



Curriculum

Science: In November MWF children did a lot of family graphing. We created Venn Diagrams to note the differences between families and bar graphs of our family members. From the children who participated we had more total number of chickens than Moms! T/Th children created some family graphs with these kids, too! When we weren't graphing we were exploring patterns and creating decorations for our family panels using patterns and counting!

For Science in December we will pose the question to the kids, "What is outer space?" and see where that takes us. Stay tuned and watch the science area evolve.

Gross Motor: November began with a variety of cooperative games. During the last two weeks of the month we set up an obstacle course for the children to explore in the gym. Stations included a hanging bar, a trapeze, a balance beam and a tunnel among others. The children had lots of fun while learning how to navigate the course and developing their balance and coordination.

In gross motor for December we will be drawing a connection to the countries that our gingerbread man travels to by playing games; learning dances, and trying activities that are popular in each country that the gingerbread man visits!

Literacy/Social-Emotional: In literacy and social-emotional development for November, we talked about families and gratitude. We read many books about families, noticing how differently families can look and behave. In order to understand thankfulness and gratitude, we played a game about what our families need to have vs. what we want. Creating these understandings allowed us to build conversations about being thankful for the many gifts in our lives. We used these discussions during meeting times and to help add thankful hearts to our family posters.

In December children will explore and learn about different cultures. We will be traveling the world, with the help of our imaginations (and the gingerbread man), reading both fiction and non-fiction while learning about people that live in different places. While exploring different cultures, we will discover how people have more similarities than differences. Many of the stories we will read will involve sunlight and darkness in preparation for the winter solstice.

Dramatic Play: In November we concentrated on families. The play kitchen was set up for imaginary "house" play. Many children cooked and baked and fed their "families" throughout the month. The blocks were also open and children were encouraged to build houses and neighborhoods. Children also enjoyed playing with a dollhouse. There was a lot of collaboration occurring between students during this play. The woodshop was also available during the month. Children designed and built houses using wood, glue, and paint. Their creations were quite impressive!

Upcoming Dates

December 20th & 21st – Solstice Celebrations 3:45-4:30

December 22nd – January 1st – School Recess

January 8th – Board Meeting & Finance Meeting

January 15th – Book Club 7:00

January 19th – Pokerpalooza 4:30-6:30

We'll be focusing on travel in dramatic play this month. We'll start by building a rocket ship to travel to the moon. We'll discuss what the moon might look and feel like, trying to replicate that environment in the school. Next, we'll settle back on earth to travel around the world; exploring different environments and cultures. Children will have the opportunity to act out visits to far away places using small world props as well as dress-up and big body play.

Art: November art was all about clay. We talked about where it comes from and how it felt in our hands. The children made snakes, snow people, nests with eggs and even pinch pots. We ended the unit exploring model magic, a very different medium than the all-natural clay that we started with. With the model magic kids created their faces or the faces of their families!

Art curriculum for the month of December will incorporate a variety of open-ended projects including collages, beading, and painting that tie in with this month's themes of light and holiday celebrations. We will kick off the month with space art and gradually fall into holiday art activities. We will finish the month by creating Solstice lanterns for the children to carry at our Solstice celebration.

Music: In November we sang songs about family and season change. We wrote a wonderful song about kindness. This song will be sung throughout the year and will become a lasting part of PHS culture. We explored instrument families such as strings, horns, etc. as we wrapped up the month.

In December we will sing songs about love, light and various winter celebrations and perhaps write a new song. We will listen and interact with celebratory music from around the world at interactive listening centers through dancing and instrumentation. In addition, we will ring out 2018 with a collection of bells of various sizes and cultures.

Wreath Fundraiser

Thank you to all who participated in the wreath fundraiser. A total of 206 wreaths and centerpieces were ordered and PHS made a profit of over \$2600. They will be at school by the end of next week. All of the snow has delayed the order a bit.

Board Meeting Cancelled

The board meeting scheduled for December 11th has been cancelled. The next board, followed by a finance meeting, will be January 8th.

Solstice Celebration

Parents, children, and family members come together and sing songs about light and the holidays. The celebrations are on December 20th and 21st and start at 3:45 and finishes up by 4:30. Children make special lanterns in preparation for the celebration. Please let your group teacher know if you are unable to attend.

Amazon Smiles

Amazon Smile is a simple and automatic way for you to support Poker Hill School every time you shop, at no cost to you. PHS will receive .5% of most purchases.

Pokerpalooza

Mark your calendars! The Community Building Committee planned a dance party on January 19th at the Underhill ID School with music by Super Sounds, a local DJ. Pizza is provided and families are asked to bring in a dish to share. This is a wonderful event for the whole family. More info will go out in January.

Book Group

Poker Hill School's book group is reading "Small Animals" by Kim Brooks. We will be meeting at PHS on January 15th at 7:00. If you would like to join the book group, please email Rebecca at rebeccaruess@yahoo.com.

Backpack Connection

Backpack Connection Series is a great parenting resource. The Backpack Connection Series was created to provide a way for teachers and families to work together to help young children develop social emotional skills and reduce challenging behavior. <http://challengingbehavior.fmh.usf.edu/do/resources/backpack.html>

Need a Babysitter

Katie Gardner, one of PHS's T/Th teachers, is interested in babysitting. Please call or email Katie for more information. kmgardner93@gmail.com
802-989-5009

Wacky Wednesdays

Wacky Wednesdays will begin in January. For our MWF program, we flip flop our daily routine on Wednesdays; having group time in the morning and an extended outside time in the afternoon. This allows us to cross country ski, snowshoe and sled with children (we have several pairs of skis and snowshoes for the kids!). We will need 3 parent volunteers to snowshoe, ski and sled with us on Wednesday afternoons from 12:30-3:00 to make this work. We will have a parent volunteer sign up out the 2 weeks before winter break.