



UNITY SCHOOL



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PROGRAM DIRECTORS

Happy New Year!

We hope that everyone enjoyed the holidays and spent some quality time with family and friends.

Thank you for all of the wonderful 'Wish Tree' gifts - we really appreciate them! All of the classes are having a blast with the new items!

What a wonderful turn out we had for the winter celebration! Thanks to all the families who came and spent the evening with us. We do apologize for the date change; sometimes "Mother Nature" has a mind of her own! We felt the change was needed for the safety of families and staff. What an amazing job the children did on their performances and the yummy treats they made for the event were scrumptious!

We want to take a moment and acknowledge the *fabulous* staff we have at Unity School! Your children are taught by tremendous team members who are caring, creative, encouraging, supportive and committed to your children and Unity School. The staff has done a remarkable job learning and implementing more High/Scope aspects, utilizing our garden space, volunteering for Pet Care on the weekends, and doing both field trips and community service projects with their classes! We are really proud that we have such an awesome team to guide your children and make their learning experiences the best they can be! Take a moment and thank staff member, letting them know how they've done a super job for you lately!

We have a couple reminders we would like to bring to your attention. Remember, the pull-through driveway is a 5-minute drop off/pick up spot only. If it takes a little longer than 5-minutes for you and your child, please pull into a parking spot so we can keep traffic flowing. The other reminder is to provide lots of extra clothes for your child. During the fall and winter months, the weather is very unpredictable. It's helpful to have a good supply of warm items such as hats and gloves in your child's cubby. Unity encourages non-violent attire, so please avoid weapons or superhero clothing. We also would like to

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encourage child-friendly clothes and avoid clothing that uses adult logos or wording. Thanks for your help in this matter.

Here's to a wonderful year ahead,
Susanne & Chris

OFFICE MANAGER

Happy New Year Everyone,

I just want to let everyone know about some of the new changes for the upcoming year.

Unity School now has a functionally active Facebook page. It is under Garden Way. Please check it out! Also, if you have any photos you would like to share with us, tag them and send them to us.

Secondly, as of January, Steve will be having a food Friday on the last Friday of every month. This is a good way for you to try some extraordinary treats that Steve makes, and helps Unity School earn extra money.

Lastly, I have been working really hard with our web page designer to keep our page updated on a regular basis. We have added a spot where all of the Newsletters for this year are available. We have also moved the Breaking News section to the home page for easy viewing of upcoming events and changes, so please check it out once in a while.

I hope you all have a wonderful New Year,
Virginia

PANDA

Hi Panda Families,

What an interesting month it has been! We hope you enjoyed the snow, and appreciate your flexibility and understanding on our no-school days and late starts. The kids sure enjoyed getting to play in the snow when we got back to school.

Typically, we discuss a topic for two weeks then move to discuss something new. This month however we have just stuck to one topic - shapes and colors. The kids have really begun to gain an understanding of shapes and colors. We start each day by giving the children a colored shape to identify and then talk about it.

We've done a lot of matching activities with a variety of toys, including blocks, magnets, and colored animals.



One activity we worked on was color mixing. We read a book called "Mouse Paint" and practiced mixing paints to discover what new colors we could make. It was a lot of fun to see the looks of excitement on the children's face as they made purple, green, and orange.

We also enjoyed making some special holiday art for our classroom, as well as making gifts to send home to you.

Thank you all for joining us at our holiday party. It was a huge success! We hope you enjoyed yourselves, we sure did. We also hope you all had happy holidays and safe travels this season.

Welcome 2014,
Cherri, Celia, & Libby

CATERPILLAR

Happy New Year Caterpillar families,

Wow! Just as I was getting the hang of writing 2013, another year has once again quickly flown by! I wonder how long it will take me this year to get into the habit of writing 2014?

While the hustle and bustle of the recent holidays wind down and the business of the New Year begins, take a brief moment to look back and reminisce about how much your Caterpillar has grown both physically as well as academically. In just a few short months it's been astonishing how quickly our students have picked up new and different school routines. It's amazing how you can see the pure excitement in their eyes when new learning concepts are introduced and how interested they become.

December was full of awe and wonder at home as well as at Unity. Between the unexpected snow and the holidays we had plenty to talk and learn about. The snow days provided us with opportunities to explore the different kinds of weather we experience during the different seasons. For winter we made coffee filter snowflakes, Spring was all about using stickers to create

a blooming flower scene, Summer was water-color fun in the sun paintings, and fall was pressing beautiful fall leaves to create wonderful paintings, ending our journey through the seasons. We ended December holiday web with a lot of anticipation for the upcoming holidays. The students showed a great deal of interest and shared many idea's to use as our new area of focus on the web, making the web turned out to be quite extensive, as each student discussed family traditions they did every year. We had many fun hands-on activities that incorporated each holiday tradition and theme. We added to our



classrooms family traditions by reading and creating crafts that were not solely based on Christmas but Kwanza and Hanukah as well. This helped all of us gain a deeper and better understanding of how traditions are different for everyone. So, as I said before, between the snow and the holidays December was an extremely busy month for all of us.

Teacher Tara and I are looking forward to sharing the New Year with all of you. We can't wait to watch your Caterpillars bloom, grow and learn new and exciting concepts that they are interested in.

Just a quick reminder, January is still very chilly, so please remember to send warm coats, boots, hats, gloves and a spare change of warm clothing for your child. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact us at anytime.

