their efforts to craft thriving environments for children and adults.” A digital copy of the article will be included with your May eNews.

IALS Conference in Pittsburgh

From May 2nd through 4th, the Children’s School will co-host the 2018 Conference for the International Association of Laboratory Schools (IALS). On Wednesday, we will host job shadowing experiences for two lab school administrators, one from Canada and one from the West Indies before attending an evening reception at the Falk School to officially launch the conference theme of “Roots & Wings: Essential Gifts for All Laboratory Learners”. On Thursday, out of town conference attendees will have the opportunity to choose among tour and observation sessions at all of the Pittsburgh Alliance of University Schools (PAUS) partner schools. Then they will join with the educators from the PAUS schools for a reception at Carlow University with a keynote presentation by Jane Werner, Executive Director of the Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh. On Friday, four of the five PAUS schools will be closed so that all of the educators can attend conference sessions held at the Falk School. Miss Hancock will share how our school utilized an IALS mini-grant to launch our hillside gardening project. Dr. Anna Fisher and graduate student Cassie Eng will present results from studies of children’s attention regulation, and Dr. Tony Lee, who is on sabbatical here this year from Duksung Women’s University, will present his research on digital blocks as “Smart Toys”.

NAEYC Accreditation Renewal Success

On April 11th, we received the official news of our school’s successful NAEYC accreditation renewal for another 5 years (to July 1, 2023). We are very pleased with the scores we earned!

• All four of the classroom observations earned scores of 94% or 95%, which means that with a mere 60 minutes in each classroom, the assessor saw clear evidence of almost all the quality indicators randomly selected for review.
• Together with the classroom observations, review of the classroom portfolios yielded scores of 100% for Relationships, 91% for Curriculum, 95% for Teaching, and 100+% (i.e., extra credit) for Assessment of Child Progress.
• Review of the administrative portfolio yielded scores of 100% for Physical Environment and 100+% for the categories of Leadership & Management, Community Relationships, Family Relationships, Teachers, and Health.

Please share this good news widely, and let your friends and neighbors know that we still have preschool spaces available for the coming year!

PA Private Academic School License

On April 13th, we received the additional good news that our PA Private Academic School license has been renewed for another year (through April 25, 2019) based on the straightforward annual report we submitted.
Undergraduate Spotlight: Farewell Seniors!

We are saying good-bye to six of our valued student employees and interns.

- **Grace Dzina** will be traveling to Taiwan for a big family reunion and then spending the summer working in New York City at DREAM/Harlem RBI with their baseball and academic summer program for middle schoolers.

- **Tori Iatarola** is applying to schools for a Masters in Nursing.

- **Michelle Kang** is returning to Korea over the summer. She plans to work as a research associate in a psychology lab in the fall and also prepare for graduate school to pursue her interests in developmental psychology.

- **Rachel McKinney** is moving to Nashville, Tennessee to work as a research assistant in the Psychiatry Department at Vanderbilt University Medical Center. She will then be pursuing a doctorate in clinical psychology.

- **Lynnette Ramsey** will graduate in May with a BS Psychology and a minor in linguistics. She will be going home to New Jersey to continue her search for a full-time job in a metropolitan area. Lynnette's long term goal is to go to graduate school for speech pathology.

- **Charline Tomer** plans on traveling and spending time with her two grandchildren.

- **Lauren Yan** will be going to Korea to teach English in the fall.

Thank you to all of these seniors who have shared themselves and their talents with us to enrich our team and our program!!

Senior Capstone to Explain Biomimicry

Inventure Lab is a Design Capstone Project created by CMU seniors Gillan Johnson, Noah Johnson, Faith Kaufman, Alexandra Palatucci and Charles Van De Zande aiming to bridge ecology, design, and sustainability through making and play. The Kindergarten children recently assisted in the pilot test of the Inventure Lab on the playground by engaging in biomimicry. Pretending to be bees, the children participated in a scavenger hunt to collect “nectar” from flowers, and build the “hive”.

