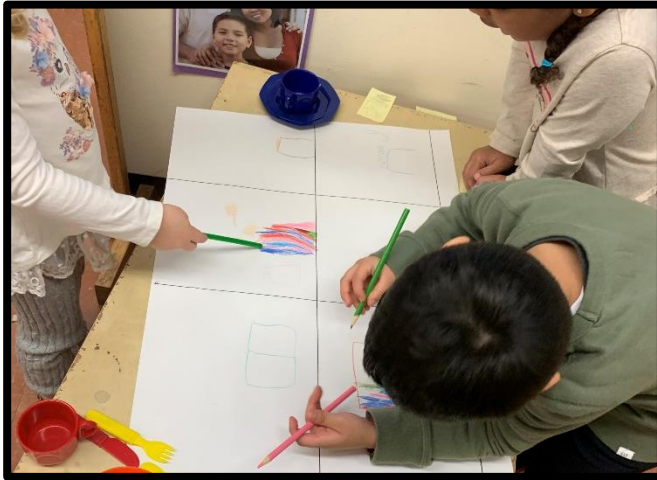




February 24, 2020

Dear Families,

Just before vacation, in Amanda's classroom, pre-K children made their own school. In this photo, you can see them creating their own work time choice board.



Once they had made the tools teachers use, they used the language of grown-ups at school: “Blocks is open for four friends.” “Please clean up.” “Who wants to go to cooking? We're making corn muffins.”

When children start designing their own materials and routines, when children adopt the voices of adults with power, they suddenly face big decisions. How will we collaborate? What do we need to create now? What changes need to be made? Are we being fair?

The *actual* adults of our school – the adults whose work and voices these pre-K children can replicate so well – will spend our first staff meeting after vacation planning to harness the intellectual power of this kind of work, especially how children’s decision-making can develop democratic thinking. We’re happy to be back in classrooms where children can create such rich work.

More Community in Community Coffee

Friday, February 28 – 8:35 A.M.

When Amanda’s pre-K children imitate the language of adults (“Please clean up”), they remind us that, even in an informal school, the presence of people who are ‘in charge’ change conversation. The conversation *really* changes if the principal starts to talk. Often, a *group* discussion turns into a series of questions that only the

principal can answer. That's a good way to share information, but it won't build community.

This Friday, at 8:35, at our community coffee, we will be sure to avoid those principal-only questions. I will sit in the circle, and Marilyn will facilitate. Our topic will be *community*.

We want more families to help and hear each other. Especially if you have never come to a community coffee, or if your voice has been quieter before, please come to this conversation.

Speedy Recovery to Najah

Previously, Najah sent home word that she will be out until mid-April. We are hoping for a successful surgery.

We'll be working without a parent coordinator for a while. Please reach out to Stephanie and Shelly in our main office as a first point of contact for the things Najah usually takes care of.

A couple of months ago, one of our students hurt her ankle and heard she might have to wear a walking boot. She asked, "Does that mean I have to wear it forever, like Najah?" Clearly, Najah has lived with her protective boot for too long. When she comes back, she's supposed to be walking, boot-free. We're rooting for her.

-Gabriel