DIRECTOR’S DESK
Welcome back to the second half of spring semester. We enjoyed a nice break to catch up and get ready for the good weather (warmer with rain) and fun times ahead.

The teachers have prepared for parent-teacher conferences (conference schedule is listed on page 3 of this newsletter). We do expect all families to sign up for a time to meet with your child’s teacher to discuss their growth and development since fall. Each teacher has a sign up sheet in the classroom with times they are available to meet. If the times offered don’t work for you please talk with the teacher to plan for a time when everyone is available.

April is a busy time of year with conferences, WOYC, and assessments. During the week of April 14th we will have enrollment week for returning families. Everyone who will need child care for summer and fall will need to stop up front and take about 10 minutes to fill out the re-enrollment forms. Jane-ne will take a week to make placements and then the week of April 24th you will stop back up front to sign your contracts. The signed contract will hold your enrollment. The week of April 17th we will open enrollment to new families and you may lose your priority placement if you don’t have an application on file and you need care.

The applications for the May/June interim are available and due Friday, April 14th. After this date a 10% fee will be added for late registration.

During the week of April 24th the center will be participating in The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Week of the Young Child (WOYC). A calendar of events is posted in this newsletter on page 8. The week will be filled with opportunities for parent and child play, participation and learning. We will be hosting guest readers from the university as well as the NIU Drum Line. Each day has a theme and an opportunity for center wide participation. We love this week and the opportunity to appreciate our teachers for the amazing work they do educating young children to be smart, strong and healthy members of society. The parent advisory board will have a sign up sheet posted near the check in station for ways you can help contribute!

We will be applying for re-accreditation this summer and part of our self assessment is to get parent feedback. A NAEYC survey will be included in your enrollment packet! We need an 80% response rate on this survey so please take the time to fill it out!! Thanks!

Kristin Schulz
PRESCHOOL ROOM 1

April is a month I always look forward to! It usually means that spring is in full effect, with nicer weather, longer days, and flowers beginning to bloom! There is a lot to discover and explore on our playground and around campus this time of year. On the playground we are busy turning over the tree stumps and looking for worms or different bugs, making mud pies, and watching for the buds to appear on the trees. Please keep in mind that there is usually a good amount of mud on the playground, so you may keep your child’s winter boots here, or bring in rain boots.

This month Bri and I will be meeting with you for parent conferences. We look forward to this time to sit down and reflect on the growth we’ve seen and to set some goals for each child. Bri will be meeting with her primary families April 6th, and Jen will meet with her families April 17th. The end of the month we will be celebrating Week of the Young Child. This is a week we look forward to each year as we celebrate the importance of early learning opportunities and celebrate the teachers and staff who devote so much time to the Early Childhood Profession. There will be times for families to come in and participate as well that week. We are also working on creating an Art Gallery to display some of our finest creations! One day we were reading a book called ISH!, and learned the vocabulary word gallery. We have been using it as we talk about art that is on display.

REMINDERS

- The last day of spring semester is May 13th. Full-day care is available during Interim (May 15th — June 10th); applications are due by April 8th. Anyone who requests care after this date will be charged the ‘extra care’ fee; an additional 10%.

- Child care fees need to be paid in full prior to the upcoming semester.

- Summer and Fall child care applications are due during re-Enrollment week, April 10th – 14th. Contracts will need to be signed the week of April 24th.

- Summer Enrollment for New Families will begin on April 17th, online application.

- For those who pick up at the end of the day, please remember that our building closes at 5:30 so we need you to pick up and leave the building by this time.

- For tax purposes, our FEIN# is 36-6008480. We do not distribute statements regarding your child care payments. If you did not save your invoices for the year, you can obtain a record of your payment history through MyNIU.
We have had two areas of studies taking place in our classroom. The first study that came about was talking about farms. This began back in February with some discussions Josephina led and group times. The children were interested in learning about where our food comes from, and how it gets to the store. This led into more discussion about what we can make from the products we get from farms, such as how we can use milk from cows to make ice cream. Our dramatic play area became an ice cream shop, and we added farm animals to the block area and tractors. In the ice cream shop, we discuss the different roles that take place – servers, cashiers, customers, and ice cream makers! We were exposed to money concepts and discussed the differing amounts that coins were worth. Many children created ice cream art with puffy paint, and their own ice cream paintings and signs using emergent print. We also created a mural, cooperative art that included stickers of farm animals, drawings of farm machinery, and discussions of the different sounds animals make. To connect print to pictures we added photos of animals with their names printed in the block area. We also read The Cow that Went Oink and discussed the animal sounds, and then compared them to real animal sounds that we

