Welcome Spring!

In this newsletter, we hope to share all of the wonderful “Spring” happenings of our school with you. Each classroom is “busily a-buzz” with activity. We are thrilled to be spending more time outdoors and enjoying walks in the community we love!

As we wind down these last weeks of the school year, we can only look back and smile. It has been our pleasure to spend this year as part of your family. Thank you for sharing your children with us and for allowing us to offer “Inspiring Experiences” to your little ones.

After School ____________ Ms. Rebekah, Ms. Jessica, Ms. Hannah

Our after school community is taking full advantage of the warmer weather and longer days! We love to maximize use of our beautiful outdoor spaces, so friends have been enjoying books, coloring, games, water, and many other kinds of fun activities both outside and inside.

In the coming weeks, we plan to do several outdoor art projects and nature experiences. Our learning continues through the afternoons, and we have so much fun exploring together!

Upcoming Events at OCC

~ May 29  No School, Memorial Day
~ June 6  OCC Family Picnic
~ June 7  Last Day, 11:30 Dismissal
~ June 12 Summer Sessions Begin

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Classroom 1
Ms. Kassie & Ms. Robin

Springtime! Our classroom looks very cheerful decorated with our spring art projects—budding trees, watercolor flowers, and fluttering butterflies. As we continue to watch nature unfold, we will study about many kinds of flowers and how to grow a beautiful garden. Each day we see more insects in our playscape. On our science shelf, we will explore the insect world—Why are there so many? What are they good for? We have already enjoyed watching caterpillars transform into butterflies, and sent them off into the world of nature. We are continuing our unit on our continent of North America and will next learn about the many landforms and natural resources our land contains. What is it like to live in the mountains, or desert? What is a town like right on the coast?

We are also cleaning in our classroom. We have been doing ongoing dusting of materials and shelves, and now will focus on cleaning our beloved classroom materials and scrubbing our chairs and tables to refresh our environment. The children are such good helpers with so many skills learned through their practical life work. We know these last weeks of our school year will fly by, so we want to enjoy, working and learning together and appreciate the community we have built this year.

Classroom 2
Ms. Amanda & Ms. Maggie

Classroom 2’s ocean study included fish, coral, and sea turtles. Some favorites from this unit were the book *Pout, Pout Fish*, our sink/float experiment, making our ocean mural artwork (which will be on display at The Makery event in April), and our field trip to the library for an ocean themed story time! Now that the warm weather has finally arrived we will be moving back on land to learn about insect invertebrates and flowers in science, including observing the growth of live butterflies and flowers. In Geography, we will move from the coral reefs of Australia to the rainforests of South America. On our All About Me shelf, we will learn about ways to care for our Earth and each other. Our math, language, and sensorial shelves are full of many stimulating Montessori works to challenge our minds to grow and transform during our last few months together!
Spring and fall are my favorite seasons—a time to appreciate the fleeting and amazing changes in the natural world. They also tend to be busy times of year with our families and friends. With all this change, we anchor to the solid routines in our lives. In our classroom, the daily processes—washing hands, finding and doing works, reading books, interacting with peers, helping with jobs—all of these give the children purpose and comfort.

But like spring, we see changes here and there in our classroom. As the children develop their interests and skills, harder works are introduced and new works placed on the shelves. During circle discussions and by replacing works around the classroom, we unfold new themes. We will be learning about the human body: our skeletons, our muscles, and our organs. We will also take time to learn about other vertebrates that the students are interested in. In Geography, we will be talking about Australia after wrapping up a nice look at the diverse continent of Asia. And finally we will be enjoying spring by planting seeds, playing in the soil, and getting outside more for nature explorations. If any of these topics are of particular interest to you and you want to come in to share and play, let us know. Enjoy this magical season of change.

