

# **PLATO ACADEMY**

## **PRE-KINDERGARTEN NEWSLETTER**

### **SEPTEMBER 28, 2017**

Hello and welcome Autumn! We are happy to have some cooler weather. Happy September birthdays for Allison 3, and Lucien, Mila M. and Penelope who turned 4!

Our classroom was bustling with activity! The water table became a rice table which changed a few of our regular motions around it. The rice had a different feel and sound when we scooped it and poured it. Some students found that it got stuck in the same funnels that water easily flowed through. It also didn't go through the sieves. But we could pile the rice up and scoop out roads for the cars and other vehicles to drive through. Clean up was a little different, too. Instead of wiping up spills with towels, there were small brooms and dust pans to gather the rice from the floor. There was a lot of eye, hand, and hand coordination required. We all helped each other!

We have a new fish aquarium! I applied for and received the Pets in the Classroom grant which provides us with a new tank kit and coupons for the fish and other products needed. We have followed the set up instructions and are waiting to get the fish. From where are we getting the fish? The fish store of course! ☺ **So... on Wednesday, October 11<sup>th</sup>, we are going to walk to Pet Supplies Plus, south on Lee St., to buy our fish! We need a few extra adults to walk with us. It's about a half mile walk one way. We will leave school after lunch between 12:15 and 12:30. Please let us know if you'd like to join us. If you have any questions, please contact us.**

Explorations happen all day, every day! Sometimes we plan them but often they just happen. This week, students could be seen walking around the room with a bucket on the head (safely). What was happening? The student was also vocalizing and making sounds which echoed off of the bucket and the student was experimenting with sound, echo, and vibrations. Other students used mirrors to look at people and objects from different angles. Sometimes a student had two mirrors and was experimenting with various reflections. On Friday, we began our day with ceiling lights off and flashlights in hand after a few students brought out flashlights and began experimenting with light and the magnetiles. As students came in, we welcomed them to grab a flashlight. We said the Pledge of Allegiance while holding flashlights and then we did our morning songs with them. It was fun spinning and seeing where our light beams shined and how they moved.

Another unexpected exploration was the resurfacing of Lee St. in front of Plato. During our walk to the park on Monday, we had watched as the equipment scraped up the old asphalt and the roadway was cleaned and swept. On Wednesday, we heard rumblings so we headed outside to see the dump truck dump asphalt into the spreader that laid it down. Then the steam rollers rolled over the newly laid road and flattened and smooshed the asphalt. That is what was making the rumbling sounds that we could hear from inside! I picked up a small piece of asphalt to show the class. It is made from pieces of rock and tar. That is what smelled so bad when we walked outside.

Back in the classroom, we have begun learning about the moon and rocket ships. We sing a song by Laurie Berkner called, Rocketship Run. It talks about the sun, moon, stars, and Earth. It incorporates different types of movement along with song. Some students have been making rockets and space ships

out of the blocks and magnetiles. We acquired a large box and began painting it to make our own rocket ship. We have been looking at photos of different kinds and how they fly. One interesting one is the space shuttle. I found a video of a launch and landing. It is very interesting how it goes up with the help of rockets and lands like an airplane. We will continue to research rockets from the past. I look forward to seeing a room full of astronauts!

Let's talk about independence and self-help skills! Do you know that your child helps clean up? mops up spills? sweeps trash into a dustpan? uses the bathroom by his/herself? puts on her/his own jacket/sweater/hoodie? YES!!! Do they do it quickly? Usually not, or at least in the beginning. ☺ We have started from Day 1 at school. It takes time and we know that sometimes it's easier on us adults to just do it for them especially when we are in a time crunch. So we, adults, do our best to adjust our time to help them be successful. Again, it's more difficult for us. We live our lives by the clock. Children don't. And I'm sure you have encountered the meltdown and frozen stare when we try to place our big people time schedule onto little people. So how do we transfer this independence from school to home? It starts in the parking lot in the mornings. Have your child wear their backpack while walking into school. Expect them to put their lunch bag into the lunch basket and backpack, etc. into their cubbies. They're not ready or want to wear their backpack or jacket a little longer. OK. They will eventually put it away. And if their items don't make it all the way into the cubby, a quick reminder and follow up will help them. And if you apply these same guidelines at home, you will see a dramatic difference. Try it! It can't hurt!

Thank you to all families who made donations for the Hurricane Irma Relief fundraiser! I believe Ms. Dionysia's class raised a nice amount.

Reminders:

\*\*Please send healthy PEANUT AND TREE NUT FREE foods for lunches and snacks. **Please... no chips, cookies and candy.** They do not provide the nutrition and energy needed for the day. Examples of some healthy snacks are: fruit (cut up in bite-sized pieces), veggies, pretzels, graham crackers, yogurt/gogurt/danimals, oatmeal or granola snack bites/bars as long as they do not (may) contain peanuts or tree nuts. Tree nuts are, but not limited to: cashews, pecans, pistachios, hazelnuts, walnuts, almonds. Those are the most used in snacks and other food products. Please help us protect all students! We share the lunchroom and other common areas with the other classes and there are students with severe allergies in the school. Please know that the staff follows the same protocol.

\*If your child will be in Aftercare for an hour or more, please provide extra snack so that they aren't getting too hungry.

Please, please, please... Make sure that your child has eaten breakfast before coming to school. It is important that they are energized for the morning. They exercise their bodies and brains before lunch at 11:20. That is a long time to go without nurturing our bodies. We do not have the accommodations for students to eat or finish breakfast in the classroom.

We are starting a WISHLIST. The below items are wanted for future various activities in the classroom. This list is for items that you may have around the house and don't use anymore. It is not intended for a family to go out and buy them new:

Used sippy cups

Newspaper

Old towels, any size

Please contact us with any questions or concerns. Texting is best since we can usually reply quicker.

Thank you for allowing us to be a part of your child's life!

Ciao!

Noel and Soraya

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