

March Newsletter

Dear Parents:

March 20th is the first official day of **Spring** and we look forward with excited anticipation to this wonderful season. We are very happy to say goodbye to the possibility of any more snow for this year (hopefully)! The children will soon enjoy nature walks around the grounds of the Center to look for signs of spring.



We welcomed our Japanese Intern, Ms. Chikage Ota in February and she will leave us the first week of March. She has been learning English, observing American children, families, education and culture. Our Team in Room 1 have been mentoring her and we are enjoying a cultural exchange including a very special relationship with one of our students in Room 3, Hirona, whose mommy is also Japanese. Ms. Maria Bigelow will participate in the Bon Voyage dinner planned for all the Japanese interns who participated in the program.



The teachers at Greenbelt Children's Center enjoy the opportunity to help the children discover the changes of each season. Just imagine what it must be like to watch the beautiful miracles of springtime through the eyes of a young child! We hope that everyone takes some time to celebrate the season of spring with his or her child! Go visit the library, the zoo, or a museum with your child, or go to a park – everyone plays!



March Units

This month the children will be learning about Things That Move, Engineering, Transportation and other Units. We hope that all families are faithfully buckling their child in the back seat of vehicles with the appropriate child seat in order to keep all our friends safe.

We believe it's important to introduce the children to the world of work through the next unit, **Community Helpers**. Parents, you are sincerely invited to participate by visiting the classroom to talk about your occupation (or a related one). We suggest that parents bring "hands on" items to pass around or show to make the experiences more concrete for young children. For example; painter: paintbrushes and rollers; accountant: adding machine with tape and office supplies; nurse/doctor: stethoscope and flashlight, etc. **If you can participate, please arrange a day and time with your child's teachers.**

Throughout the month, we will provide opportunities for the children to try out different roles from the world of work through dramatic play experiences. We will also turn our dramatic play centers (aka House Corners or Imagination Centers) into post offices, grocery stores, a hair salon, hospital, farmer's market, etc.

We are seeking empty food cartons, junk mail, dress up items, etc. that you might be able to send in to replenish some of the dramatic play materials for the Dramatic Play Centers in each classroom. Please save these items for us! Bring them in any time! Your trash is our treasure! (OR ANYTHING ELSE THAT MIGHT BE GOOD FOR PRETENDING!)



Have You Checked the Bulletin Boards Lately?

Did you know that *every day* you can find out all the details about what the teachers have planned for your child? All you need to do is go to the classroom bulletin board that says, “**Parent Information**”. Your child’s **Daily Schedule** is posted there as well as the **Weekly Lesson Plans** with all the activities that will occur each day. You can find out what’s for breakfast or afternoon snack, what to help your child select for Show and Tell on Friday, and what story teachers will be reading to the children each day.

You can find out what the classroom is discussing for Social Studies (circle time) or what the Nutritional Education Activity will be this week! Please also remember that Mrs. Gee has a Parent Resource Bulletin Board outside the office where items of interest that come across her desk are hung to share, in addition to postings on the front door. It is our goal to keep you informed about resources and your child’s program everyday at GCC! A brief minute or two daily will be time well spent!

Upcoming Events!

Please, please come out and participate in our wonderful activities this month:

- **Parent Café Planning Meeting**

We hope to have this activity in collaboration with Greenbelt Nursery School, Greenway Learning Center and our Judy Center partners, **date and time will be determined soon**- we must have at least one parent volunteer to hold a Parent Café! **Please RSVP to Mrs. Gee once date/time is determined**

- **March 6 Viewing documentary film: No Small Matter**

Wednesday morning 9:30 am at the Prince George’s Child Resource Center. 9475 Lottsford Road, Upper Marlboro, MD. All Parents are invited and encouraged to bring a guest. The film explores the most overlooked, underestimated and powerful force for social justice in America today: early childhood education. Call 301-772-8420 or register through Eventbrite. Free, includes refreshments. Sponsored by the Maryland Association for the Education of Young Children. Discussion will be led by Mrs. Gee.

