

The Marsh Messenger

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Happy New Year from "The Sunshine School"

What's happening?

- "KID CRANE"
COUNSELOR
TIME: We'll start the year with a resolution: "Be a Better Bucket-filler" by practicing ways of caring for others and filling their "bucket" (heart) with happiness. This is a research-tested method of building empathy, improving relationships and raising our level of happiness.

PE: In PE, the kindergarten classes are in their balance, stunts, and tumbling unit. It is an introduction to gymnastics. The preschool classes are learning to move their bodies like different animals. With frigid outdoor temperatures, winter is a tough time for kids to be active. [Go Noodle](#) is a free website with many activities and movements to songs and rhythms as well as kids yoga and breathing exercises. Koo Koo Kangaroo and Maximo are two of our favorite channels.

• Music:

The Christmas music program was wonderful! Thank you parents and the teachers for helping your children learn their Christmas songs. They did great!! The kindergartners also did an awesome job with their Christmas caroling. The children made ornaments for the folks that we visited and that was so special. We're so proud of each child and delighted to share their joy with others!

Happy New Year to all our families! It's fun to reconnect with our students after the break and to see them reconnecting with each other. We'll be focusing on re-establishing routines that enable kids to succeed at school.

We appreciate families who re-establish routines at home too! Early bedtimes, getting to school at or before 7:45, and dressing children warmly all increase their comfort level and help them learn.

We are grateful for a new year together and thank you for the privilege of working with your children. I welcome your phone calls if you have any questions, concerns, or just want to share something that would help us know your child better.

Stacey Plane, Marsh Director/Principal

Memories of a Magical Night



Helping Your Child Develop Social Skills

One of our favorite resources for supporting children is the Post Parenting Institute. Dr. Bryan Post, in his January newsletter, reminds parents that socialization begins at home. "We tend to be in a rush to socialize our children, because we don't want them to miss out on the mastery of any important development stages," he writes, but he adds, "Nothing needs to be rushed."

Post says that because the brain is so sensitive in the developing years, children can oftentimes be overwhelmed. When this happens, it's not uncommon that children, especially boys, will hit, bite, spit or be unwilling to share in early years, to other aggressive behaviors in later years. Such behaviors can be

displayed by girls, as well. However, girls who are overwhelmed often withdraw and isolate themselves. Both of these lead to few connections to others, leaving our children "alone".

Practicing peaceful problem solving can help children who lash out increase their repertoire of responses. Use stuffed animals or puppets and re-enact the types of situations that stress your child. Have the toy or puppet respond in a more positive way. Build empathy by having your child take the role of the other child and let them experience how it might have felt to have been hit or bitten in response to normal conflict.

Mrs. Haslar, our counselor, is available for consultation and small group support as well. Please give her all call if you have any concerns about your child's social skills.