

January 2019

The Leaflette

Tree of Life Charter School

Public Montessori Education



Resolutions

by Celeste Beck, Principal

Often, this is the time of year when we reflect on the past year and resolve to change our actions in an effort to improve ourselves in the coming year. Our children learn by observing and copying our actions and, sometimes, our attitudes. Often, if we want to see changes in

our children's behavior, we need to change our own. In addition to the article on page 4 about respect, here are some other things families might want to resolve to do:

- Read together as a family for a set period of time each evening
- Turn off the screens and interact with a board game, cards, or Legos

- Prepare and eat home-cooked meals...one child and adult make the meal together for the family
- Plan time each week to exercise together, take a walk or jog, go to the park
- No screens at meals...real conversations instead
- Prepare for school the night before, wake up on time, arrive on time
- Share appreciations of each other weekly

Parent Council News

By Kristi Binderup, Parent Representative

Welcome back! I am hoping that everyone had a wonderful and restful winter break. The talent show was so much fun and well attended. I remember watching from the back and seeing all us parents, children, and teachers coming together to cheer one another on and feeling very warm and fuzzy about this amazing community we are a part of. I feel very blessed to be part of such a fun and dedicated community; the more we come together like that and work together the stronger our community is.

Speaking of community, this month we begin our open enrollment. We would encourage all families to talk to your friends, neighbors, and relatives about what a great community and school we are. We also place flyers around the community, so pick one up in the office if you know a good place for one.

This month we also bid a fond farewell to Michelle Maxwell and family as they move on from our community. This means we will be looking for a new parent rep. Please let Celeste know if you are interested in the position. This important and interesting role does not take too much time but is so important to the running of our school. I have found the time commitment as a parent rep to be about 3 to 5 hours per month. Those hours are mostly at the parent meeting or event or in the board meetings, in the late afternoon or evenings. It's great for someone who wants to support the school but isn't able to volunteer during school hours; all parents are welcomed to apply. It is a very fulfilling role to play in our community.

Coming up on January 22nd we will have our parent meeting where we will be

discussing and voting on what we want our food policy to be. The two choices so far are to keep it the same, no refined sugar on the ingredients list, or to modify it to something like sugar listed fifth or lower on the ingredients list. The last meeting we read the food policy and had some good discussion on the pros and cons of the policy, some of the challenges, and some great benefits seen in current and past students. Please join us for an optional pot luck beforehand at 5 or just come to voice your opinion and vote at the meeting itself at 5:30. We also will have an education topic from the teachers and a TOL board report. Hope to see you all there--being engaged in our community in this way is as important as being engaged in the fun stuff, like the talent show! Remember to sign up for the Guide-led conferences later this month. Happy New Year!

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Brief Reminders:

Jan 15-18— GUIDE-LED SEMESTER CONFERENCES: dismissal at 1:30 each day; sign up for your conference on ParentSquare

Jan 18—TOY DAY SPIRIT DAY

Jan 21— MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY; NO SCHOOL

Jan 22—PARENT MEETING—optional potluck and fundraising meeting at 5; meeting at 5:30; childcare provided at 5:30

MONDAYS & FRIDAYS lunch fundraisers \$4

WEDNESDAY—Bank Day for Savings Bank

Peaceful Praying Mantis Class News

By Molly Johnson, Guide

Happy New Year to all Peaceful Praying Mantis Families and Friends!

It takes a village.....

We have been studying how to get along with others, addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, wood-working, space, reading, writing, and maps of Europe, Australia, and the world. We have studied 4 land and water forms. We will continue with these studies and begin to study North America and the U.S.A.

December was short but packed with activities! The painting project, directed by Ms. Ellie, Evelyn's great-grandma, was able to show their finished works at the Winter Party. I hope you got to bring your child to their First Friday (January 4th) art opening at the children's section of our local, Ukiah Library!

Ms. Chelsea decked our doors and our winter party with gorgeous wreaths. Please remember to bring

the rest of your money if you made a partial payment at the winter party, and remember, if you are holding a special event and need beautiful, original floral adornments, contact Chelsea.

Papa Mike, Patrick's grandfather, taught children to use many tools and by now you have hopefully seen the result. We hope you enjoyed it and all of the hard work and hours of fun that went into it!

Monday and Friday Mornings Toña Faer, and Gary have gifted our class with their yoga talent! The sessions have transformed from wiggly to meditative under the gentle guidance of great leaders!

