



Spuyten Duyvil P R E S C H O O L

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"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed individuals can change the world. In fact, it's the only thing that ever has."

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- PreK 4 Kindergarten Meeting on Zoom..... Wed Nov 1 6:30 – 8**
- Parenting Circle with Laura Marte, social worker.....**
Helping your children with their feelings”... Thurs, Nov. 2 9-10 am
- Photo Day1/2 Day School noon dismissal Election Day..... Tuesday Nov.7**
- Double Good Popcorn Fundraiservirtual..... starts week of Nov. 12 (info to follow)**
Brochure Nov. 12 thru Nov. 26
- 4K Share Luncheon Wednesday, Nov. 22**
- Thanksgiving Break School Closed Thurs- Fri, Nov. 23, 24**
- Family Conferences week of Nov. 27**
- Open House for perspective families to SDP Wed, Nov 29 6-7 pm**

Oct. 27, 2023

Dear Families,

I LOVE FALL! Of course not trading in my summer, but the weather can be glorious, just like this past week, air is crisp, the trees are beautiful, our garden in transition and FALL FESTIVAL! On Tuesday our 4’s were invited to the front yard to take part in seasonal activities: candy apples, pumpkin painting, hat making, sand jars, still-life drawings (which are coming home as t-shirts), and piñatas. Thanks to our wonderful parent volunteers (so grateful you were able to step up!) adults and kids had an easy-going, fun morning. Kids moved independently between activities as you can all see from these photos.

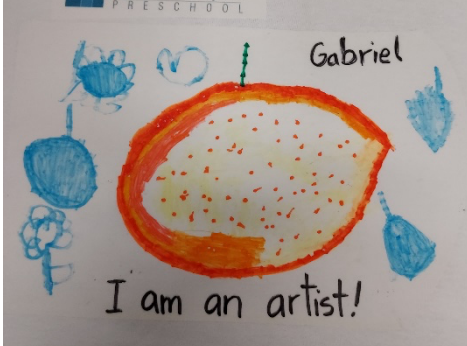
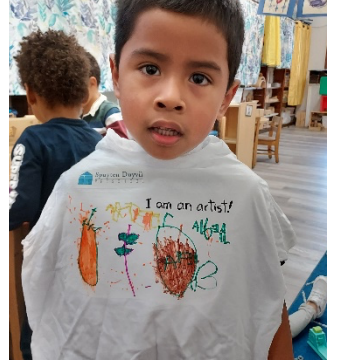


HOLIDAY POLICY: Yes, we are awash with pumpkins but you will notice the word Halloween is not at Spuyten Duyvil. It is not because we are grumps. Halloween is often an important family event which is as it should be. We welcome children sharing their experiences, but we do not bring religious or commercial holidays into our educational environment. Several reasons for that: we are a non-denominational institution (the variety of Dec. special days), kids get frightened, confused, over stimulated by some of the symbols out there, not all families partake in some or all of these events in the popular culture and then the resistance to bringing commercial outreach into our special space; school is a respite for all of us where we share our communal rituals and routines. And that is how Fall Festival comes in. We acknowledge children’s interests, build a common experience and set of memories and even connect all that to curriculum goals. The children made their papier mache piñatas based on stories they have been learning: Sick Simon and Mouse Paint this year. The gluing, scooping sand, observational drawing, pressing the icing dispensers are all directly connected to the work the children do every day in class. Yes, we also know that sugar is not part of our regular diet at school, but ... it was a lot of fun!



That means no costumes in school on Tues. Please no candy sent in to share with classmates. Leave all that for your fun after school.

Popcorn Sale: This has been an incredibly successful fundraiser- and super delicious! I The past 4 years we asked our families to put that friendly pressure on co-workers, neighbors and family. Work patterns have changed but our families still want to support our school and who doesn't like a special yummy treat?



DOUBLE GOOD POPCORN FUNDRAISER to start Nov 12 and run most of November. More info when we get closer. Consider this as part of your holiday gift-giving. The product is good and nearly no work for you or the school, just enter the orders and sit back! We get 50% of the sales. We are running this fundraiser in 2 formats- the virtual pop-up store will be open Nov. 12-16; the brochure sales will run through Thanksgiving. Between these 2 ways of reaching out to your own communities we should be able to beat our previous high sale year of \$12,000.

Virtual sales are sent directly to the customers; brochure sales are sent to the school and we give them to you to give out to your people. All deliveries will arrive before the December holidays. More details and forms next week.

KINDERGARTEN IS COMING! CHANGE OF TIME- starting at 6:30 pm



Sorry to be so blunt but families need to start paying attention to this timeline. The Dept of Ed process will take applications from Dec 6- Jan 10. The format is pretty much like what you all did for 4K. To help break down all the information I am holding a Zoom presentation next week, **WED, Nov. 1, from 6:30-8**. I have a set presentation, then former SDP parents with kids at different schools in districts 6 and 10 will share about their choices and what they have learned. **THIS IS THE ONLY KINDERGARTEN WORKSHOP WE ARE DOING.** The event will be recorded but if you want to be sure your questions are addressed please make the time to join. Zoom link will be sent out next week. An annotated list of most attended schools will come home on Monday to help prepare you.

