

July 27, 2011

Kindergarten begins in six weeks, and we are busy ensuring that this will be a wonderful year in your child's life! Kindergarten holds such a unique position in a child's educational journey. Their capacity to think rationally and systematically explodes. Flexible thinking increases as does their ability to use language adeptly, respond with empathy, and to cooperate. And that curiosity! It keeps us on our toes and makes us grateful for the internet!

You may have heard...afternoon kindergarten will be better than ever, more enriching than ever, more exciting than ever!

We are thrilled to announce that Spanish classes are now included in our kindergarten program. One afternoon each week, your child will enjoy an imaginative and playful encounter with the Spanish language. Delightful songs, games, crafts, movement activities, and finger plays are just a few of the captivating strategies utilized by our skillful, fluent Spanish teacher.

We are also introducing **Mystifying Mondays**. Our kindergarteners will conduct a hands-on science experiment every Monday afternoon. We will investigate magnetism, life processes, motion, natural phenomena, and more. This will be a great opportunity to expand on the science concepts we have explored during our morning social studies/science period.

We will continue to dedicate one afternoon per week to handwriting as well as arts and crafts, games, and engaging supplemental experiences.

As you know, we are anxious to keep our program updated with the latest resources and curriculum objectives. Our rich supply of instructional materials and quality educational toys will be augmented with **new computer software**, and **Lakeshore's Science Discovery Chest**.

This chest has six drawers packed with hands-on supplies such as eyedroppers, magnets, magnifiers, thermometers and much more.

On the first day of school, we'll be ready to dive into our highly successful language arts program featuring dozens of anthologies and easy readers, the Phonovisual method of teaching phonics, and beginning writing. Our captivating easy readers are an essential component of our individualized reading program. We have purchased several exciting new books on the early emergent and advanced reading spectrum.

Expect to hear your child talk about our kid-friendly manipulatives that are part of the Saxon Math program. This outstanding foundation develops concepts through hands-on activities and rich mathematical conversations that actively engage children in the learning process.

We'll be using the iMac computer to promote literacy and math skills, to foster creative expression, to encourage the growth of problem solving skills, and to learn about geography, animals, and more. Our internet will facilitate access to many amazing digital resources.

Within the last few years, we've made some exciting additions to our popular social studies and science program. Last year we added *How the Sun Makes Our Day*, an Earth and space science unit for high-ability learners in grades K-1 that engages students in investigations and observations about the sun. *How the Sun Makes Our Day* was developed by the Center for Gifted Education at The College of William and Mary. The Center's materials have received national recognition from the United States Department of Education and the National Association for Gifted Children, and they are widely used both nationally and internationally. This supplemental program focuses on advanced content and higher level thinking. We also added activities from the book *Wonders: Plants, Insects, and Dinosaurs*, an inquiry rich curriculum that stimulates curiosity.

We cannot wait to begin offering your child the experiences and skills that will lay a strong foundation for later school success. Their energy and zest for learning is inspirational and we hope to touch their lives in a positive way. Let the kindergarten adventure begin!

Sincerely,
Karen Duffy
Director of Curriculum & Programs/
Kindergarten Teacher

Leigh Ann Kurz
Kindergarten Teacher