

# K-K News

December 19, 2008

Dear Families:

As I write, we are bracing for the first big storm of the season. In addition to checking for bread and milk, purchasing gas, and doing all of the things we tend to do in preparation for a storm, I am asking that you take a few minutes this weekend to help prepare your child for the winter weather that will be with us for the next several months. We go outside almost every day. This means that children must have snowpants, boots, jackets, hats, and mittens or gloves every day. In addition to having these items (which, I know, are difficult to track down early in the season), children need to be able to put them on and remove them with relative independence at school. While Julie and I are happy to assist with tricky zippers and laces, we cannot dress twenty-three children for recess and dismissal. Thus, a great activity if you are stuck inside this weekend would be a "getting ready race," in which children are timed against themselves to improve their time and efficiency at getting into and out of their gear. I am not suggesting that you create stress for your child, rather that the practice of this critical skill - which will help your mornings as well as our school days - might be approached as a fun-filled challenge this weekend. (Note: for some children, a discussion of the order of gear - first snowpants, then boots, then jacket, etc. - might be helpful.)

In addition to supporting the children in their independence with dressing, you can support the classroom this weekend by

checking all of your child's gear for labels. Initials or last names are fine, but it is *critical* that all outdoor gear be labeled. With twenty-three children, each with several items, the cubbies and closet becomes filled with "mystery items" each day. We are eager to reduce the amount of time we spend searching for anonymous owners or missing items in class. As I e-mailed yesterday, four pair of identical boots with no names caused a significant delay in our departure from the classroom yesterday. Thank you in advance for your help with these mundane but critical items!

### **In other news...**

- Our piñata is taking shape quite nicely! The children have developed a great appreciation for the hard work and artistry involved in creating a piñata, and they are enjoying the opportunity to create authentic decorations for our fiesta next week. Of course, they are looking forward to breaking it, too!
- Thank you to the many parents who have volunteered to help with the piñata, offered donations for the fiesta, or signed up to help in the classroom on Tuesday morning. If you are volunteering on Tuesday, please come directly into the classroom at 9:30. There will be materials and a direction sheet available for you when you arrive, but we may be in the middle of meeting when you come in.
- In mathematics this week, we continued our work with patterns. The children have gained great confidence decomposing patterns into their component parts. We will conclude this unit next week, and move into our next unit on number after the break.

- I hope that many of you have enjoyed seeing the KidPix patterns that your children created as a supplementary activity to our unit on patterns. If you have not seen one yet, ask your child. He/she may be waiting for a turn at this activity.
- We will conclude our formal handwriting work next week, and shift to using our writing instruction block for writing workshop after the break. The children are eager to share their personal narratives from their topic lists, and I am sure they will be ready to add to those lists upon returning from vacation!

Speaking of vacation, Julie and I wish all of you a wonderful and healthy vacation with your children. We wish a Happy Hanukkah to those families celebrating this weekend, and a Merry Christmas to those celebrating next week. Enjoy love, laughter, and time with your children, and know that we look forward to seeing them - and you - in the New Year!

Warmly,

*Lynn*