



PRESCHOOL NEWS



St. Stephen Preschool

February 2019



DATES TO REMEMBER

- February 8: Last day to Place See's Candy Orders
- February 13 & 14: Valentine Parties
- February 18: President's Day (School Closed)

Planning Ahead

- March 8: Parent Teacher Conference Day (School Closed)
- March 5 & 6: School Picture Days
- April 15th-April 19th: Spring Break/Easter Holiday (School Closed)

Message from the Director

If you are anything like me, you might well still be chanting 2, 0, 1, 9, 1, 9, 1, NINE - as you jot down the date. But here we are in the second month of the year! What that means at the director's desk is that I am still hearing about happy (and harried) winter breaks, we are busy starting our new second semester students (please welcome all the new faces), and the phone is ringing with inquiries for summer session and tours for prospective enrollments next September.

Looking forward, Summer Session this year will begin directly after the last week of the regular school year in June – four short months away - and (NEW, new, new!) extend through all of July to comprise an eight-week program. You will be able to join for all 8 weeks or combine weekly sessions to better accommodate your summer schedule. Yay! Website dates and tuition updates for next year should be up by the middle of the month. Also, we are considering again extending drop-off and pick-up times to better accommodate our working families. *And* we will be adding more enrichment programs. You will be receiving a *survey* email blast this month. Please weigh in with your ideas and comments. I will be looking for **100% participation**.

One more place I would like full participation is at the **ALL-CLASS Meetings for each INDIVIDUAL classroom**. These meetings will take place this month so that we have meet Before your March Parent Conferences. I know time is precious and schedules tight. I will be getting a consensus and will let you know ASAP if this will be a morning or evening happening. Either way there will be no cost child care available. *We will cover what lies ahead for your student this year and next*. Please plan for at least 45 minutes. For those who have more time, I will spend just as long as you would like...



Tracey



Parent Conferences

Parent Conferences will be held with your child's teachers on Friday, March 8th. School will be closed so that we can meet with every family. This is an important and special time set aside for you to talk with the teachers about your child's progress and development. At that time, you may discuss any concerns and goals regarding your child. **Please watch for a sign-up sheet outside your child's classroom.**



FALL REGISTRATION

As we begin to plan for the next school year, please watch for the Fall Registration flyer to be sent home this month. Please keep in mind that in order to attend St. Stephen you must register anew each year. Please do not assume a space has been automatically saved for your child. Current St. Stephen students and siblings are given priority early registration in February. We then open enrollment for new families in March. Your non-refundable Registration Fees serve to hold your child's space in our program. Your enrollment is complete when we have received your first & last month tuition payments and all paperwork. We know that some families hold spaces at more than one school so enrollment numbers do change. However, many of our rooms are at capacity on certain days and signing up early guarantees you your preferred choices. If you choose to pay in full, you will benefit from a total 5% reduction on class time tuition. If for some reason you are unable to attend, your tuition payment is refundable with 30 days prior notice.

Admission for Kindergarten in California public schools requires that your child must be 5 years old *on or before September 1* to begin Kindergarten. If you have any questions about your child's readiness for Kindergarten, please speak with Tracey at the Individual Classroom Meeting or your Teachers at Parent conferencing. Here is the website regarding LAUSD Kindergarten:

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/gs/em/kinderinfo.asp>

What's Up↑in FEBRUARY?

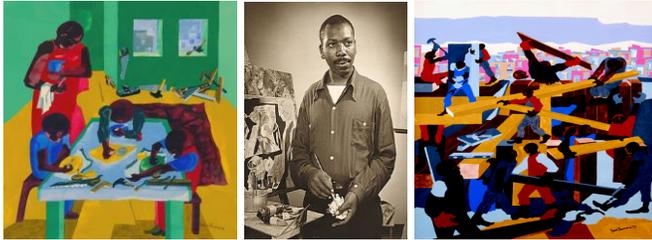
Will You Be My Valentine?

Valentine's Day is a holiday showing appreciation to the people we love. Your children will be very busy exploring feelings and creating art projects made with lots of love especially for you! We will celebrate Valentine's Day on Thursday, Feb. 13 and Friday, Feb. 14. Children attending both days may bring Valentines on both days. If you wish to bring Valentines, please have your child bring one for each child in his/her room. The children may sign them. **PLEASE DO NOT PUT NAMES ON THE ENVELOPES.**



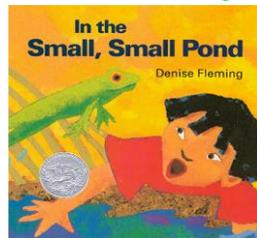
This month our artist of the month is Jacob Lawrence and the author of the month is Denise Fleming. Our yoga pose is "On Your Mark". The composer is Scott Joplin. We will also learn about the lives of President Washington and Lincoln and how they have helped influenced our lives today. Love, Ms. Tracey, Ms. Christine, Ms. Vickie, Ms. Carla, Ms. Maria, Ms. Jeanie, Ms. Betsie, Ms., & Ms. Selene, Ms. Mouchmouchian

Artist of the Month Jacob Lawrence



Author of the Month

Denise Fleming



Composer Scott Joplin

Yoga Pose



"Teachers have 3 loves: Love of learning, love of learners and the love of bringing the first two loves together."

"Don't play this piece fast. It is never right to play ragtime fast."

"On your mark"

You Asked! We are happy to answer...

Several parents have stopped by the office to ask about volunteering time to the preschool. If you are interested - we have some tasks small (office, art prep) and large(ish) (snack prep, website help) up for grabs. If you are interested in helping, just let us know! OR (and this is something that can sometimes rub me the wrong way when I am asked to do it - jus' sayin' but here goes...)

Review Us Online - We are privileged to have superior Yelp and Google reviews. However, some of them (just like St. Stephen 😊) have been around a for while!

