



PRESCHOOL PRESS

(Orange Early Childhood Newsletter)

Volume 1 Issue 1

Fall 2019

ORANGE PUBLIC
SCHOOLS

From the Desk of the Principal,
Orange Early Childhood Center

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We are proud to be a part of the Orange Early Childhood Center this year as we embark on the power of Interactive Read-Alouds for all of our preschoolers. Reading aloud to children interactively to facilitate discussion of the text is an incredibly effective method for supporting children's literacy learning. Additionally, our "Read it Again" component allows the teachers and the children multiple opportunities to read the same book with different objectives and techniques for each reading session to further engage with the book. We are focusing on three key factors with our read aloud initiative. First, the readings will be interactive where teachers and children are actively involved in thinking and talking about the read aloud text. Second, our read aloud sessions will be purposeful and planned. Teachers will carefully select text and determine how it will be used to support learning. This includes how and when the text will be read, what the teacher will explain or model for the children, and the types of questions, ideas, and words that will be discussed. We are confident that interactive read alouds will provide critical opportunities to support children in building knowledge about the world. The more related knowledge students bring to a text, the better they are at comprehending that text. We are excited and proud about our new initiative as we are striving to help our children master foundational reading skills which will help them learn to read and eventually read to learn. Our children's vocabulary and background knowledge have improved exponentially.

Please follow us on
Twitter @EarlyCenter
Facebook OrangeEarlyChildhood
Website www.orange.k12.nj.us/Domain/528



"Good to Great....."



EVENTS IN PRESCHOOL.....

NURSES' NEWS

By Maria DeFalco and Linda Vicci

In September & October, the preschool nurses presented an educational, interactive, and age appropriate activity to all classes where students learned about why, when, and how to properly wash their hands to prevent the spread of germs.



We practiced the proper steps for handwashing and the proper way to cover a cough and a sneeze to help keep us all stay healthy which will promote perfect attendance.

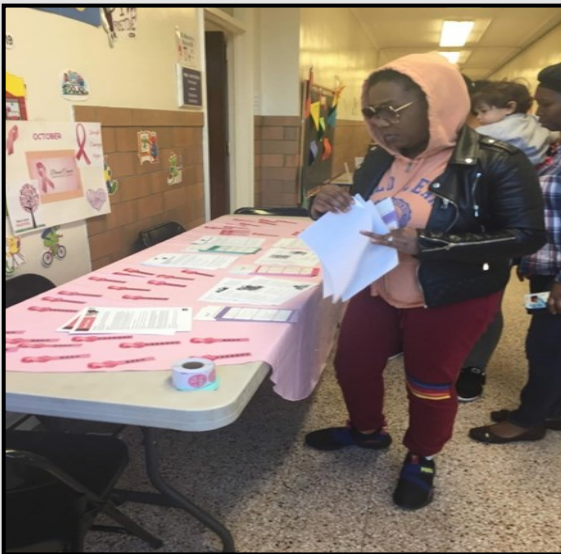


HANDWASHING STEPS



EVENTS IN PRESCHOOL.....

October was Breast Cancer Awareness. We all wore PINK, the lobby was decorated, and we had informational handouts for all families. We also had gifts for our families.



Educational information was provided for staff and families on breast cancer awareness and prevention.



Nurses arranged a visit from the Orange Fire Department to introduce the students to the importance of fire safety. Sparky was a big hit! The children all learned to Stop, Drop & Roll! The nurses work with the fire department to improve community safety. Names of interested families were forwarded to the fire department contact person for FREE smoke detectors.



EVENTS IN PRESCHOOL.....

DID YOUR CHILD GET HIS/HER FLU SHOT YET?

State law says all children up to age 5 are required to get a flu shot in order to be in school. Don't delay! Make that appointment now before it is too late. Flu season is here! Children can get the nasal spray vaccine or the injection this year. Flu symptoms include: high fever, body aches, sore throat, chills. The flu virus is very contagious and spreads easily by coughing, sneezing, or touching dirty surfaces then touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Help prevent the spread of the flu. Get your flu shot too!



COMMUNITY/PARENT INVOLVEMENT SPECIALIST

By Iris Ramos

The school year began with a bang as all of our preschool locations are almost full to capacity. However, we continue to register families on a regular basis to ensure that all families who are eligible have the opportunity to attend our great free preschool program.