John, John's dad, has been playing soccer with the children and being a great role model! Debra, John's Grandma, and JJ, Emmett's mom, have been listening to our students read, which is helping them progress nicely!

Megan and Constanza have spent a lot of time in the classroom this year, helping students and prepping class and works.

Many thanks to the parents who have stopped by to clean shelves, to all of the parents who have driven on outings, and to all of you who have brought delicious, organic snacks to share!



Please sign up to drive as soon as possible! We have a big field trip planned to the Willits Museum on Friday, January 25th. We will be loading at 9:15, leaving by 9:30 and arriving by 10am. Please send a big lunch that day, leave car seats if you can't drive, and dress your children in layers, as we will spend time in the park (weather permitting) after we visit the museum and the 'Roots of Motive Power' behind the museum.

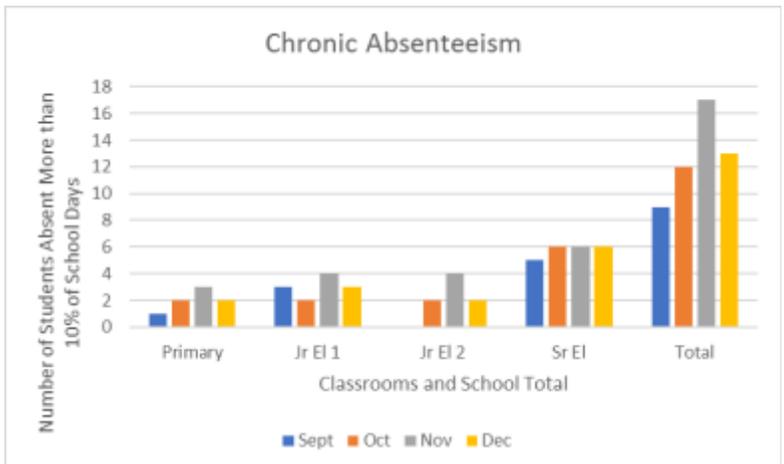
Remember to sign up for conferences on ParentSquare!

Lastly, we look forward to seeing all of you in January. Please check your children's indoor shoes and change of clothes, as they tend to grow rapidly this year. Please bring your children to school by 8:30 as we have our Move this World video and our morning ellipse time first thing in the morning. It is really disruptive when the door opens and bright sun shines in during our video and quiet learning time. Please make sure to read with your children nightly and have them read as many words or books as they can every night.

Attendance Stats

Thank you to all the families who turned in independent study packets before the winter break. As you can see from the graph, that really affects our chronic absenteeism numbers. Being absent without doing independent study for just 2 days a month leads to chronic absenteeism, which research has shown has a negative effect on student learning. Please help your student and our school by arriving to school on time, having your student attend school daily unless very

ill, and doing independent study packets on absent days whenever possible. Daily attendance is the very best way to support your child's learning. Avoid taking vacations when school is in session.



Jr. El. 1 Golden Gecko News

By Anthony Esserman Melville, Guide

Happy New Year Golden Geckos!

Welcome back everyone. I hope your time with family was well spent and many wonderful memories were made. In the classroom during December we focused on the science of crystal formation in minerals and water. We looked at salt crystals



under a microscope, created borax crystal decorations, cut out snowflake designs and watched a documentary on how snowflakes form in clouds. We also completed 2 more of the Great Lessons: the 3rd (Story of Humans) and 5th (Story of Numbers). The 4th (Story of Writing) I will be presenting the first week we return to class. We also completed our December MAP assessments on the computers and got some headway on our portfolios for conferences. Most importantly, we rehearsed and performed our song "A Million Dreams" at our winter talent show. Thank you to all who made it out to the annual performance. I was very proud of all the students who worked so well together as a team to make it a success.

In December we also said farewell to our dear friend and classmate Sahara. We will miss Sahara and her family, but we wish them well and let them know that they were welcome back anytime.

This month we will be starting sci-

ence fair projects. There will be an outline that I will be sending home and discussing at the conference during the second week of school. Remember to sign up for your conference if you haven't yet on Parent Square. If none of those times work for you please contact me and I will see what I can do. It is VERY important that the student and both parent/guardians (if possible) attend the conference. We will be celebrating milestones, setting goals for the next quarter and making sure we remind all stakeholders what we are agreeing to do to help the student thrive. Time will be set aside if needed to discuss issues with out the student present if requested.

If you have not added the remaining fieldtrips to your calendar, please do so. Posts on ParentSquare for drivers will be forth coming:

Wednesday, January 16th, Winter Trip to Low Gap Park.