Happy 2014 from Teachers,
Tara & Joanna

LADYBUG

Hi Ladybug families,

The Ladybugs want to wish everyone a Happy New Year.

We are all looking forward to learning new things, doing fun new projects and going to some new places on field trips this year.

January will bring some new letters, shapes, and concepts. We plan to explore ideas about moons, stars, and outer space.

Then, just as a reminder, we want you to keep bringing hats and gloves with warm coats for cold weather, if you have any questions or concerns please remember to check in with Michelle or Dorothy.

Happy New Year from the Ladybug teachers,
Michelle, Dorothy, Terri & Mandolin

BUTTERFLY

Happy New Year!!!

Time sure flies when you're having fun! It seems just like yesterday that we all started together in Butterfly-land! We hope that you and your family had a wonderful and safe holiday season, full of love, laughter and warm memories!



Thank you so much for joining us at our Annual Winter Festival! The children were so excited to have you come and hear them sing. They practiced a LOT, and it certainly showed...they did an amazing job!

With the new year upon us, we will be continuing to prepare for kindergarten, taking several more exciting and educational field trips, doing more community service projects and just having fun! Please keep your eyes and ears open for any upcoming adventures we will be taking!



Gentle Reminders

1. Please make sure your children have a FULL set of weather appropriate clothing in their cubbies at all times. We play in the rain, and we want the children to stay warm and dry.
2. With the winter finally being here in full force, we ask that every child have a "heavy" coat, gloves/mittens and a warm hat to wear, even if the sun is shining. If you have taken rain boots and coats home, please bring them back, so your children will be comfy while playing outside. Thanks!
3. We have noticed that the children's art files have been staying pretty full these days, so please be sure to check them on a regular basis. Your children take great pride in the work they do at school, and would love to share it with you!
4. With Parent/Teacher conferences coming up in the spring, we will be doing more small group activities that will be geared to help us work on each individual child's needs. Many of these projects will not be sent home, but saved to give you in the spring at conference time.

What a wonderful time we have been having, learning about your families, through our "Family Tree"! We hope that you have been able to come and check it out as well! If not, please take a few minutes to get to know your children's classmates and their families better!

Well, that's it for this month. As always, it is such a pleasure having your children spend their days with us! If you ever have any questions, concerns or praises, please feel free to speak with any of the Butterfly teachers!

Hugs and Smiles,
Pammie, Dorothy, Cassie and Chandra



OTTER & OTTER PUPS

Dear Otter-pup families,

Welcome to the New Year! Can you believe it is already 2014?? It seems that just last year we were worried about the year changing to 2000.

December was full of excitement!! The Otter-pups focused on learning about Their winter, performances, and Winter Celebrations.

The extreme winter weather we had at the beginning of December sure did aid in learning/teaching about winter weather! The children learned about what animals do in winter weather, what kind of clothes we need to wear for cold weather, and the changes that happen when things freeze. The garden had a different smell when the snow melted and the kale started thawing (and rotting)!! A pipe had cracked in our classroom and when it thawed, we got to see the results of water leaking into our classroom!! There were many other changes that happened in the environment around us with that crazy weather but those were among the most exciting.

Thanks to all of you who were able to make it to our winter party. The children worked hard learning about performances and practicing their performance of 'Frosty the Snowman.' They also had fun making caramel popcorn as one of the treats for the party.

We focused on learning about some of the different celebrations that happen in winter. Mostly: Christmas, Chanukah, Kwanzaa, New Years Day, and the Chinese New Year. Whether families celebrate all of the different holidays or not, it is good for children to gain knowledge about what is going on around them in the world and to know that there are many different beliefs and traditions that people value and that we don't all value the same thing but they are all very important. We also discussed the season of giving and collected socks for donation to those who need warm, dry, and clean feet. Thanks to all of the families who were able to donate!! We brought them to Looking Glass on a field trip, which is a facility that helps people of all ages who are in need. We also learned about 'giving' our time to some residents at a nursing home by spending time with them on a field trip.

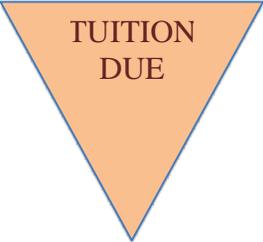
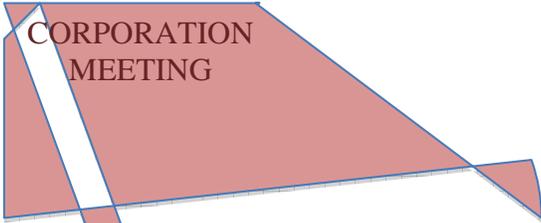


We also went on two other field trips during winter break: we went to Tamarack for some warm swimming fun and we went on a winter nature walk near Alton Baker Park.

Thanks for sending your child to school with warm clothes! Enjoy the New Year and please let us know if you have questions or comments.

Sincerely, Teachers Jessica, Whitney, and Sarah

JANUARY 2014

| MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY |
|--|---------|---|----------|--|
| | | 1  | 2 | 3 |
| 6  | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 13 | 14 | 15 BF visitor from Zany Zoo  | 16 | 17 |
| 20 Otters field trip to Volunteer at Green Valley Rehabilitation Center | 21 | 22  | 23 | 24 100th day of School  |

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|----|----|----|----|----|
| 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |
|----|----|----|----|----|