

YELLOW SCHOOL NEWS



Recycled Art - Cat

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE YELLOW SCHOOL AT MEMORIAL DRIVE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
11612 Memorial Drive, Houston, TX 77024; 713/784-0820

May 2017

It has been a privilege to work with your children! It is wonderful and fulfilling to be able to watch them as they broaden their understanding of the world around them. We love hearing their observations and watching them become more and more adept at problem solving. What an exciting time this is for them...so many discoveries to be made each day; so many "ah ha" moments! Thank you for giving us the opportunity to teach them and to learn and grow with them. Thank you, too, for all your help and support throughout the year.

ART SHOW/BOOK FAIR

Thanks to all of you who worked at, attended and supported the annual FAMILY NIGHT, ART SHOW and BOOK FAIR. Once again, the weather cooperated, the art was fantastic and there was a wonderful selection of books to peruse and purchase. Everyone enjoyed the train, the fishing game, the tattoos and the treasure hunt. Lots of delicious hot dogs (and all the trimmings) were consumed. Many thanks to Chef Bernadette, her staff and all the volunteers who helped make the Hot Dog Supper possible.

With the bug bank receipts, a \$100.00 donation from a friend of the school and a generous discount from Southwest Book Company, we were able to purchase **about \$600.00** worth of books for Small Steps! Thanks to all of you who supported that most worthwhile effort.

Thanks to your generosity, Yellow School is the grateful recipient of **58** books and we are looking forward to reading them all! Don't forget that we are a lending library. Sign out a book or two to read at home with your children.

Special thanks to Sayler Robbins, Book Fair chair, and Amanda Ollison, Co-Chair, and all those who helped make the Book Fair such a success! You were (and are) AWESOME!

MORE THANKS!!

Thank you to all our generous parents who have provided monthly lunches for the teachers and staff this year. We have truly enjoyed eating and eating such a delicious assortment of lunches and desserts. We have also loved having periodic surprise goodies that many of you have popped in with. We are so grateful for your thoughtfulness, kindness and generosity.

Thanks, too, to all the parents and older siblings who shared their talents and time to participate in the classroom, on field trips, etc. We appreciate your help and involvement and couldn't do without you!

We also sincerely appreciate our wonderful PAC (Parent Advisory Committee) members who support and affirm us in so many ways. PAC members are: Christine Potosky (chair), Amy Arriaga, Taylor Darsey, Lindsey Gilley, Noteel Koss, Amanda Ollison, Sayler Robbins and Heather Tackett.

PARENT SURVEY REPORT

Thank you to all who took the time to complete and return the Parent Survey. It is very helpful to have your suggestions and very affirming to read your many wonderful comments. All but one of you said you would recommend the school to others. The one who would not, said it was because we needed to improve the curriculum. That response was from the parent of a three-year-old who felt it was important for the children learn to write letters and numbers. The 3-year-old curriculum incorporates lots of numeral and letter recognition, phonemic awareness, counting, lots of opportunities to write and much more, but the majority of 3 year olds are still learning to hold a pencil properly and to make basic shapes which are a necessary precursor to writing letters. We encourage children to write as they are able, but expecting 3s to write the alphabet and numerals 1-9 is not a developmentally appropriate goal.

YOUR COMMENTS:

School days and hours

Of those who commented about the school hours, some wanted all full days and

an equal number loved having the flexibility of choosing long and short days. Two people expressed a desire for an earlier start time, but did not specify how early. We understand that our schedule is difficult for parents who work outside the home, but we try to utilize the 5 classrooms in the school in the most efficient and cost effective way that will provide flexibility for our families and the best learning environment we can provide for the children.

Our days are consecutive, based on research that shows children retain information better with immediate reinforcement.

One mom wanted to be able to choose days as they do at Little School. Little School is designed on a Mother's Day Out model where each day can stand alone. The Yellow School follows a school model in which the curriculum is designed for each class (rather than a single day) which meets on specific consecutive days with the same children each day.