Highlights from the first few months of school:

Each school had Back to School night which was an opportunity for the parents to gather additional information about our program.

OECC participated in the Orange High School's 150th Anniversary parade!!! We had a small but might group of families and staff members.

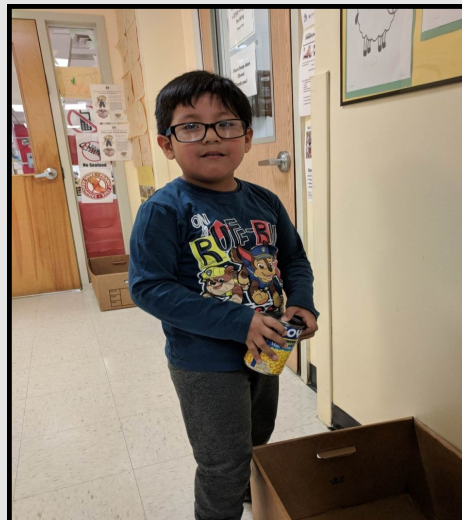
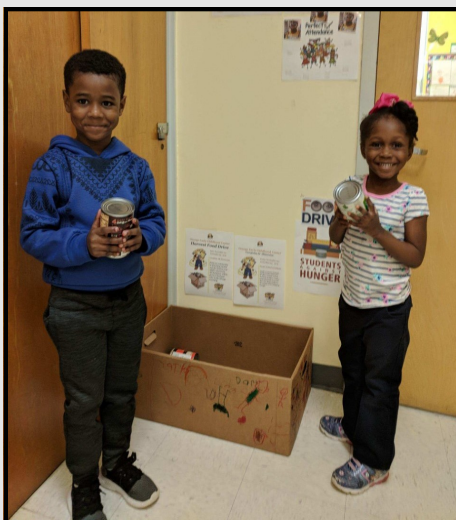


EVENTS IN PRESCHOOL.....

In October, the program held a Trunk and Read event! The children had a blast as they dressed up as a character from one of their favorite books. We had a large number of families who volunteered to assist the teachers during this event.



We began November with our annual Fall Harvest Food Drive. This is a month-long event during which different food items are collected weekly. At the end of the month, the donated items will be distributed to local food pantries in the City of Orange. This has always been an important event for our preschool program as we take pride in helping our community.



EVENTS IN PRESCHOOL.....

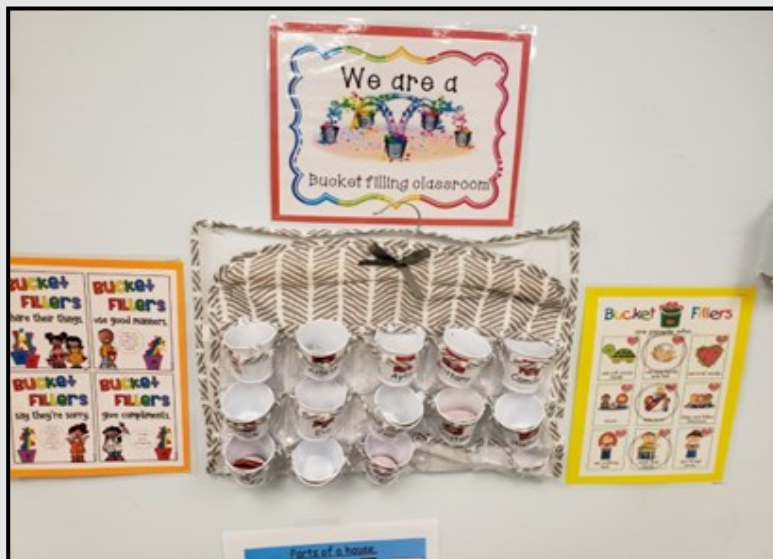
THE PRESCHOOL INTERVENTION AND REFERRAL TEAM

(Susan Monfet, Barbara Berger,
Janice Torres, Simone Smith)

The first quarter of the school year was busy for the Pre-school Intervention and Referral Team. Ms. Torres and Ms. Berger started the year by providing a workshop on the PIRS protocol to all the family workers from all the provider sites such as Valley Settlement House, West Orange Community House, Norjenes Day Care Center, and Blessed Hope Day Care Center. Ms. Torres and Ms. Berger discussed the process of initiating intervention, requesting for assistance, and the referral procedure. The workshop was well-attended and the participants were all engaged in the discussion.



