

Co-chairs: Grace Runyan & Alison Duxbury-Shadwick

KM Co-op Preschool Newsletter

FEBRUARY 2014



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CALENDAR:

Feb 11: Board meeting
Feb 17 - 21: MID-WINTER BREAK – No classes
Feb 25: **Green** Family Night
Mar 4: **Blue** Family Night
Mar 11: **Orange** Family Night
Mar 18: Board Meeting
Mar 25: **Purple** Family Night

Dear Families,

January has been full of preschool and community excitement. We have hit the ground running with projects and preparation for the new year.

January sounds a lot like the word "BUSY" to the preschool. Refreshed from the holiday season our kids returned to class packed with energy and excitement.

Returning to a schedule and routine is a wonderful thing but can require some steering at times. A big pat on the back goes to all the teachers and parents for wrangling our free-range and sugar-coated post-holiday kiddos. And I would be completely remiss if I failed to mention the community excitement about the Seahawks and their incredible journey to the Super Bowl! I hope the rest of 2014 proves to be as exciting and fun as January has been.

The preschool has welcomed a few new families in the start of the year.

We are excited to broaden our KM family and watch a new little person learn and grow. Please continue to share with other parents that KM-Coop enrolls year round and will welcome new families at any time.

Registration packets have been distributed for the next school year. It seems crazy but indeed it is time to begin that process. You may notice that changes to the available classes have been made.

Unfortunately, KM did not enroll a viable number of children to support the duplicate age group classes (Yellow 2-3 and Green 3-4) and next year these classes will not be offered unless we have excess enrollment in the remaining classes.

This was a difficult decision to make but we have to protect the financial stability of the preschool to ensure our children have a place to come to learn, grow and experience. In an attempt to provide options to our families we have developed an experimental **RAINBOW** class. This is a multi-age classroom learning environment. We hope this experiment proves to be a positive option for our families and our teachers. We welcome all feedback and input!

KM Co-op is based on parent participation. Parents that want to participate in their children's learning environment in a very hands-on way. We all have unique qualities and skills that make the KM learning environment valuable beyond explanation. KM needs board participation to function. **Next school year we have Vice Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary positions opening up and we are excited to have the fresh ideas and approaches that a new person will bring to these positions.** Please approach your class president, teacher or any board member to learn more about the board and the many positions. We welcome any parent to attend the monthly meetings and participate in the process.

Get ready for February! Things are going to continue to be busy and fun. We have picture day and exciting field trips to look forward to in our classrooms and the board will be planning for the next school year. Thanks again to our staff, board and everyone who works in the classrooms; you make this school amazing!

**Grace Runyan &
Alison Duxbury-Shadwick, Co-chairs**

Fundraising News

Hello KM Families,

The New Year is well under way as are our fundraising efforts. Don't forget to ask your VP for Taco Time Coupon books and Papa Murphy Peel-A-Deal cards. These are both available on a first come, first-served basis. When they're gone, they're gone.

You should have received your updated fundraising balance from your class VP by now. If you haven't, or if you feel the balance due is incorrect, please contact Jennifer or Lisa.

The spring bulbs fundraiser starts Feb. 10th, look for info from your class VP.

And finally, the Usborne Books Greeting Cards "Cards for a Cause" fundraiser is coming late February. This was a big hit last year and we are excited to be able to offer it again.

**Jennifer Eastberg & Lisa Leskovar,
Co-Vice Chairs of Fundraising**

Occasional/Infant/Child Visitor Policy Review to be Held at February Board Meeting

The Kent Meridian Co-Op Board of directors wants to hear your feedback on the proposed changes to the schools occasional/Infant/Child visitor policy. The discussion will be held at the school during the School Board Meeting on February 11th. Some of you might be asking: What is this all about?

Earlier this school year, the KM Co-Op Board asked a volunteer group to review our school's policy on visitors to our classes. This committee was tasked with assuring that the policy meets the needs of our school, specifically in regards to the safety of our children, the integrity of our classes, and the obligations to our liability and accident insurance coverage. The committee rewrote the policy and presented the proposed changes to the board.

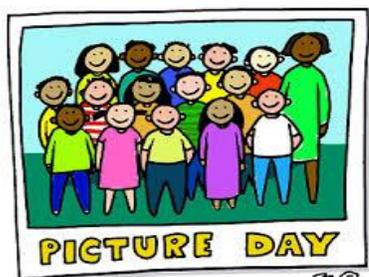
Most of the changes were well received by the board in regard to adult and infant visitors, but some concerns were raised about the changes to the occasional child visitor part of the policy.

Currently the policy allows for teachers and individual classes decide how to define what "occasional visitor" means and how many times a child can visit. The change to the policy defines occasional as visiting "no more than once a month." Some members of the board felt this rather limited definition of an "occasional visitor" would severely impact some of our families with multiple children and also impact our enrollment.