- **March 7 - Piano Lessons Meet & Greet with Music for Life Staff**

- **March 12 - Wolf Trap Master Artist, Kindertwin! Parent/child activity!**

Rhythm, Chants, and Space Games: Movement for Memory

Developed by the late Teaching Artist, John Taylor, DC/MD/VA Wolf Trap Master Teaching Artist

A highly energetic workshop led by Kindertwin integrates rhythms, movements and simple body part chants with more intricate spatial awareness games to demonstrate activities which help children identify and recall concepts such as colors, shapes, numbers, community relationships, modes of



transportation and action verbs. Finger spelling and American Sign Language are incorporated as an aid in teaching the alphabet and developing fine motor skills. Sequencing games also build concentration, self-control and memory. **Parent must participate with child.** Sign up in classroom so we will know how many to expect.

- **March 19 - Prince George's County Early Childhood Advisory Council**
12- 2 pm Tuesday at John Carroll Elementary School. The council needs parents to serve as representatives voicing the perspective for parents of young children in helping the early childhood educators shape policy and plan events for young children and families in our county. Please consider being a parent advocate! You are sincerely needed as the voice of parents!

Coming in April:

- **April 6 - Colgate Dental Van 10 am-rescheduled from snow day** Free dental screenings and educational program for all children, parent release required.
- **April 8-12 - Week of the Young Child**
- **Wolftrap Family Involvement Workshop: Teaching Artist, Sue Trainor: Good Vibrations**

LENDING LIBRARY, Let's Hit Our Goal!

Remember to read at least **10 books per month** from the GCC Lending Library! We have been more consistently reaching our goal for each classroom each month. The goal is important because children benefit greatly when read to, it helps them to be successful in school & life. We rocked our pajama day, pizza party, Dr Seuss birthday celebration of last month's achievement!



It's been 30 years since Hart & Risley's seminal research (reported in *Meaningful Differences*) uncovered what's come to be known as the "word gap"—the startling gulf between the quality and frequency of adult-child conversations in some households versus others. (Source: Brookes Publishing Co.) As you might imagine, the children immersed in environments with richer conversational opportunities came to school better ready to learn. Last year, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) issued a policy statement urging pediatricians to encourage parents to read aloud to their children (**Literacy Promotion: An Essential Component of Primary Care Pediatric Practice**):

"Reading regularly with young children stimulates optimal patterns of brain development and strengthens parent-child relationships at a critical time in child development, which, in turn, builds language, literacy, and social-emotional skills that last a lifetime."

The MD State Department of Education evaluation of our pre-k grant includes our lending library participation rates, and the children can't earn incentives if *even ONE family does not meet the required numbers*. Please make sure *your family* is working to help meet the classroom goal of ten books read per month!

2019-2020 School Year Planning Parents of children **turning five by September 1st, 2019** must register at their neighborhood school for kindergarten as we have decided to discontinue the Alternative Kindergarten Program at GCC. **We will continue to operate as Preschool/Pre-kindergarten and will have limited spaces for Before and After School Wrap Around Care.**



Benefits for your child include: small class size, low teacher/child ratios for differentiated instruction and attention, full-day care to cover your entire work day, a calendar with more school days open, research-based curriculum that is approved by the MD State Department of Education and an excellent "Five Check" (MD EXCELS highest rating) NAEYC accredited early childhood program. These are very important things to consider as you make your choice for the fall. **The value of our early childhood program is exceptional.**

The grant for our **partnership with Prince George's County Public School for the Pre-k Public School Program that is here at Greenbelt Children's Center has been submitted.** The age of entry requirement for Pre-K is: "turning four years old by September 1st, 2019." We now have the PGCPs School Calendar and school will start after Labor Day on September 3rd for the 2019-20 school year. We have grant funding for 16 income eligible families in the Pre-k program so if your child meets the birth date, you reside in this county, please stop in the office to see the income chart to see if you qualify for the reduced tuition and pay only the Before & After Wrap Around fee for the same 7 am – 6pm schedule as always. As soon as we receive the new PG County Public School forms we will begin registration. GCC families come first but keep in mind the program is advertised to the public by MSDE and PGCPs.