Parent Conference Schedule Changes– Up and coming for April–

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 3rd</td>
<td>Sherie</td>
<td>Kendra</td>
<td></td>
<td>Bri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 10th</td>
<td>Jennifer</td>
<td>Diane</td>
<td>Hillary</td>
<td>Ann</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 17th</td>
<td>Jen</td>
<td>Leslie</td>
<td>April</td>
<td>Barbara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 24</td>
<td>WOYC</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Conferences</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 1st</td>
<td>Katslyn</td>
<td>Kellie</td>
<td>Pam</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 8th</td>
<td>Make</td>
<td>Up</td>
<td>Week</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

New this semester– Each teacher is being given a full 9-4pm shift out of the classroom to conduct parent conferences. We do require families to meet with staff for a 20 minute conference and goals setting period. We value our relationship with you and the home school connection for your child’s benefit. We will remain flexible with families who have trouble meeting this time frame but ask that you keep to your day as best as possible to help us manage all of the meetings we need to get through over 5 weeks.
watched on YouTube. We even played a guessing game, and some animals made really funny, unexpected noises.

The second study that has been taking place is construction. We had construction trucks in the room before the farm materials, and it had faded out. One day Josephina brought in magazines with house plans and construction helmets for an activity. The day after the children were wondering where the materials went and really wanted to bring them back into the classroom! On our clipboards we added grid paper and talked about blue prints, or house designs. The children used them to create their plans! They have been building elaborate block structures and adding the smaller unit blocks with environmental print such as Red Lobster pictures, or Buffalo Wild Wings, and building communities. They have even built car washes! It’s exciting to see them working together and expanding on each other’s ideas and plans.

Jen Young & Bri Wicker

Calendar of Events

**Parent Conferences** (Month of April): See page 3 for your child’s conference day!!

**NIU Cares Day— Saturday, April 22nd**— A team of teachers and students will be doing spring cleaning and gardening from 9-12pm. If your family would like to contribute materials or time please see the sign up sheet or Kendra for more information.

April 24-28 — **Week of the Young Child (WOYC) Guest Reader Program and Child Alumni Readers Welcome!** (See schedule on page...)

May 5th — **Reading Day** (we are open as usual)

May 8 — 12 — **Finals Week**

May 15 - June 16 — **Spring Interim**
PRESCHOOL ROOM 2

The month of April is going to be a very busy and exciting time for our classroom and for the center. During the week of April 24-28 we will be celebrating The Week of the Young Child. The Week of the Young Child is a celebration each April sponsored by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Research and experience clearly shows children’s earliest years are crucial learning years. The Week of the Young Child is a chance to celebrate the learning opportunities of young children and to recognize the responsibilities we share for helping them make the most of the early years.

During this special week the children will be engaged in a variety of activities throughout the week. More details to come.

**Music Monday**: NIU Drumline to perform on the playground at 4:00 p.m. Amy will be playing music over the intercom at 10:00, 12:15, and 3:30.

**Tasty Tuesday**: Each classroom will choose a healthy cooking activity to do with the children. Families will be invited to bring in a healthy recipe that will be included in a class/center recipe book.

**Work Together Wednesday**: The goal for today is for everyone to work together. Preschool classrooms will use the scrap wood to build a 3 dimensional structure. Use open ended materials to create a structure, etc.

**Artsy Thursday**: Some art students will be coming to do an activity with the children. The children will be participating in art outdoors.

**Family Friday**: Muffins and coffee will be provided for families at drop off. This will be located in the conference room. We will be inviting families to come and read throughout the day.

We also made new blue silly putty and white mud for the children to manipulate. The children had fun measuring the ingredients and pouring it into a large bowl. They also used their muscles to help mix all the ingredients together. They were amazed with how the white mud becomes a solid and a liquid.

During our morning group times we have been talking about different scenarios using the second step posters. Some of the topics we have covered
include the following: How to wait and politely interrupt someone, how to show others we care about them, how to tell others your feelings and how to pay attention and ignore peers who are trying to distract us; that is, peers who take our attention away. These posters are encouraging empathy and problem solving skills.

This past month, some of the children became fascinated with paper airplanes and flying them inside our classroom and on the playground. To expand on this topic, we brought in several books that featured transportation in various forms. The children then were challenged to think of their favorite type of transportation/vehicle and to put that thought onto paper and explain what they drew. A few days after everyone had a chance to draw their picture, we voted at group time of their favorite transportation vehicle. The majority voted for a wedding limo. So together we built our wedding limo out of a large cardboard box. It was great watching the children work together as a group and sharing ideas and expanding on the original idea. The children made flowers and other designs out of paper to decorate the outside of the limo. We not only had a wedding limo in our dramatic play but also a reception area. We have had a lot of fun with this project.

As the semester is winding down, it is time to once again hold parent/teacher conferences. Diane’s conferences will be held Tuesday April 11th from 9:00-4:00. Ann’s conferences will be Thursday April 13th from 9:00-4:00. Please sign up for a conference if you have not already done this. We will each have a sign-up sheet posted right inside our classroom. We look forward to meeting with each of you.

We have a variety of children that will be attending Kindergarten in the fall and I thought families would find this information helpful.

