

Mrs. Irre's Class Notes  
February 2020

Dear Parents,

I am experiencing some technical problems that are preventing me from sending pictures of the children involved in classroom activities from my computer. So, I will ask you to do what I ask the children to do when I am explaining something to them or reading a scene from a book: close your eyes and see if you can imagine what these lessons may look like!

Five and six-year-old children are literally knocking my socks off these days! We have two children involved in multiplication, many doing addition, children counting money and making exchanges of five pennies to a nickel, two nickels to dimes, etc., fractions (yes, you read that correctly), and reading labels for the farm that depict the article, adjective and noun pattern so common in English speech. We have also been taking individual turns with the tasting bottles that highlight the four tastes: sweet, salty, sour and bitter. There is so much more to tell, but limited amounts I can have you imagine. But do remember we encourage observations at any age level.

The four-year-old children are writing with movable alphabets, making posters of plane geometry shapes, playing equations with the bank including addition and subtraction, and writing numerals and simple cursive letters. Children in this age group can often be seen polishing my shoes, too. If I seem a little unsteady on my feet once in awhile they might be so exuberant that they polish the insides! It's a little slippery when that happens.

The three-year-old children, including Holden Dusing, who started last week, spend time with their beloved Ms. Irwin doing various small-group lessons such as identifying the beginning and end sounds in words, discussing various language cards (continents and the animals that live on the continent matching cards are very popular right now), and taking care of all their personal needs such as snack and putting away their belongings. I have been showing many lessons of practical life such as hand washing, polishing, simple sewing, and flower arranging. The three year olds also love lessons that require building, matching, grading, and puzzle-like activities. Each day I observe them becoming more independent.

The extended-day children that have lunch in their own classroom with Ms. Burling and me have the opportunity to work diligently on their table manners and personal responsibility for clean-up after lunch. We have been focusing on sitting at the table during mealtimes with their knees under the table while they eat, participating in conversations using conversation voices (quieter than playground voices), and all aspects of clean up including sweeping crumbs from the table, wiping their spot, and sweeping under the table. Your children are so capable if given the opportunity. I encourage you all to focus on table manners at home - it is such an important skill!

I will hopefully get the glitches squared away on my computer to send some pictures soon. They are far more fun than my thousand words!

Sincerely,  
Carrie

Don't forget that our **Queen of HeARTs Gallery Opening** is this **Friday, February 14th from 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.** at the Blue Ridge Arts Council and Gallery on Main Street. This major fundraiser will help kick off our New Playground efforts as our current playground is about to be completely removed. Tickets are on sale now at \$10 for children and \$25 for adults. There is still time to volunteer and/or sponsor this event!

Also, our own Valentine's Day celebration will take place Friday as well. Please don't forget to send in 30 valentines from your little one to share with their classmates and a few former classmates living overseas! These little cards mean a lot to them, especially the giving part! Remember to have them sign their names but DO NOT ADDRESS THEM. The process is much simpler if the children can simply drop a valentine in each bag.

February 23, 2020

Dear Parents,

This past week you received enrollment information for the upcoming school year, as well as various camps and bumper weeks offered throughout the year. If you have any questions regarding the best options for your family, please send me an email. There is quite a bit of information to read, as well as many opportunities for your child to continue learning and growing at Mountain Laurel.

A number of parents have asked me about volunteer opportunities to help our school and our classroom. Please contact me if you are interested in the following:

- washing mats
- classroom laundry
- cleaning and rescreening the air vents in our class over spring break
- organizing moveable alphabet boxes (fun for children 4 and older!)
- taking down Art Gallery (Monday, Feb 24th at 1:00 - 2:00 p.m.)
- removal of current playground
- building/assembling new playground (I am part of the playground committee and would love to have you join us!!)

#### MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Monday, March 16th - NO SCHOOL for Parent-Teacher conferences. I will send the sign up in a separate email.

March 23rd - March 27th - NO SCHOOL - Spring Break (camp is available)

Friday, April 24th - Spring Fling! You received a big information packet last week regarding our annual school auction. This is another fun event that will raise funds for our new playground. If you would like to volunteer, please contact Odalys Martin at [omartin@mlm-school.org](mailto:omartin@mlm-school.org)

We are having fun-filled days in our class and urge you to schedule an observation prior to parent-teacher conferences.

Sincerely,  
Carrie