In October, the PIRS Team introduced one of the social and emotional initiatives that we have for preschool, BEING A BUCKET FILLER. It focuses on encouraging positive behaviors in our preschool classrooms. The PIRS Team visited different district and provider site classrooms to read books on how to be a bucket-filler and discussed ways on how to fill someone's bucket. The students were engaged in the discussions. They provided great examples on being bucket-fillers. The teachers have implemented this initiative in their classrooms and have stated that the program works. The PIRS Team continues to provide assistance to classroom teachers and the many children we serve by offering supports that allow children to be successful within their classroom environments.



EVENTS IN PRESCHOOL.....

Coaches' Corner

(Amy Burns, Denise Davis, Julia Jasper, Abisola Oshuntolu)

The Play by Play with Your Preschool Instructional Coaches

Did you know that your Preschooler's school has a coach assigned to it? This coach does not wear a track suit and is not likely seen with a whistle around her neck. Nevertheless, she plays a very important part in making sure your child succeeds in the classroom. She is an *Instructional Coach* and collaborates closely with classroom teachers to be sure that the instruction your child receives is FIT (Focused, Intentional and Targeted). When instruction is FIT you can be sure that:

- the teaching is focused on particular learning objectives
- teachers think carefully about each activity or experience they plan for your child
- specific skills, from our state standards, are at the center of every lesson objective

Instructional Coaches collaborate with teachers in every aspect of curriculum implementation, classroom instruction, assessment and classroom management. They are veteran early childhood educators with years of hands on experience in the preschool classroom. The latest initiative the Coaches are working on with the teachers is the implementation of our new Interactive Read Aloud Program. This program gets children excited about good books, builds strong vocabulary and develops comprehension skills. Ms. Amy Burns, Instructional Coach, is pictured below modeling a Read Aloud lesson in a preschool classroom.

Be on the look-out for your school's Instructional Coach. While you won't find her coaching an athletic event, but you will see her encouraging, instructing and supporting your child's teacher. Whether she is leading a workshop, planning with a small group of teachers, leading a lesson or meeting with a teacher one on one, you can be sure that the Instructional Coach is focused on providing your child with the highest quality educational experience possible.



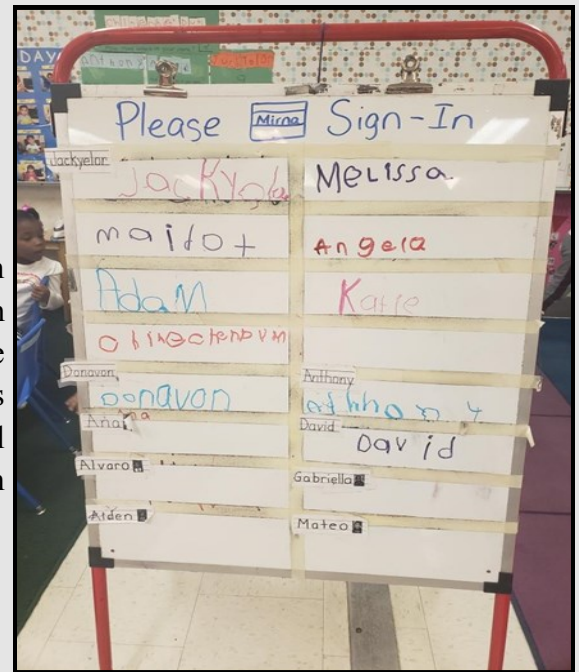
EVENTS IN PRESCHOOL.....

Here are some highlights from some of our schools:

School: Forest

Coach: Amy Burns

Preschool Teacher, Mirna Larue, changed the way her children sign in each day. Based on a professional development session staff members took in September, Ms. Larue decided to have the children sign in at the easel rather than at a table or desk. This provides an opportunity for children to develop large and small muscles needed for writing. Teachers, and parents, have seen much growth in the students' writing ability.



