

Southminster

Early Learning Academy News



April Showers Bring May Flowers



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From Michele

Every year when, I write the April/May newsletter, I'm always amazed that it's almost April already. The year just always flies by so fast. This year has been especially fast. I'm writing this article on the first day of spring, but it is snowing outside right now. We're supposed to get 2-4 inches. But it's the first day of spring!!

So for me it's especially hard to write this newsletter article. Yes, the year has gone by much too fast, there are only two months left but it just doesn't feel possible. The last day of school this year just may be the hardest one yet. I'm just not ready for it. Maybe it's the weather, maybe it's your wonderful children. I think it's actually both.

Maybe you're wondering what are favorite things are about the school year. I'm sure we would all have different answers, but the one constant would be your children. To get to spend every day with them is truly a gift. To see life through the eyes of a child, to see learning through the eyes of a child is just amazing. Their excitement, their curiosity, their personalities are all just wonderful things to see every day.

Also, while looking back on this year, I've had the opportunity to reflect on these past 12 years. I don't know where that time has gone either. I guess when you're doing what you love the years just fly by.

I was very excited to come to Southminster. It was such a wonderful opportunity for me. I was very familiar with Southminster Nursery School's reputation in the world of early childhood education. So I was both excited and thrilled to become a part of all this. Being a part of this school meant I was part of a school that was actually the first Nursery School in the area. We are now over 60 years old. In those 60 years many changes were made, always to better the school.

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APAT NEWS

Happy Spring families!

It's hard to believe that the end of the school year is just around the corner! For some of your children, like our boys, they will be off to Kindergarten in the fall. For the younger children, they will be moving onto the next level of preschool. It's always bittersweet as a parent to think about them growing up, stepping out of their comfort zone and taking on exciting new adventures. We wish all of the children (and you) the warmest of wishes as these new beginnings get underway!

Thank you so much to all of our families who participated in this year's fundraisers! Your support of these efforts goes a long way!

Our next event will be the Ice Cream Social and Dance Party! Plan to join us on Friday, April 13 from 6:30-8:00 for dancing with DJ Bob and ice cream from Scoops on Beverly. Also, be sure to mark your calendars for our end of year picnic on Thursday, May 10. We hope that your family can join us for this fun filled day at the park! Details about both events will be sent out as we get a little closer to the day.

Enjoy the rest of Spring and have a safe and enjoyable Summer!

Stacie Carlson & Katy Thomas \
APAT Co-Chairs

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When I came here my goal was to continue to move the school forward. With the support of a wonderful staff and a very supportive board of directors, we were able to implement a lot of good changes. Change in education is very important. We are constantly growing and changing here at Southminster Nursery School. So much so that we have decided we have outgrown our name. We feel that Southminster Nursery School no longer reflects, or describes the kind of school we are. We are constantly changing, growing and thriving. So we have decided to change our name to one that we all feel best describes who we are. So, in the spirit of growth and change we have decided to change our name. Southminster Nursery School will now become: "Southminster Early Learning Academy."

Although the name is changing, nothing else will change. We will still be the same school you have all come to know. Just one with a more modern name.

We will officially kick off our new name at our Ice Cream Social/Dance Party on Friday, April 13. More details will come home after the break. I hope all of you will come and celebrate this exciting time with us at the social/dance party.

So please, celebrate with us our growth and our name change. We look forward to seeing you all at our very special Ice Cream Social/Dance Party this year. Help us make it a very special night for our children and for our school.

Thank you once again for sharing your children with us. It is truly a pleasure to spend each and every day with your children and with your family.

Have a wonderful summer!!!

-- *Michele*

IMPORTANT CALENDAR CHANGE

April 25

Please put this change on your calendars. Pastor Dan Merry has arranged, with the help of the Mt. Lebanon Police department, to hold a mandatory, "Major Incident Training", here at the church for all staff. Our training will take place early in the morning. To accommodate this training time, we are having a 10:00 AM start on Wednesday, April 25. 2 day 2's children will stay until 11:30. There will not be drop off on this day.

Thank you for your understanding. We appreciate your support as we train to make our school as safe as possible.