Classroom 4 has welcomed spring with open arms! We try to take advantage of the warm days by going on walks and observing signs of spring. During OCC's Spring Fling week, our class enjoyed participating in each day's theme, whether it was wearing crazy hair or dressing in rainbow colors. Before the Easter break, we had caterpillars join our class in order to learn about the process by which caterpillars become butterflies. When we returned from Easter, the caterpillars had already turned into chrysalises. We will transfer the chrysalises to a butterfly garden net for the butterflies to emerge. We will then release the butterflies outside! Our geography unit has focused on oceans - the children love learning about the fish and sea creatures found all over the world. The science shelf has been particularly popular with studies of reptiles, amphibians, and now magnets. As the year has progressed, it has been fun to watch the children learn and grow in their use of the materials and works. Each day, we are delighted to see their independence and desire to learn.
Older Toddlers

Ms. Leanne, Ms. Rebekah, & Ms. Hannah

The Older Toddlers have certainly come a long way this school year! As we close out our year together we will be discussing butterflies, flowers, insects, and spiders. Water pouring should also be making an appearance in the classroom very soon! In preparation for Preschool some of the children who are already three may be doing some visiting to a Preschool classroom in the month of May. This will likely only be for those that are signed up for our Summer Program. Also on May 16th the Older Toddlers will be going on a walking field trip to the Schlow Library. We will provide more information as the time gets closer. This is our first time at the library as a class and we are looking forward to the trip!

Younger Toddlers

Ms. Stephanie, Ms. Hannah & Ms. Kristina

With a little more than a month left in school the Younger Toddler classroom is looking forward to finishing a fabulous year by focusing on ‘spring things’ like birds, ducks, and flowers! We hope to take advantage of the beautiful spring weather by spending a lot of time outside, going for walks, and having circle outside in the grass. In our classroom, we will be making some flowers to put our classroom tree in bloom and the children will each get to paint their own planter pot to take home. Our friends will also be spending time in the older toddler classroom to help them prepare for their transition to the next classroom. Thank you to all the families for helping make this year so amazing so far!
Enrichment

Amanda, Ms. Robin, Ms. Kassie, & Ms. Pam

The Enrichment class has been working hard these past few weeks making sense out of dollars and cents with our study of money. We have practiced identifying coins and bills, making specific amounts of money using different coin combinations, and adding different amounts together. We also gained an understanding of money in a real-world context on our trip to First National Bank. To wrap up our unit on money we opened up a store in our classroom. The children were very excited to apply what they had learned; they each got to practice calculating the costs of items and making change, with a little addition and subtracting help from the golden beads.

In the next few weeks we will begin our study of fractions through fun cooking projects and hands-on learning experiences. We will also be tapping into our creative sides by delving into the world of art and literature with author and illustrator Eric Carle. We will learn how Eric Carle uses different art mediums to create his illustrations and let that guide us in making our own! We will use these illustrations to inspire us to write our own stories! In addition to these new projects, we will be continuing to learn simple stitches that we will use to make a farm-themed quilt with Miss Kassie. It’s going to be a busy and eventful last few weeks of school!

Explorers

Ms. Maggie, Ms. Sarah, & Ms. Jillian

Explorers have been busy welcoming the season of Spring with poetry, art, and outdoor observation. On our weekly walk, we have noticed the changes the season brings as flowers bloom and birds sing in State College! We have been outside to read stories, play games, go on worm hunts, egg hunts, and catch “bubble bugs” as the weather cooperates. As we extend our focus on Spring’s “rebirth” with baby animals we will learn about the life cycles of pond animals such as frogs, ducks, turtles and dragonflies.

We plan to walk to the duck pond on campus to observe some of these life cycles in action. We will also learn to differentiate between wild animals and domestic animals and then shift our focus to farm animals for the remaining weeks of school!
A Message from the Board of Directors

Happy Spring from the OCC Board! Thank you so much to everyone for supporting the fundraiser at The Makery, and to our development committee and chair Kate Woodruff for all of her efforts! Thanks also for participating in the Wednesday Out Fundraisers. Hope to see you at the next one June 7th at Rita’s! What fun ways to help contribute to OCC’s scholarship fund!

The OCC Board of Directors is still moving forward with work on our strategic planning process. Our board participated in a morning retreat and has been meeting to understand how best to support our school, staff and administration. We will have openings for board members for next year if you have any interest in supporting the school in this capacity. Please contact us at occbrd@gmail.com for further info.

Thank you for your ongoing support!

The school year is almost over? Remember...

OCC’s Last Day is June 7... 11:30 Dismissal!

Office Updates

- Friendly reminder that all tuition payment plans for the 2016/17 School Year include a June payment. OCC does not prorate tuition based on days/month. June payments represent the 10th month in our yearly tuition payment plan.
- Moving on from OCC? Please be sure that your mailing and email addresses are updated to allow for proper end-of-year tax statement mailings.
- Returning for the 2017/18 School Year? Be sure that your Enrollment Contract has been signed and returned to secure your child’s registration.