School: OECC

Coach: Julia Jasper

All classrooms enjoyed a trip to Alstede Farms located in Chester, NJ. This trip was a cumulating activity for our unit of study on the Community. After the fun of exploring the farm and enjoying a hayride, the students and teachers carried out further investigations in the classroom including:

Creating Class Books about the Experience (English/Language Arts)

As the children worked on the books, they learned about the basic features of print.

The Life Cycle of a Pumpkin (Science)

The children were able to learn how a pumpkin, and many fruits or vegetables, begin as a seed, need water, sun and soil to grow. They saw how a pumpkin develops roots, leaves, a vine and a flower.

All classrooms celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month (September 15-October 15, 2019). Included among the activities and events in various classrooms were:

- Dancing and creative movement to music of the Hispanic Culture
- Parents and children worked together to posters celebrating the family's culture
- A school wide Heritage Parade

Units of Study throughout the program have included:

- My Community
- All About Me
- Homes



EVENTS IN PRESCHOOL.....

Schools: Rosa Parks Community School and Norjenes

Coach: Denise Davis

The highlight of this fall was our first professional development day. The teachers from Rosa Parks Community School presented workshop on Mat Man to their colleagues. Mat Man is an integral part of the Handwriting without Tears Curriculum as “he” is the Pre-K classroom character and is used to help children develop strong drawing and writing skills using a multi-sensory approach. .

Ms. Cobbertt, a teacher at Norjenes, attended the professional development session. The picture below illustrates how she uses Mat Man in her classroom. The lines in Mat Man’s body are lines used in the formation of letters. In this instance, a student worked with the wood pieces provided to create Mat Man. The student even found a way to add a belly button.



School: Montclair Child Development Center

Coach: Abisola Oshuntolu

Students from MCDC are hard at work during a Small Group activity focused on shape recognition and making patterns. Both of these skills are part of the New Jersey Preschool Mathematics Teaching and Learning Expectations. The picture illustrates differentiated instruction as each student is working at his or her own developmental level. For example, some are lining items in a row, others are extending a pattern and still others are creating original patterns. The teachers actively meet the students where they are work to move them to the next level of learning.



The students from MCDC, enjoyed a trip to a local farm. While there, the students observed animals and the growth of produce first hand. In addition, they enjoyed a hayride!



EVENTS IN PRESCHOOL.....

Social Emotional Development

Social and emotional development is important parts of the preschool curriculum. Each of our classrooms is engaged in two initiatives in this domain.

Tucker Turtle teaches children how to use the “Turtle Technique” when dealing with BIG emotions such as anger, disappointment or frustration. Tucker helps the children learn how to:

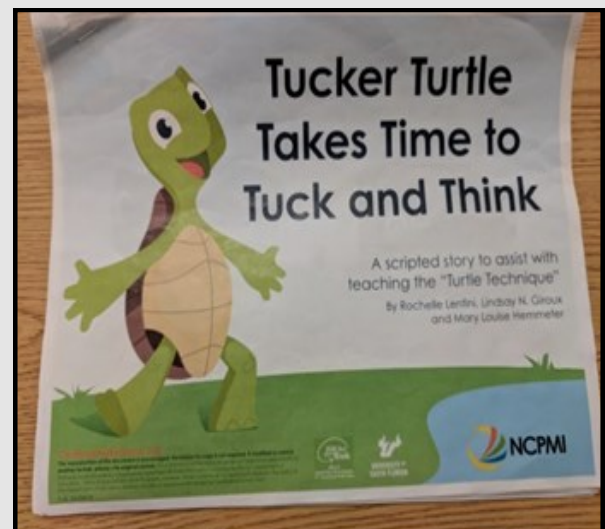
STOP negative behavior such as hitting or yelling

TUCK away in a quiet spot

BREATHE three times slowly

THINK of a new solution to the problem

" When little people are overwhelmed by BIG EMOTIONS... It is our job to share our CALM and not join their chaos. " - L. Knost



Transitions are Learning Opportunities in the Preschool Classroom

The Preschool daily routine is full of movement. In addition to the creative movement and gross motor activities that are a part of our student’s every day experiences, preschoolers spend a good amount of time transitioning from one learning space to another. They move from indoors to the playground, from the carpet to their cubbies and the table to the learning centers. Each transition is an opportunity for learning and our teachers make certain that the students do not miss out on a single chance to learn and practice skills.