APRIL/MAY DATES TO REMEMBER

Monday, April 2 - Last day of spring break

Tuesday, April 3 - School back in session. Welcome Back

April 9 and 10 - Science with Miss Verna-Topic = bugs and recycling

Friday, April 13 – Ice Cream Social and Dance Party

Tuesday, April 24 - Field trip to Spring House Farm= 3 day 4's, 4 day 4's, and Pre-K only

Wednesday, April 25 - Mandatory staff training with the Mt. Lebanon Police

Department=Safety training

Wednesday, April 25 - All school **10:00 AM Start** due to training with the Mt. Lebanon Police
- details in this newsletter.

Monday, April 30 - Open House-details to follow

Two Day Two's

It is hard to believe we are coming to the end of our school year so soon! We can't believe the time has gone by so quickly. The kids each continue to amaze and delight us with how much they have grown and changed. They have each made us proud in some special way -- from using a friend's name, sharing a coveted toy or playing much more interactively, we see how far they have all come this year.

In April and May, we will focus on growth and change through studying butterflies, bugs, and plants. We plan to squeeze as much fun and learning into these last few weeks with things like planting seeds, watering plants and learning about the lifecycle of butterflies. We'll also spend as much time as we can on the playground, and just enjoying our friendships.

Thank you for allowing us to spend our mornings with your precious children. We have had so much fun!

Lori Guenther and Nicole Gilberg



Two Day Three's / Three Day Three's

What wacky weather for the month of March; perfect for the clothing study! During circle time the children took a look at what they wear and why. We explored different types of fabric for our dress up and laundered the items with our washer and dryer combo unit made out of a cardboard box. The children screen printed a t-shirt for the bulletin board and graphed pockets, zippers, and buttons. They added a blue diamond to the caterpillar and are looking forward to April to add the purple oval and watch as a chrysalis appears. We will move onto a study of signs of spring and real caterpillars! Our final month of May will be spent exploring the ocean.

Many thanks to all of the families that are able to attend the Spirit of Music program and the All About Me activities; the love and pride of the children is wonderful!

Kindest Regards,

Mrs. Szigethy, Mrs. Tischuk, and Mrs. Santos



Parent/Tot

In March the tots explored texture. They created a texture collage and mixed salt in with their painting. In April/ May we will hopefully be able to make use of the playground more and take our art activities outside. We will be water painting, easel painting, painting with toys, and chalk drawing.

It has been such a pleasure to spend my Fridays with you and your tot. I hope you found the program beneficial. Have a great summer.

Mrs. Byrne

Three Day Three's

Throughout February we have been taking turns having "Me Box" days. The children have all seemed to enjoy their special day to bring in toys to share, snack, story, and their parent as a guest reader! We will continue with the rest of the class in March.

We have also been studying exercise. Discussing what we know about it, why it is good for our body, what fuels us, and how our muscles and bones work together when we exercise. We tried some new items to get our bodies moving, including hula-hoops, jump ropes, various balls, and even a hockey stick. Throughout the month we built obstacle courses in the ballroom to use our muscles and practice coordination!

In March we will be studying buildings and structures. Focusing on the color blue and the diamond shape. This will be Mrs. Drizos' last month teaching before the baby arrives, so we will also be working to prepare for that transition. Hopefully March also bring more Spring weather and the opportunity to get back outside to the playground!

Mrs. Drizos and Mrs. Hannan



Three Day Four's

March was our Building Study. We devoted our time to discussions about what we know and want to know about buildings, browsing skyscraper books, and going on a building tour outside. The children drew buildings on paper and constructed buildings with blocks, magnetiles, and boxes. At the end of our study the children used recyclable materials to construct their own building, grouping them together to create a city. The children were also very busy in March practicing their straight line letter printing. In April we will begin curved line letter printing.

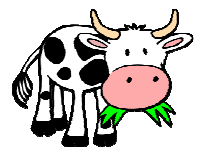
For April our study will be The Pond/Water and also a short mini-study of Farms due to our trip to Springhouse Dairy.

Our Super Special Reader program will continue in April. The children really enjoy when you come in to read and they are always excited to see what the story will be.

May is our last month together and the children will be making use of creation station, planting seeds, and hopefully enjoying the warmer weather.

Thank you for letting us be a part of your child's early learning years. We hope that you and your child have enjoyed this year. We are so proud of their accomplishments and wish them good luck as they continue on.