Research Spotlight:

The ExerGame

Psychology graduate student Cassondra Eng is working with her advisors, Dr. Anna Fisher and Dr. Erik Thiessen, and an interdisciplinary team of undergraduate research assistants to create a developmentally beneficial exergame. Exergames (a portmanteau of “exercise” and “games”) are a new generation of video games that stimulate a more active playing experience. The exergame for this study aims to improve inhibitory control in prekindergarten children through an experience that promotes both cognitive engagement and physical activity. Cassie and her team of undergraduate RAs built a custom-designed exergame and are now pilot testing the children’s enjoyment of and engagement with solving the narrative task the game involves.

The exergame is modeled after the traditional “Flanker Task.” Many researchers around the world use this task to investigate the development of inhibitory control in young children. Inhibitory control refers to one’s ability to suppress responses that are not appropriate in a given moment (answering a teacher’s question out of turn or taking a toy with which another child is playing). This ability is crucial to successful functioning in many areas of life, including academic success, wellbeing, and social relationships. Although inhibitory control skills keep developing well into adolescence, the development of this ability is especially flexible during preschool years.

In this exergame, children play a “gamified” version of the flanker task, meaning that specific game features were applied to the existing inhibitory control task by adding incentives (collecting ocean treasures) to encourage children to expend effort practicing the otherwise boring task. The flanker task itself, however, remains largely unchanged. The game is projected onto a wall with a connected non-slip game step mat. Children respond by stepping left or right on the physical game mat’s arrows, depending on the direction that the central fish— Frankie—is facing, with correct choices reinforced by helping Frankie collect ocean treasures. Frankie, the central fish, is either facing left or right but is flanked by four other fish. Children wear a pedometer (FitBit) during the game to record their steps as a measure of physical activity.

The long-term goal of this project is to investigate whether this exergame can potentially enhance inhibitory control skills in pre-kindergarten children.
Director’s Corner: Reviving Nature Play

Throughout this school year, the lives of “Animals in the Wild” have been my inspiration for this column. With so much to celebrate this spring – our 50th anniversary, our NAEYC accreditation and PA private school license renewals, our lab school collaborations around the world, our kindergarten graduation, and a fabulous school year overall – I began to wonder whether animals celebrate in the wild. Of course, culture ascribes meaning to the milestones humans celebrate, and diverse cultures creatively plan unique ways for people to have fun together. Considering opportunities for having fun is where animals can inspire us to launch our summer celebrations by reviving nature play.

Animals love to play. Crows will slide on their backs on a steep snowy slope, then fly to the top to slide down again; bison will repeatedly sprint onto a frozen lake, then bellow gleefully as they skid across the ice. Brown bear cubs who play the most, Alaskan scientists have found, live the longest. Why is play behavior so prevalent in the animal kingdom? Through play, animals explore their world and discover all its possibilities. In higher animals, play stimulates the brain, enhances cognitive function and adaptability, and strengthens social bonds. Beyond these biological and social explanations, scientists are starting to believe that play is a means by which animals can express their joy of life. (From Deep Nature Play, by Joseph Bharat Cornell, 2018)

Early childhood educators advocate strongly for increasing children’s nature play opportunities, for all of the reasons mentioned in Cornell’s description of animal play’s prevalence. Furthermore, we see benefit of encouraging more open-ended play with simpler materials for children’s creative and critical thinking, as well as their attention, persistence, and resilience, all of which are evident in the ways that dogs fully engage in water play or pigs in mud, or that polar bears relish the unusual springtime sensations, chimps care for their “stick babies”, and river otters play with river stones.

In a way, engaging children in nature play is both easy and inexpensive because intriguing materials like water, dirt, plants, sticks, rocks, etc. are abundantly available across the seasons. At the same time, educators and parents may need to adjust their tolerance for risk-taking, mess-making, and lollygagging. Summer is a perfect time for taking a slower pace and reflecting on our priorities for children’s development into adults who are healthy in both mind and body.

A quote often attributed to Einstein is that, “Play is the highest form of research.” Closely observing children’s play often reveals that they are indeed creatively and systematically seeking to understand the world through their “hands on” and “minds on” interactions, particularly when supported by adults willing to listen, acknowledge, and encourage their endeavors. May the animal kingdom inspire your summer to be wildly joyful with nature play that invigorates children and adults alike.