In order to address these concerns the committee reconvened and created an alternative policy that defines an occasional child visitor as visiting "no more than 12 times in a school year or approximately once a month."

The Board is now seeking feedback from the general membership on these proposed changes.

Look for an email this week that includes more detailed information about the policy and proposed changes. We hope to see you at the board meeting and to hear your feedback on this issue.



School Photo Schedule

Mark your calendars: The class pictures are scheduled for the week of February 24th as follows:

Mon: White & Red 9:30; Green 12:15

Tues: Blue 9:15; Purple 12:15

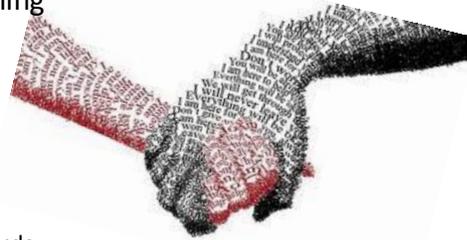
Wed: Orange 9:30

Fri: Yellow 9:30

Rainbow Class

KM Coop is going to offer a new and exciting option for our families: A multi-age class that supports sibling enrollment and promotes a learning environment for kids of different ages! Rainbow class is for children ages 2-4 and priority will be given to sibling groups. The classroom will continue the KM Coop model of age appropriate, child centered, play-based and child guided learning.

The children will spend time together in a group and then split up to address their age specific skills. We hope this class will teach our children how to interact in a community of children with understanding and support, as well as, allow each child to experience the magic of preschool learning



The Power of Words

As parents and teachers, we encourage our children to use their words.

We teach them that words can be used to take turns, ask friends to play or tell a friend how they feel. We applaud these efforts at communication. But, often times, preschoolers will experiment with words that are less socially acceptable, i.e. words that hurt feelings or are inappropriate.

One of the main reasons children say these things is because they are learning how powerful words can be. And, as preschoolers tend to do, they experiment with that power. But how can we deal with this language experimentation?

First, regardless of the nature of the language, try to stay calm. If we, as adults, react strongly to these words we assign them even more power. A lot of times children will say things to get a reaction, and when they don't get the reaction they expected it takes the fun out of it.

Here is a brief look at some common language power plays and some suggestions on how to react.

For potty words you can:

1. Ignore them.
2. Say calmly "we do not use those words" (without repeating the specific words, if you repeat them the child just got you to say them too).
3. Provide an outlet, "those sound like bathroom words, you may go into the bathroom if you need to say them" (be prepared for your child to take you up on this).

When your child says "I hate you," they really mean "I am frustrated and angry at you but am also afraid of these feelings."

1. Try to stay calm and empathize, it is scary for children when they are emotionally out of control.
2. Say calmly "those words hurt my feelings."
3. Help them name their feelings, "you sound really angry."
4. Help them put their wants into words "you wish you could have that toy."

When peers say, "I'm not your friend," usually children say this because they need to feel powerful. Although hard to hear, it is rarely meant literally.

1. Encourage the child on the receiving end of this statement to tell the speaker how those words made them feel.
2. Role-play and problem solve with the child who said this to foster empathy. "How would you feel if someone you wanted to play with said that to you?"

Language is a wonderful, powerful skill, and like any other skill, needs to be learned and practiced in a trusting, encouraging environment. Having patience and creating empathy can turn those less than desirable exchanges into, "Will you play with me?" and "I love you."

By **Tonya Vance** (Thank you, Teacher Cindy for this submission!)

White Class Update

In December we shared what traditions we are going to be handing down to our children; we focused on holiday traditions and our class runs the gamut from still developing to having established traditions in our families. Almost all of the babies in the class are mobile now (except for our youngest baby, who is now sitting on her own!) and it seems that each week more are transitioning to toddling—even though some are still a little wobbly. They love the songs, especially the ones played from Teacher Cari's iPod.

In January, the door to the "other room" was opened. It's neat to see the kids' reactions to the other space away from mom—some are more adventurous than others! They love the sensory table and the new items Teacher Cari brings out each week for them to explore. They also got to experience the Large Muscle room for the first time. We also got a new classmate—Miles and his mom Peggy!

Megan Rhoads



Tadhgan & Eleanor, White Class' oldest and youngest, sharing smooches.