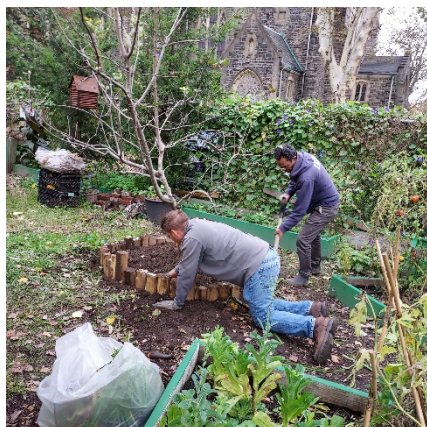
LENDING LIBRARY- 4K classes have begun bringing home books they choose every week from our Sharing Library. We now have very spiffy blue book baggies complete with the school name. Please take this school-home connection seriously. On a very basic level, you and your child are both getting ready for the more regular "homework" that we all know is coming next year. I cannot promise that will as age appropriate and functional as ours, but the process of bringing something school-home-school is valuable in itself.



Then there is the content involved. At the beginning of the month I include a Reading Tip designed from my own many years teaching grade K-3, those years when children go from enjoying the pictures and their favorite adults spending time with them, to cuddling up with their own reading choices. Most of things I suggest are probably in your own toolbox already, but take a look anyway.

Please take this activity seriously. It should not take any more time from your busy day; use the books your child chose sitting with their teacher for the regular nightly reading that should be happening already.

Children cannot take out new books if they don't return the previous week. If you are not sure of your class return date, ask your teacher.



FALL FAMILY GARDEN DAY- If you think our yard and sidewalk plantings look cleaner, fresher and more welcoming, here are 2 of the parents you can thank, along with the other volunteers who weeded, dug, raked, carried heavy tree stumps from next door, and once again made it clear why Spuyten Duyvil has the well-earned reputation it does. Many thanks to you all.

If you missed last Sunday, no worries- Looking Garden still needs weeding, and it would be great to get landscape timber fencing around the tree pit just above ours that we planted wild grass in. Just let me know.

LAST NOTES:

- **SCHOOL PHOTOS- Election Day, Nov 7-** yes we are open but it will be ½ day school for staff development; kids picked up at noon. There is no aftercare or violin that day. All kids are photographed, individually and in their class picture. Irvin Simon, the photo company, will contact each of you directly via email to see if you want to order. Totally up to you. The school does get a percentage of the sales as a small fundraiser.
- **FLU SHOTS** – I have already started the nagging so please take note. Dept of Health mandates all children receive this season’s flu shot by Dec. 31. If I don’t have receipt or immunization proof by then, your child will not be allowed into school when we return from winter break on Jan. 2, 2024. Please don’t let that happen, and help us keep everyone safe.
- I am still entering all the enrollment paperwork. I have already reached out to families where odds and ends are missing. Sorry for the bother but if it isn’t all uploaded into the Dept of Ed system, our funding is affected.



Have you sent in your FUNKY PUMPKIN yet?

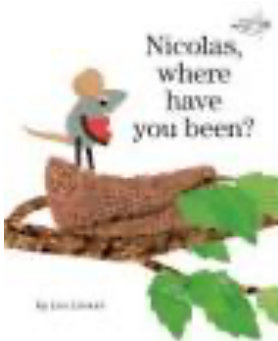
ARTICLE OF THE MONTH:

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed individuals can change the world. In fact, it's the only thing that ever has." Margaret Mead

This is one of my favorite quotes; I find it helpful when I am feeling lost, angry, confused by how I don’t match up with popular culture, memes, feeling like I am the only one believing, acting as I do. It is what popped into my head when I took the picture of the group of parents digging around the apple tree (see above) on Sunday. Several more parents came later, but in the beginning was just a few and, being me, I was despairing at getting the volunteers I would have liked. And then the quote popped up- the small group that was there was getting it done- and quickly and successfully. Of course the quote is in reference to more global effectiveness than just our garden maintenance, and that’s where my thinking went next.

The world has been in such a downward spin lately; it seems like we go from one bad news piece to the next heartbreak to the following “What now??” Without touching on political toes, the bombardment of conflict, angry words, defiance is surely exhausting on all sides of any issue. In all of these news items the Margaret Mead quote takes on a different meaning than the one that gives hope. A small group can also take events down a road not necessarily helping the greater good. We are seeing that too. Mercifully, our kids are too young to be fully immersed in the news, but if it is in the air, if their adults are upset or worried, they pick up the vibes too.

Here are 2 resources that may be helpful during these times. The **10 Tips** handout is a general guide in how to talk to kids about any unpleasant situation or feeling. In any time there are things that come up that kids question or are disturbed by- a dead bird on the sidewalk, for example. Doesn’t have to be the big stuff we worry about.



The second recommendation is a book that I just came across this month. I was in a small bookstore upstate and bought a book by the wonderful, classic author/illustrator Leo Lionni. If you don’t already know his work, time to introduce yourself and your child. His stories are all about inclusion, peace, kindness, patience. I thought I knew all his work and had the collection in our school library. Turns out there were a few I didn’t know (cue up Amazon and now they are here too). But the one that really hit me hard, especially in light of all of the above, was Nicholas, Where have you been?

Amazon must have some more used copies available. Worth the purchase I promise. I decided not to read it to the kids, not unless some comments come up that need addressing. But it is perfect for generating the kind of conversation that parents should be having with their children all the time- same things: inclusion, peace, kindness. I will leave you with another quote, this time from this book:

“One bad bird doesn’t make a flock.”

Sincerely,

Judi