We need drivers to drop us off at 8:30 AM and pick up at 12:30 PM. Any adults are welcome to tag along and chaperone. This is an all-weather trip so be sure to dress warmly, bring a rain jacket, rain boots, and prepare to get wet and muddy. It's time for a "get outdoors and explore!" experience. We will be looking for signs of life in winter and how it differs from the fall.

Friday, February 1st, to the Lawrence Hall of Science in Berkeley (adult cost \$12).

school improve attendance. If your child is consistently arriving late or is chronically absent, you may be getting a call from Megan to remind you about the State's school attendance laws, to inform you about our school's independent study option and reminders about returning that work in a timely manner, or to see if there is some way our school community can facilitate your child's regular attendance.

We will be leaving TOL at 7:30 AM and returning around 5:00 PM. **Drivers needed.**

Tuesday, March 5th to the Sonoma County Fish Hatchery at Lake Sonoma.

We will be leaving TOL around 9 AM and arrive at 10 AM for the tour, returning after lunch by 2 PM. No cost, but we will need drivers.

Wednesday, March 27, Spring Trip to Low Gap Park.

We need drivers to drop us off at 8:30 AM and pick up at 12:30 PM. Any adults are welcome to tag along and chaperone. This is an all-weather trip so be sure to dress in layers. A rain jacket and rain boots might be needed as it is spring, and one never knows. It's time for an outdoor explore experience to look for flowers and insects!

Tuesday, April 9th to see "Street Beats" at the Luther Burbank Center for the Arts.

We will be leaving TOL around 8:10 AM and arrive by 9:30 AM for the show which is performed on repurposed materials. We will return by 12 noon. Drivers/chaperones needed.

Thursday, May 16th-17th is confirmed as our overnight fieldtrip to Mendocino Woodlands.

We will leave here early in the morning on the 16th and arrive in the late afternoon on the 17th. More information will be coming soon - we will need drivers and chaperones.

P.S. We have a few new changes in the classroom; some are living and some nonhuman. Students, see if you can spot them all on your first day back!

New Staff

Welcome to our new office assistant, Megan Johnson. Megan will be working in the office in the mornings on Monday through Wednesday, as well as all day on Friday. Beginning in February, Danza will not be working in the office on Friday. Megan will be doing a variety of tasks, but most of her time will be focused on activities to help our

Hot Lunch Fundraisers

Support Jr. Elementary Class Fieldtrip Expenses



Burrito

Mondays & Pasta Fridays



\$4

Jr. El. 2 Mighty Meerkats News

by Stacy Strauss, Guide

I hope everyone has been enjoying family time during the holidays. Personally, I love having time to bake, craft, and, just hang out with my family. Time goes by way too quickly sometimes. I can't believe it is 2019! On the last day of school before Winter Break, we closed down 2018 by having a lesson on the Winter Solstice, cleaning the classroom, and watching a movie in the afternoon as our school December Spirit Day. The class was especially attentive during the Solstice lesson and had many questions. Our January Spirit Day is on the 18th. It will be Toy Day, which is a favorite of all the stu-



dents because they get to bring a toy to school (something that is normally against the rules!). They will get to share the toy during class, then play with it during recess. If the toy is an electronic device, such as a video game, they will only get to share it during class. They will not be allowed to play with it during recess, so I encourage you to help them choose something besides a device with a screen. Be sure to put this day on your calendar!

Our next two field trips are only a week apart. Our January field trip is on the 25th to Low Gap Park from 8:30-1:00. One week later, we will be going to the Lawrence Hall of Science in Berkeley. This will be a long field trip from 7:30-5:00pm (approximately). I have 5 free tickets for 5 parents

who can drive other students. Others will need to pay \$14. Students have been paid for with funds from our burrito fundraiser. I will be sending out field trip driver signups for both field trips through ParentSquare soon.



Speaking of our burrito fundraiser, we need some help! Debbie Hupp has been making burritos every Monday with the children. Her efforts have made it possible for us to pay for 3 of our field trips coming up. Thank you, Debbie! If you are available to shop for ingredients (you can get reimbursed by Danza in the office) or help cook on Monday mornings, please let me know!

Well that's it for this month. I am keeping it short, so I can begin writing progress reports! A ParentSquare conference sign up went out on January 2nd. Please sign up right away to have more choices! See you soon!