Red Class Update

The Red Class concluded the calendar year with our December field trip to Les Gove Indoor Park, and we also welcomed the arrival of the first little sibling of this year's class. (Rosie's a big sister now—welcome, baby Malcolm!) Over the break we parents tried to put into practice our parent ed strategies for staying sane during the holidays. In January our little ones have been exploring cold weather themes with fun art projects like snowmen and penguins. While a lot will have to freeze over before my son Joshua agrees to leave the trains and cars to do an art project, many of the toddlers love covering the paper, and themselves, with paint. Our Red Class Family Night was buzzing with parents, siblings and extended family. The kiddos got to introduce their family members to the different stations in the classroom, sing some favorite songs, make yummy fruit salads, and—best of all—take home a family handprint craft to preserve our preschool memories. *Kate Heisen*



Jameson, Brielle, Tanner and Samuel, enjoying the outside in Orange Class.

Orange Class Update

The orange class has had a great start to 2014. It has been so nice seeing everyone on a weekly basis and getting back into our routines. We have been enjoying playing with snow in the sensory table and creating snowmen and snowflakes using construction paper, paint and glitter. The children have also loved this nice weather and being able to get outside and run around. Samuel Meyer now says, "I love preschool!" when he leaves which is a huge accomplishment! *Misty Meyer*



Yellow Class on their field trip.

Yellow Class Update

This month in Yellow class has been very busy, as usual! We welcomed our new friend Kaden and his family to preschool. We are so happy they have come to play.

This month has been all about winter. It has been so much fun making snowmen out of cotton balls, crafting penguins with our feet, and painting polar bears with our hands. Our family night was on the 28th.

Teacher Tarri helped us to make thumbprint family trees, and she brought cupcakes and lemonade for us to share with all of our families and Teacher Nan.

Shelby Beeler

Blue Class Update

January was fun for Blue class! We had super fun snow days and got to play with real, fake snow! Sounds confusing right? The kids loved it!

Toward the end of the month we had Dinosaur week! The kids traced feet and got to make their own dinosaur named after them! We searched for fossils and made Dino tracks in all the play dough. Our field trip to Bounce it up 360 was the best!!! Blue Class loves to bounce! We are looking forward to February!

Jessica Grinolds



Purple Class Update

January has been a great month in the purple class; the theme for the month has been winter, and our kids have done some fun winter activities. They've made several different snowmen both at the art table and as a class. One snowman activity even incorporated counting and writing the letters of their names. This has been one of a few things this month that has focused on writing and prewriting.

Many of the circle time songs and storybooks as well as art table and writing center activities were also winter themed including penguins, mittens, and snowflakes. Even the sensory table had some snow/ice-like stuff at one point, and I know the kids loved the opportunity to "play in the snow" a little bit.



Calliegh, Taylin and Sebastian playing with fake snow in Green.

During the last part of the month, the kids got to go see a play at the Carco Theater in Renton about Goldilocks and the Three Bears.

The play, which taught the kids the importance of manners with friends and family, was such fun, and the kids were both well-behaved and fully engaged. They had prepared for the play by reading about The Three Bears during the prior story time and then carried the theme through to the following class with a winter teddy bear picnic with cookies made in class. It has been a great start to the new year, and, always, we're so grateful to Teachers Cindy and Nan for their guidance.

Laura Grace Dykes

SAVE THE DATE!

THAT URGE TO DO SOME SPRING CLEANING IS UPON US,
BUT HANG ON TO THAT PILE IN YOUR GARAGE A LITTLE
LONGER- OUR RUMMAGE SALE IS TAKING PLACE ON:

SATURDAY, MAY 3RD

WE'D LOVE TO GIVE YOUR OLD STUFF A HOME AND EARN
MONEY FOR THE PRESCHOOL AT THE SAME TIME.
WE ARE LOOKING FOR HELPERS, SO REACH OUT TO US!
MISTY BLOOMSTINE (RED) HAS VOLUNTEERED TO
HEAD UP THE RUMMAGE SALE (AGAIN!) WITH
LIZ KOCYBA AND MJ McNEILL (PURPLE)
ASSISTING

DREAM

**THANK
YOU**

You Me We

Thank you so much to those of you who came out to support your preschool for the 4th Annual You Me We Celebration sponsored by the City of Kent on January 24th.

This was the first time we attended this free, fun, family oriented celebration. We showed our community spirit, and provided face painting for all the patrons for free! Special thanks to **MJ McNeill** and **Nan Sargeant** for their face painting skills, to **Kelly Regan** for providing the supplies and last-minute face painting lessons, and to **Shelby Beeler** for her tireless publicity efforts.

Keep your eyes peeled for more events like this in the future- come out and show your Co-op some love!



MJ painting ladybugs on Lauryl and Emmy as Shelby takes a break from networking.

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• Newsletter submissions are welcome from any member of the preschool. Each month the Class Secretaries submit articles highlighting events and activities in their class. We also accept child and parenting-focused poetry and letters, information on community happenings, recipes, small classifieds, etc.

• **Deadline for contributions is the 23rd of the month.**

• Comments or suggestions? Contact **MJ McNeill** at editor@kmcoop.org.