Mrs. Byrne and Mrs. Frederick



Four Day Four's

We have had a great month in the 4 day 4s! During our study of clothing, we have learned about kinds of clothing and fabrics, uses of clothing, how we take care of it, and how it is made. We even did an experiment to see whether liquid, powder, or bar soap makes the most suds—lots of fun! We have continued working on our alphabet books and look forward to finishing them next month. In April, we will study the life cycle of butterflies and recycling. We will also talk about dairy farms in preparation for our field trip. In May, we look forward to a study of oceans. Thank you so much for sharing your children with us this year. It has been a pleasure to watch them grow, play, and learn. Enjoy your summer!

Mrs. Kontos and Mrs. Moses



Pre-K

Time has flown by this month in the Pre-K class! We have enjoyed our study of clothing—how it is made and taken care of, what types there are, the various fabrics and fasteners, and who wears different kinds of clothing. One highlight was our experiment to see whether liquid, powder, or bar soap cleans best (makes the most suds). We have continued working on our alphabet books and will finish them in April. Our polar bear, Polly, has enjoyed her weekends with Pre-K friends, and we have loved seeing all the descriptions of her adventures in our Polly journal. In April, we look forward to a study of the life cycle of butterflies along with a study of recycling. Additionally we will talk about dairy farms to prepare for our field trip. In May, we will be studying oceans. Thank you for sharing your children with us this year. It has been a privilege to watch them grow, play, and learn. Have a great summer!

Mrs. Kontos and Mrs. Moses



Pre-K

The children have been exploring a variety of fabrics, uniforms, notions, and weaving during the clothing study. They have discussed what, when, and why they wear certain clothes. They created a weaving for the bulletin board when delving into how fabric is made and also designed a little t-shirt using the same method on a smaller scale. They graphed pockets, zippers, and buttons and drew in their journal about clothes they wear for a special occasion. The A-B-C journals are coming along nicely. We look forward to April and visiting a dairy farm and looking for signs of spring. Our final month will be spent studying the deep blue ocean.

Many thanks to all of the families that are able to attend the Spirit of Music program and the all-important Me Day activities; your children seem very proud to have you be part of the school experience!

Kindest Regards,
Mrs. Szigethy and Mrs. Frederick



Kindergarten Enrichment

April will take our class to our final continent – Australia! We will learn about Pangea and how all the continents fit together. This will help to explain why such unusual animals are found in Australia. The kids will learn about marsupials and why they are only found on this continent. We will also study the native Aboriginal people of Australia. The kids will see their “white dot” method of painting and do some of their own. After learning about the Sydney Opera House and what makes it so special, the kids will attempt to build their own one of a kind structure.

In May, we will be looking at different kinds of maps. The kids will learn about topographic maps, weather maps, relief maps, and road maps. We will make maps of neighborhoods, schools, backyards, and houses.

During both April and May we will be watching our ladybugs grow from larva to pupa to adult bugs. The kids will be recording the progress in their science journals.

Mrs. Haberberger &
Mrs. Guenther



Camp Information

- Please join us for camp this year. All children currently enrolled in our 3's, 4's and Pre-K classes are invited to join us.
- Camp dates are: May 29 – June 1 (African Safari) and June 4-7 (Lost in Space). Please note, the first week is Tuesday-Friday and the second week is Mon-Thursday. All classes are from 9:00-11:30.

Eat + Play = Learn

In March we did a storybook study on Kevin Henkes books. We read Penny and Her Marble, Owen, Kitten's First Full Moon, Chrysanthemum, Lily's Purple Plastic Purse. After a short discussion about the story an activity followed. Some activities were marble painting, decorating your name, tracing and drawing a full moon, and creating a cape to wear.

In April/May we will be exploring water; how and why it is important to us.

This year has been so fun. Thank you to all the families that have helped make EPL a great success!

Have a wonderful summer,

Mrs. Byrne
Mrs. Drizos
Mrs. Gilberg



Music

I hope you all enjoyed the Spirit of Music week – I thought the children were absolutely amazing

As we end the year, we will revisit some of our favorite songs and dances and even learn a few new ones.

Thank you for a wonderful year!

Mrs. Kline