R-E-S-P-E-C-T

By Dr. Charles Fay

I was tempted to title this article, "Gaining the Respect you Deserve." My reluctance involves the common psychological result of believing that we're owed something. When I believe that my kids *must* respect me because I inherently *deserve* it as their elder and their provider, I set the stage for resentment and damaged relationships.

Something better... purer... more noble... happens when we view respect as something we want for both parties. This implies that this important commodity is something that's learned and earned through experience.

Respect is Learned and Earned- Sooner or later most kids develop sewage detectors. This sophisticated network of neurons allows them to sniff out the slightest hint of hypocrisy. When we believe we deserve, and therefore must demand respect, we are likely to behave in ways that trigger this alarm. Demanding respect due to our per-

ceived entitlement to it usually leads us toward failing to walk the talk.

Let's consider how a Love and Logic parent or educator might discuss the concept of respect:

- "I believe the best way to gain respect is to show people what it looks like.
- Because of this, I promise to do my best to treat you like I hope to be treated.
- I'm not perfect. There will be times when I mess up.
- If you ever feel I've been disrespectful, please let me know by whispering, 'I'm not sure that's respectful.' When both of us are calm, I'll listen to your opinion.
- Respect doesn't mean I will always do what makes you happy in the short term. Instead, it means I will do what will help you enjoy a responsible life.
- Respect means seeking the good of others...even when doing so isn't popular."

Kids tend to demonstrate the greatest respect for adults who are both loving and powerful.

Conferences

January 15-18

This month we hold our first semester conferences with each student, their parents/guardians, and their classroom Guide. At conferences, students will share a portfolio of their work with reflections about their learning. Guides will share a written progress report about the child's academic, social-emotional, and practical life activities and progress for the semester. Parents/Guardians should prepare to share what they are noticing about their child's learning. This team to support the child will also discuss the child's needs and ways to meet them, as well as set learning goals for the coming semester. This year the school has been using some new universal assessment tools to help staff understand each student's strengths and challenges in order to meet their unique learning needs and levels.

Parents/Guardians are an important part of this learning team. Please be sure to sign up for a conference appointment on ParentSquare. Also, remember that school is dismissed at 1:30 to facilitate conferences on January 15th—18th.

Sr. El. Random Mushrooms News

by Angela Reglin, Guide

Welcome 2019! It's a time where even our youngest students think about goals. As a learning community, my goal for us is that our students would become more confident and self-sufficient in problem solving. This includes basic functions like being able to put materials in their proper place so that others can find them.

Our guide-led conference time is a wonderful place to discuss personal and academic goals as a team. It gives the parent, child, and guide a chance to reconnect, and allow for a child's interest to propel their quest for knowledge further. Please sign up for your conference on ParentSquare.

If we have a few sunny days our way, we would like to reschedule the jog-a-thon this month. It is our class' single fundraiser, and perhaps those pledges were already made; if not, this gives all a little more time to gather them.

We have thoroughly investigated

the timeline of life, plate tectonics, and the patterns it creates in our Earth. Now we will be diving into chemistry, volcanoes, rocks and minerals, as well as the coming of humans. While our middles and elders have already begun much study about ancient peoples and civilizations, our 3rd Great Lesson is a chance for all of our students to come together and enjoy wonders left by ancient peoples.



Perhaps the most important event upcoming is that of the science fair. Students are expected to work on their project in class, though they may

require help and support outside of class. We do our best to provide materials for each child to conduct an experiment, but they may need

materials from outside of our facility. In order for us to provide those, students need to select their question early on. Each student is expected to utilize the scientific process in their investigation. Their experiment should relate to their own curiosity about a phenomenon they are personally curious about. Each child received a packet before break in their purple folder. They were asked to be thinking of some questions they would be interested in investigating over break, so that upon returning, they could be excited about diving into their research.



Student Council News

By Eliza and Gideon

The Talent Show in December was fun and entertaining. Thank you to everybody who took the time to get ready for the talent show and to the people who performed their talent.

PJ Movie Art Day was a lay-down pajama art-awesome day. Instead of sitting in a classroom doing work, you sat in a classroom watching a movie and doing art.

Next Spirit Day will be Toy Day. This year you may bring a maximum of 3 toys, as long as they all fit in your backpack. If you have a large toy, you may only be able to bring one if that's all that will fit in your backpack. It will be on Friday, January 18.

This month we'll also have Student Council and Board Representative elections.

Roots & Shoots April 6th

Our annual Roots & Shoots dinner and auction fundraiser takes place at Barra of Mendocino on Saturday, April 6th. This will be a really fun event with a speak-easy theme and dance lessons! The fundraising committee has been busy working on getting a caterer and donations.