A developmentally appropriate transition is carefully planned, in advance, by the teacher and allows for some student choice. Here are some transitions you might see and hear in any one of our classrooms:

Teacher: “When I call the letter your name begins with, please move like your favorite farm animal to your cubby to get your coat”.

Teacher: “When you hear a word that rhymes with your name, please find a slow way to move to your table.

As story time ends, the students each choose a paper shape from a basket. When the teacher calls a particular shape the children holding it move to the next activity.

EVENTS IN PRESCHOOL.....

Helping Preschool Children Develop Social Skills

By Carol Daly, School Counselor

1. Support social interactions with friends.

At this age children are beginning to form friendships and may even have one or two close friends. It is important for families to support this social interaction as much as possible, by allowing the children to have more extensive play dates.

These could include activities such as attending parties at the homes of their friends or planning and attending social family outings together.

2. Talk to your child about handling negative feelings and interactions.

At this time children may also start to develop negative feelings towards other children or find out others have similar feelings towards them. While this is a normal part of social development, it can lead to hurt feelings if not handled properly.

Talk to your child about their feelings to help them understand that everyone is different and has different likes and dislikes.

There is nothing wrong with preferring the company of one child over another, however it is wrong to say and do hurtful things to another person. Should this happen, talk to your child to help them understand why this is unacceptable. Having a child simply apologize may be socially correct but is meaningless if the child does not grasp how their words or actions affect the other person.

You can do this by asking your child how they would feel if the same hurtful words or actions were done to them. This helps your child to develop empathy for others.

3. Encourage your child to independently solve social problems.

Allowing children to problem solve themselves helps develop a number of social skills.

You can do this by asking them to think about solutions and remembering to react only when necessary.

4. Observe the behavior of your child carefully.

When you see that he or she wants to perfect a skill or try out something new, provide support.

For example, when learning to button a coat, be patient as the first steps to learning a new skill can take time. When you respond positively to your child's efforts they will develop self-esteem and confidence in their abilities.

Condensed from <https://www.wikihow.com/Support-Social-Development-in-Young-Children>

EVENTS IN PRESCHOOL.....

THE INCLUSION TEAM

(Maria Adame, Lucilla Rivera, Melissa Strelec, Marissa Balzano-Kaplan)

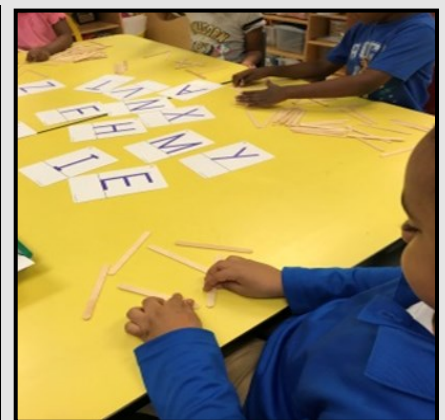
As inclusion teachers, we collaborate closely with classroom teachers and review the goals and objectives that should be focused on for our students throughout the school year. We have worked on the following since the first day of school: classroom routines, washing hands, bathroom routines, social emotional support, language development, and play skills.



Child used number cards with dots while working on numbers and counting using one to one correspondence.



Child sorted shapes, using each bag as a visual representation of the corresponding shape.



While learning about uppercase letters, child used popsicle sticks to represent straight lines and built letters with them.



Children worked on building fine motor skills too. To help build fine motor skills and build the small muscles in their fingers, children were encouraged to use tweezers to pick out corn kernels from a piece of corn.



Children used tweezers to move acorns from a tray to a muffin tin, then they counted the number of acorns.



Beginning learners began working on drawing vertical, horizontal, and slanted lines in preparation for learning to write the letters in their names.

EVENTS IN PRESCHOOL.....

As we worked on academic skills, we also helped students integrate the arts into their play. Using paint brushes, playdough, and other tools, students were able to build their fine motor skills as well as their creative minds.



Child explored the different colors of fall in the art area creating a beautiful representation of a tree with falling leaves.



Children explored new materials in the art area. Here some children are working on fine motor development using playdough and playdough tools while another child explored with the pom-poms and made a "Monster Face."



In block area, children work on learning many different types of skills. Here a child used his creative mind to build while learning about shapes, balance, and size.