Helping your children with the transition to Kindergarten
- Enthusiasm is contagious. If you convey confidence and anticipation, your child is more likely to be comfortable with beginning Kindergarten.
- Visit the school with your child before the first official day and try to arrange a meeting with the new teacher. It’s a good idea to practice walking to school or going to the bus stop.

Help your child to ease in. If the teacher encourages parents to spend some time in the classroom the first day, you can look around
- Find a familiar face. Plan a one-on-one playdate with another child from the class or program before school begins.
- Create continuity. Start a daily routine a few weeks before school begins and involve your child in the process of packing their lunch or choosing their clothes.
- Prepare yourself. Pay attention to how your child reacts to separation so you’ll know what to expect on that first day of school.
- Help your child to ease in. If the teacher encourages parents to spend some time in the classroom the first day, you can look around with your child.
- Always say good-bye. Be loving and firm as you leave, and never make a child feel foolish about being upset to see you go. Reassure them that you love them and will be back at the end of the day.

If you would like more information on this topic, please let me know and I will make copies of articles I have.

Diane Mathison & Ann Kuta

PRESCHOOL ROOM 4
As March comes to an end, I must say this semester has flown by. One more newsletter and we will be into the summer months!

I would like to thank all the families for their patience and support while I have missed quite a few days due to medical appointments. A huge thank you to my dear co-teacher Hillary who I can always count on for support and I know when I am away, children and families are in great hands!

It was a big change for me coming into a new classroom in the middle of a year, but it has been a pleasant experience. We have a great group of children who really get along well with one another and get engaged in their daily play.

Conferences are coming up this month, and we will be interested in your feedback as to how the day long conferences compare to having conferences for a full week. Hillary and I will have separate sign-up sheets for our primary families. Please be sure to sign up on the correct sheet. As usual, if these times won’t work for you, we will try to accommodate your needs. Please let us know as soon as possible.

We have implemented more literacy and math the past month. We have concentrated on simple patterning skills and having the children become more aware of specific vocabulary in stories. We will have a fun activity whenever they hear a specific work in a story they need to do a specific action. Not only does this allow the children to focus on the story more closely but it introduces them to new words. We want to expand the children’s vocabulary and have them learn that there are many words to use to describe things.
The dramatic play area with the castle has been very popular. It is a fun way to expand on social studies with the children and teach them that there really are castles, kings, queens, princes, and princesses around the world and in different cultures. They are learning vocabulary such as King, Queen, knights, guards and the important role each of these play in these types of government.

Following the children’s interest, we brought dinosaurs into the classroom. We added real life props such as twigs, sticks, and rocks to bring more science into their play. We learned vocabulary once again with different dinosaur names, words like carnivore, herbivore, and omnivore and the definition of each. The children socialize, create environments, and use their creativity while engrossed in this type of play. Lots of learning going on!

Along with conferences, we will be celebrating the Week of the Young Child at the end of this month. We will keep you posted on what fun activities we will have going on during this week. Please check your child’s cubby and replenish clothing that may be missing. Be up on the weather report day to day and dress your child accordingly. We will need to keep snow boots here until the muddy days of spring are at an end.

If you ever have questions or concerns, just ask! Have a great month!

April Kaiser & Hillary Rosher

Music Monday— A musical break at 10:00, 12:15, and 3:30. NIU Drum Line will visit CCC at 4pm. All are invited! (NIU Spirit Day or Wear Red and Black)

Tasty Tuesday— Each classroom will choose and cook a healthy recipe. Families many be asked to help provide ingredients. Also consider sharing one of your families favorites to be included in our CCC cook book! (Mismatch day, wear different patterns and colors the more the better.)

Work Together Wednesday— Follow the obstacle course! All day long find ways to work together! (Fancy Day)

Artsy Thursday— All classrooms will help chalk the sidewalk in front of CCC! Other ideas include, decorating the trees and using art to create movement and cheer. (Favorite Color Day, choose your favorite.)

Family Friday— Families are invited to participate as guest readers, bring in older CCC alumni if possible. Parent’s only, stop in the conference room for muffins and coffee to go! It’s our way of saying thank you for being our partner! (Pajama Day, wear your comfy PJ’s to school.)

* Preschool will have an Art gallery on display all week in Pre-3 (Rm 128). Stop in at any time!
On Saturday, March 25th our staff participated in A.L.I.C.E Training. At the lead of the NIU PD and with support from Counseling and Consultation services we practiced a number of scenarios to help prepare us in the most up to date evacuation and safety training protocols.

The training lasted three hours and the staff practiced in each age group and classroom space. Going into the training all staff were unsure of what to expect and a little hesitant, but after the training we all have a clearer understanding of how to respond to keep all children safe.

In this day and age we don’t want to ever have to use this but it’s best to be prepared. If you would like more information about this program please follow this link. http://www.niu.edu/publicsafety/safety-education/alice.shtml