Curriculum

For the most part, you were happy with the curriculum. Many of you said your children are recognizing sight words, sounding out letters and words, and talking excitedly at home about the many things they have learned. One mom said her older children who had attended Yellow School have excelled in reading, writing and math in elementary school. On the other hand, one mom said she had heard that some parents felt their children were not well-prepared. It is true that in past years we did not emphasize sight words and we let writing develop more naturally. Since public kindergartens are asking more of children, in the last two years we have added *Handwriting Without Tears* to our curriculum and are giving the children more

opportunities for writing and working on sight words. As you look at the “What’s Happenings” posted on our website, you can see what we are doing and the goals and objectives we are working towards. Given developmental differences, not all children will attain these goals at the same time, but we are working hard to align our curriculum with that of the public schools in our area.

Communication

Many of you would like weekly communication specifically about your child. We are working on ways to facilitate this. We have been considering some apps that might work for us and hope that we’ll be able to institute some changes for next year. Rest assured, however, if there are concerns about your child, we are in touch with you. We hope that any time any of you have questions or concerns, you will contact us.

New children introduction to school

Most of you really liked the home visits, but a couple of you asked about bringing your child to see the school and meeting the teachers. We have found from past experience that a dedicated day to see the rooms does not work well, but we welcome you to bring your child to school at any time to see the classroom. You can do this any time from now to the end of this school year; on picnic day; on the day of Parent Orientation; or any day this summer. There is usually someone here each day, although you might want to call first, just in case.

Some of the things you particularly like...

Loved the warm, welcoming environment with small classes.

Children learn skills that will help them with their peers later in life.

Ability to give individualized instruction and attention to the children.

Plenty of opportunity for movement during the day.

The nurturing atmosphere and all the opportunities for creativity

Well educated, loving, and experienced teachers

Loved the What’s Happenings each week!

My child LOVES to come to school!

The hands-on experiences and field trips!

Teaching children simple responsibility through classroom jobs.

Fostering independence

Grandpas.

Opportunities for exploration and learning in unstructured environments.

My child has made dramatic improvement in academic skills.

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If I have not addressed your concerns and/or suggestions, or if you would like to speak more about any of these or additional things, please do not hesitate to call me. We are always interested in your comments and suggestions.

END OF YEAR PICNICS

We are looking forward to our end-of-the-year picnics.

- Tuesday, May 16 – picnic for the MT and MTW 3s

- Friday, May 19– picnic for all other classes

ALL children in the afternoon class come to school in the morning on Friday, May 19.

Who comes? – Moms, dads, siblings, grandparents, other relatives and friends.

Where and what time? – Meet us on the Yellow School playground at 11:45 am

What do I bring? – Bring a picnic lunch and drinks for you and your family and something on which to sit. We will provide popsicles for dessert.

At the end of the picnic, please gather near the deck. The children and teachers will gather on the deck and serenade you with many of our favorite Yellow School songs.

KINDERGARTEN PARENTS - you are invited to meet in the **Kindergarten Room** at **11:00 sharp** for a short presentation by the children followed by the picnic on the playground. Watch for more information.

HELP WANTED

We periodically need teachers and substitute teachers. If any of you (particularly those of you with teaching backgrounds) or your friends might be interested, please let us know. That's how we get our best staff members.

SUMMER SCHOOL

We have just a couple of spots available. Sign up online. We are planning some wonderful activities in our June Fine Arts Session!

CHAPEL CHAT

Your children have been such a blessing, and we thank you for sharing them with us this year during Chapel Time! During the month of May we will explore the call to spread the Gospel with others. From the books of Matthew, John, and Acts we will hear stories of how others went before us and how we are to continue.

Your children are always welcome at Ark Adventures, our Preschool Sunday School program at MDPC, at 9:45 and 11:15 as we learn more about the love of God and our Savior, Jesus Christ. We wish you a happy summer!

UPCOMING EVENTS

June 14 – Preschool Playground Playdate on the outside playground from 2:30 – 3:30. Come meet our summer interns while enjoying refreshing snow cones and fellowship!

July 10 - 14 – Registration is open for Summer Celebration 2017 – God Works BEHIND THE SCENES! Preschool age and younger are invited when a parent volunteers the week of Summer Celebration, July 10-14. Contact Becky Funderburk at bfunderburk@mdpc.org for more information.

August 19 – Wacky Wednesday Water Day! Join us on the preschool playground from 10:00am to 12:00 noon for fun, lunch, and a bunch of water! Register online at www.mdpc.org

Have a wonderful summer!!