Looking Ahead . . . **THINK SUMMER!**

Be sure to start thinking about your summer schedules because you will definitely want your child to enjoy the special opportunities, we are planning for them at our Summer Program this year! We have been busy working on our Summer Activity Calendar; we have some wonderful special events planned to include some of the favorites that the children enjoyed so much last year and some really cool new ones, such as African Drumming and Dance! The Summer Calendar will be available soon! Children attending the Summer Program can look forward to the pool, musical entertainment, drama, nature, animals and science programs - just to name a few!!



Summer Program begins on June 17th and continue for 11 weeks until August 29th. A Schedule Reservation form for your child will be sent home soon so that you will be able to reserve a space, **before** we offer spaces to the public. It is very important to work on your summer plans now; we anticipate great demand and waiting lists, as has occurred in the past.

Also look for the **Summer and Fall Intention Letter and Form** that will be sent home with your child in March. It will have information about next school year's calendar and fees. Parents will need to complete the Intention Form for the upcoming summer and fall program at Greenbelt Children's Center regarding your child's continued enrollment.

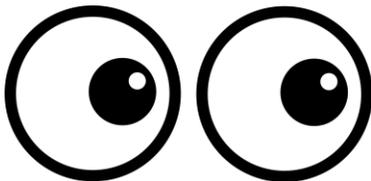


Intention form is due back to the office **April 18**. (Submit with payment for Annual Material fee for 2019-20 to keep the same tuition as the 2018-19 published rate. **Summer schedules will be due by May 17th.**)

Transition Plans

An **individualized transition plan** for next year will be developed for each child as soon as parents notify the GCC office of their child's plans for the coming year on the GCC Intention Form. Teachers help transition what comes next so your child will feel secure and confident about the change. **Rooms 1 & 3 will have the opportunity to go on a Transition Field Trip to Greenbelt Elementary School to tour kindergarten and first grade and meet the people who work at an elementary school to prepare for that transition. Look for information soon.**

Looking Ahead

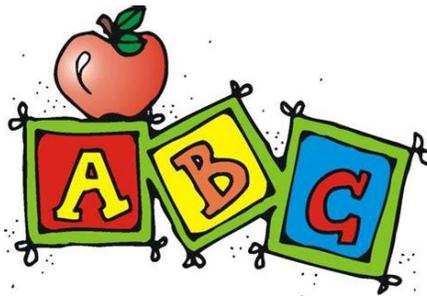


Parents who commit to GCC's Fall 2019-20 Program by submitting the **NON-REFUNDABLE \$150.00 Materials Fee by April 18, 2019**, will have tuition held at the current 2018-19 published tuition prices:

Room 2: \$260 per week

Rooms 1 & 3: \$235 per week

(Reminder- Pre-K families may have grant subsidy to reduce tuition for families that are income eligible at certain levels and live in PG County) and \$160 per week for Before & After Wrap Around Care. If you miss the deadline, tuition will increase as per published rates for 2019-20, a 4% increase to meet expected costs.



Thank You!

Thank you to Ameerah Bridges, Arianna Rm 1, for the lovely Dr. Seuss swag and cupcakes for the Dr Seuss Birthday Celebration! Also thank you to Colleen Ransome, Kaiden-Rm 3, for the case of plastic bags donated.



Announcing the 2019 Week of the Young Child™!

Join NAEYC as we celebrate our youngest learners on April 8–12 with five fun-filled, themed days. All week long we'll be featuring music, resources, and [activity ideas](#) for teachers and families that will make play meaningful and learning fun! There is so much children learn as they enjoy music, explore food and cooking, build together, create art, and celebrate their families!