We know that more and more families use online resources when they search for schools. And many tell us when touring, "I have driven by a hundred times and never knew you were here". Our great reviews and good old-fashioned word of mouth have brought us many amazing families like you. Our current reviews are stellar! Let's include some from two zero one NINE! Thank you for making the preschool everything it is. - We greatly appreciate your support.

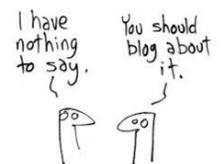


+ HEALTH POLICY +

It's that time of year when we are seeing lots of viruses and bacteria circulate. In our effort to maintain a healthy school environment, we'd like you to review our Health Policy as found on Page 10 of the

Parent Handbook. In addition, if you have other children that are home sick, please feel free to call the Preschool Office at morning drop-off or afternoon pick-up and we'd be happy to walk your preschooler to/from their classroom, so you don't have to get a sick or sleeping child out of the car.

St. Stephen Preschool has a strict health policy and children need to be well when attending preschool. This means a child needs to be free of infectious disease or infestations (lice), fever, rash, diarrhea or other signs of illness for at least 24 hours before arriving at school. Parents will be responsible for monitoring this, but teachers are to watch for signs that children are not feeling well. At the first indication of fever, diarrhea, vomiting or general listlessness, the teacher will bring your child to the office and you will be notified.



Preschool Blog

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent-teacher relationships are most effective when participants have frequent and open communication with each other and demonstrate mutual respect for each other's role in a child's life. When families are positively

involved in their child’s education, the child will flourish. Teachers prepare for conferences by thinking about each child’s interests and progress. Here are some ways parents can prepare so they too can be active participants in parent-teacher conferences.

Be willing and ready to share information about your child and family. Families are the most important influence in a child’s life. You know your child better than anyone else and have valuable insights to share with the teacher. Advocate for your child. Share things about your child’s life at home—personality traits, challenges, habits, friends, hobbies, and talents. Focus on the things you believe the teacher needs to know. What kinds of things do you enjoy doing with your child? How do siblings relate to their brother/sister and vice versa? What kind of discipline do you use? What are your dreams for your child? What are your concerns?

Stay focused on your child. In our childhood, some of us might have been shy students who avoided the teacher’s gaze. Others were very active and seemed to always need the teacher’s help to stay on task. It is natural for our ideas about teachers and their role to be shaped by our own school experiences. Think about and then put aside your past experiences as a student. Stay focused on your child and his or her unique temperament, individual needs, and special interests.

Attend every parent-teacher conference. If your work schedule makes it difficult to meet during regular hours, make this clear to the teacher and try to set up a meeting time that is good for both of you. If you can’t visit in person, schedule a telephone call to discuss your child’s progress. Whether in person or by phone, use the conference as a time to exchange information with the teacher and discuss ways to work together to enhance your child’s education.

Arrive on time. Teachers usually have a tight schedule for conferences—typically 20 minutes per child and family. If you would like additional time to talk, ask for it ahead of time so you and the teacher will have plenty of time to discuss your ideas, concerns, and suggestions. Be considerate of other parents whose conferences will take place after yours. Remember that the teacher needs a few minutes between conferences to record the information shared and to prepare for the next parent.

Remember, children can hear and remember what is said. Young children often get mixed messages when they hear adults talking about them, no matter how positive the conversation may be. It’s best to arrange for a caregiver for your child or invite a family member to occupy him or her during the conference. If this is not possible, bring a favorite toy or activity to keep the child busy in another part of the room. Unless a child is expressly invited to take part, the conference is a time for you and the teacher to discuss your child.

Listen with an open mind. Try to concentrate on what the teacher is saying instead of what you are going to say next. Ask questions when you don’t understand. Speak up if you disagree with a strategy or don’t understand how it will support your child’s development and learning. Explain

the reasons for your views and voice your concerns but be open to suggestions. Stay on the subject: your child’s progress.

Be prepared. You might think about or write down one or two questions to ask the teacher. It’s a good idea to ask the most important question first, in case time runs out. Remember, while teachers have specialized education, they don’t have answers for everything. Teaching just isn’t that simple.

Keep the conversation focused on what can be done for your child. When there are problems, both teachers and parents need to stay calm and work together for the best interest of the child.

Stay involved. Try to visit school frequently, not just for conferences. Ask the teacher to suggest activities you can do at home to reinforce your child’s learning. Look for opportunities to engage yourself in your child’s education. For more visit: <https://www.naeyc.org/resources>

Just checking to see if you’ve read to the end.

Did you notice someone new amongst the teachers names in *What’s Up in February?*

Thank you, thank you, and thank you to Arpi Mouchmouchian who has been beyond generous (not enough words) and has chosen to donate her valuable talents and time to our prekindergarten program. Along with being mom to Hagopig in room two (and his two older siblings Mardig & Karin) and Aunt to Vani (Rm. 1) Arpi holds a multiple subject (Elementary) teaching credential. She has stepped in four days a week to help plan and implement consistency of curriculum and all around support to enrich our program and make sure that there is plenty of time to complete each of the students lengthy assessments before parent conferences next month. If we don’t scare her away, she has told us that she will actually commit to this position throughout the rest of the school year. Am I dreaming? This is truly nothing short of REMARKABLE!! We are all over the moon, and as you can imagine, feeling super grateful and blessed for this level of love and commitment to our preschool. This kind of gift is rarely found. I credit our devoted and professional staff for spreading the kind of knowledge and gifted work that shows what a fine program and institution of developmentally appropriate learning we have here at St. Stephen. Like seeks like and so thank you knows no bounds Ms. Mouchmouchian - for finding it in your heart to jump right in.

P.S. – Thank you too Mr. Mouchmouchiam. 😊