We need YOUR help to make this event a financial success. You have all received raffle tickets, so please sell them early and often.

If you or your business would like to become an event sponsor to underwrite the event costs, you can donate in one of four sponsorship levels that will give you recognition in our event program, advertising in our program, advertising in our event poster, and/or a reserved dining table with 2 event tickets. All donations are tax deductible. Spon-

sorship forms are available in the office.

We also need your help in getting donations of items that can be auctioned during our live or silent auctions. Donor letters and intake forms are available on the table in the office, as well as a sign-up sheet so we can keep track of donations and not double up.

A fundraising check-in meeting will be held during the Parent Meeting optional potluck at 5 PM on January 22nd. At that time the group will discuss tasks moving forward, including setting up a volunteer site work day so that we can earn the Disneyland tickets for the raffle. (Disney has a new policy that organizations must earn tickets by having their group do a volunteer project. A two-hour project with at least 15 volunteers will earn us 5 park passes!) As we get closer to the event, we will be asking for event day volunteers too.

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Education for Life!

Regular School Hours:
M, T, Th, F—8:30 AM-3:15 PM
W—8:30 AM-1:30 PM
Before School Care 7:30-8:30 AM
After School Care until 5:30 PM
Student-Led Conference 2:30 PM Dismissal
Guide-Led Conference 1:30 PM Dismissal

From our charter:

“Like parents everywhere, we care about our children, want what’s best for them, and know that their experience in school can have a great impact on the quality of their life. We want them to have an education that is worthy of their beauty and potential. We want them in a place where they are known, not as faces in a crowd, but individually and personally. We want them in a school where they receive direct, high-quality attention, where their actual needs are met, where their potential is being realized.”

Office News

by **Danza Davis, Business Manager**

We are happy to announce we have hired Megan Johnson to assist in the office. Megan will primarily be working on registration and attendance reporting and improvement. She will be calling families to check in on absences and independent study.

Guide-Led conferences are coming up quickly! Sign up on ParentSquare. We have early release days at 1:30 on January 15th through 18th to accommodate conferences. Please note school will be closed on January 21st to observe Martin Luther King Jr Day.

Child Care invoices were sent out the week before break; please remit payments as soon as possible. Invoices not picked up will be sent out via ParentSquare private messages. I am available in the office if you have questions on your invoice or the fee schedule.

Thank you all for your work getting independent study packets in before the break! We had quite a pile turned in. Please see me in the office if you have questions on any outstanding packets. Please continue to request and turn in packets for days your student is out. As always it is appreciated when we have advance notice to prep packets for planned family trips.

Keep an eye out in the coming weeks for information on our annual Roots & Shoots fundraiser, April 6th at BARRA of Mendocino. Our staff and parents do an amazing job to bring you this exciting event, with live music, auctions, food and drink. We are seeking donations and sponsors to help make this event a success.

Community Page

We’d like to start a new Community page in our newsletter, but it depends on information from YOU! Would you like a place to post services you need or could offer (i.e. babysitting, yardwork, handyman, etc.), items you have for sale or you’re looking for, carpool offers or requests, a place to rent, information about your business, ideas that help you manage your busy family? This will be our Tree of support for each other...our community network.

Simply send your information by ParentSquare message, or bring in a written copy to the office, no later than the 25th of each month. This is our second offer of this service!

“Children become like the things they love.”

—Dr. Maria Montessori

Healthy Start

How about giving your body a healthy start for the new year? What are the best foods that will bolster your body’s health and keep immunity from disease high? Even though people often think it’s important to get enough protein, studies show that most people living in this country actually eat too much protein for their body size. What has been found to be more important are the following types of foods that contain cancer-fighting micronutrients and powerful antioxidants that help us to stay healthy:

Greens: lettuce, kale, spinach, watercress, chard, collard greens, arugula, etc.

Beans: any variety of beans works including garbanzo, kidney, black, pinto, cannellini beans etc.

Onions: shallots, red, white, sweet, yellow, scallions, garlic, etc.

Mushrooms: white button, crimini, portabello, shiitake, oyster etc.

Berries: blueberries, strawberries, pomegranates, raspberries, blackberries, cranberries, acai, etc.

Seeds: sunflower, pumpkin, flax, chia, sesame, hemp, etc.

Try making a “bowl” with greens for the base, topped with beans mushrooms, and onions cooked together, sprinkled with some healthy berries and seeds!