We believe that parents are our student's first teachers and to help bridge the gap between home and school, we communicate with our parents on a regular basis and send home resources that can be used in the home setting. We have uploaded several parent resources on our website for families and staff members to access and use at any time. <https://www.orange.k12.nj.us/Page/14099>.

Staff worked closely to present a brief parent workshop on Social Emotional Development. We discussed problem solving skills, Tucker Turtle, and self-regulation skills. Families were able to take home materials to use in their home. The parents were very engaged and were eager to take what they learned and implement it into the home setting.



Resources: Dual Language Learners

Tips for Using Language at Home and in the Community

Here are eight things you can do every day to help your child learn your family's language and become successful in school!

Use your native language at home

The easiest, most important step is to use your home language every day. Many families worry that using their home language will confuse their children. In fact, children can easily learn several languages at the same time. They have an easier time learning English when they have a strong foundation in their first language.

Tell stories and sing songs

Your family has a rich heritage to pass on to your children. Stories, chants, rhymes, poems, sayings, and songs from your childhood are an important part of their heritage. Share these with your children and have fun!

Tell stories and share books together

Read a book to your child every day—in whatever language you feel most comfortable—beginning at birth. And if you don't feel comfortable reading words, you can point out the pictures in the book and talk with your child about them.

Check out materials in your language from the library

Look for books, DVDs, and music in your language. If they don't have what you want, ask the library staff to help you find what you need.

Talk about your traditions and culture

Visit your child's classroom or child care provider. Share your language and traditions, including family songs and games. Encourage your child to retell family stories and share your heritage with their teacher, friends, and others.

Look for activities in your community

Attend cultural festivals and concerts and meet other families who speak your home language. Join with other families and organize your own events!

Continue using your home language as your children grow older

Sometimes children start to prefer English as they get older. Talk with your children about the benefits of speaking two languages. Continue using your language, even if your children respond in English so you keep your lines of communication open.

Don't forget that YOU are key to maintaining your home language

Parents and other family members are the most important people in your children's lives. What you value, your children will learn to value. Help them learn that your family's language and culture are something to be proud of and to treasure. Remember the benefits of your home language and remain committed to continuing to use it, no matter your child's age.

Source: www.talkingisteaching.org.

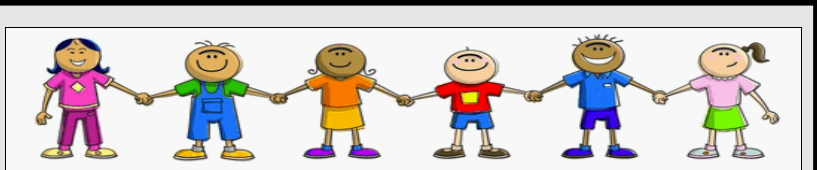
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www.orange.k12.nj.us



RESOURCES

<http://www.spanadvocacy.org/>

<http://www.prekinders.com/fine-motor-skills/>

<http://preschoolers.about.com/od/activitiesfun/a/Types-Of-Play.htm>

<http://kidsactivitiesblog.com/category/activities-for-kids/preschool-activities-2>

<http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/resources/strategies.html>

<http://www.school-ot.com/FIne%20motor%20101.html>

Early Childhood Education Mission Statement

It is the intent of the Early Childhood Department to provide a quality educational opportunity for all children ages three and four living in the City of Orange Township. Our goal is to maximize their individual cognitive, physical, and social/emotional potential by utilizing a developmentally appropriate approach to learning that is supported by a comprehensive research-based curriculum and the NJ Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards.

Shared Beliefs

- All children will have an

equal opportunity to develop personally (i.e. culturally and linguistically) through a quality preschool educational experience.

- All children will be provided with a quality educational environment that promotes his/her cognitive, social, and emotional growth.
- All children come to school with a special gift and something to offer; it is the responsibility of caring adults to accept, acknowledge, and support them while nurturing their gifts in a warm and respect-

ful quality learning environment.

- A developmental approach to preschool education supported by a comprehensive research-based curriculum provides educational opportunities that allow for success in life.
- Effective preschool programs have an effect not only on the preschooler but on the community as well. It has the potential to positively alter the lives of families and the community at large.