



Prekindergarten News

Rochester City School District

Volume VIII, Issue 2

October, 2012

Fall Focus on Literacy in Our UPK Program

submitted by Dr. Robin Hooper

***It's not that I'm
so smart, it's just
that I stay with
problems longer.***

-Albert Einstein

Pre-K @ College

**Saturday,
October 13th at
Nazareth College
10:00 - 12:00**

A Special Morning for
Parents and Pre-K Students

- Local Author Will Hubbel will read his book to the children
- Activities for parents and children
- A book for each child to take home

**Watch for your
invitation!**

**Save the date!
November 6
Superintendent's
Conference Day**

**Registration for
this and other profes-
sional development
will be online using
avatar:**

**[https://
rochesterny.courseinsite.com](https://rochesterny.courseinsite.com)**

See page 2 for details

Prekindergarten students have settled into their new UPK classrooms this fall as we move into the month of October. There are many changes in our environment during the fall season that support a variety of literacy activities taking place inside and outside of the classroom. Students are beginning to learn the Letter Links associated with their names and the names of their classmates. Classroom routines are becoming familiar as students learn to follow the picture cards displayed in each classroom depicting each part of the day. The message board with a daily message about the events of the day supports the development of literacy skills through the use of pictures and print. In addition to these daily activities there are many additional opportunities to increase literacy learning for our preschool students at school and home.

During walks outside students have an opportunity to discuss the changing colors of the leaves on the trees, the preparation of squirrels and other animals for winter, and preparations people make in the fall to get ready for the winter months ahead. These discussions provide opportunities for vocabulary development, oral language skills in conversation and turn taking, and the development of cognitive skills. Follow-up activities could include making a classroom book with leaves, acorns and other artifacts glued to the pages and a shared writing activity to describe the fall items gathered during the walk.

This month Pre-K families are invited to participate in a literacy event sponsored by Nazareth College with their child. Participating families will hear a book read by a local author, participate in learning centers and receive a free book. At home parents can support their children's literacy learning by reading books about fall activities and themes. This is a great time to take a trip to the library to see what types of books are available about fall or other topics of interest. Fall activities like making applesauce or decorating pumpkins assist children in learning to follow directions and sequencing. Literacy learning can be as simple as telling your child a story and asking them to retell the story or to list the characters from the story that was told.

In addition to student learning, teachers continue to work to increase their knowledge of best educational practices through college coursework, professional development and reading professional journals. In this month's newsletter upcoming professional development courses are listed with dates and times of sessions. Some sessions are being offered at more than one time to accommodate the schedules of Pre-K teachers in schools and agencies. This year professional development courses are being offered as series of sessions on specific topics. Teachers signing up on AVATAR to attend professional development will be required to attend all sessions of the course they have committed to attend. Also, the early childhood department will be offering a variety of workshops on Superintendent's Conference Day. Please sign up early as a limited number of seats will be available for each workshop. Parents and teachers are invited to attend the free Symposium on November 3rd. Register at www.rcsdk12.org.

RCS D 2012 Symposium

**"Nurturing the Whole Child: Connecting
Health & Wellness to Academic Success"**

Saturday, November 3, 2012

@ the Edison Complex, 8:30 am—1:30 pm

Superintendent's Conference Day Tuesday, November 6, 2012

A number of 2-hour workshops for UPK staff will be offered on Superintendent's Conference Day. Please look for these selections on avatar and register for the session of your choice. Presenters, times and locations will be listed in AVATAR.

- **Daily Doses of Movement.** How often is movement incorporated into your daily classroom routine? From this presentation you will gain insight into the movement needs of young children, to gauge your comfort level in regard to movement, and identify areas within the daily routine to incorporate movement.
- **Dual Language Learners.** The training will help participants support children and families who speak other languages. This session will provide activities to implement in the daily routine to ensure growth in the second language as well as maintain the home language.
- **How to Build a Great Teaching Team.** (Must attend as a teaching team.) Harmony. Cooperation. Synchronized effort. It's possible and it can be learned. Teamwork among teachers is of particular importance in the high-stakes world of children's education. A child's preschool experience is the foundation to a life long journey of learning. Come to experience an interactive workshop with games and discussion that will reveal the steps to creating an effective and rewarding teaching team for children, families and staff.
- **Promoting Active Participatory Learning Through Quality Adult-Child Interactions.** Participate as a real partner in children's play and conversations. Recognize and plan learning experiences that build on children's interests and strengths. Use encouragement to support children's development. The presentation will include video examples, hands on activities, and ample time for questions and shared experiences.
- **Successful Preschool Experiences for Children with Special Needs.** The IEP is the document that defines a child's strengths and needs. Special education and general education teachers use it to develop strategies which build an effective preschool environment. This workshop will discuss the process and demonstrate how the family, CPSE and school staff can work collaboratively to provide successful experiences for children with special needs.
- **Working with Children with Challenging Behavior - What's Next?** (Prerequisite—Attendance at Summer Institute session.) This session will focus on the practical application of the tools discussed in the Summer Institute. Please come prepared with anecdotal observations.

Professional Development for 2012-13

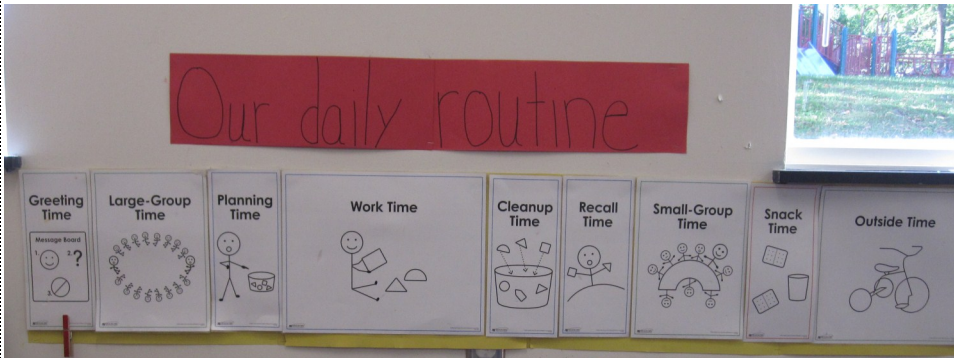
As we proceed into our 3rd year using the HighScope Curriculum, we are offering a menu of course offerings for our UPK classroom staff. Please register for your choice of course(s) using AVATAR. Locations and presenters are listed there.

- **The HighScope Classroom Learning Environment.** Facilitators will lead staff in an examination of the preschool classroom using the Program Quality Assessment (PQA) as a guide. This is targeted for teachers new to the HighScope curriculum through intermediate level. 3 sessions: October 11, 25 and November 8, from 1:00—3:00 or from 4:00—6:00 for a total of 6 hours.
- **The HighScope Daily Routine.** Exploring and refining the preschool daily routine using the Program Quality Assessment (PQA) as a guide. This is appropriate for teachers new to the HighScope curriculum through intermediate level. 3 sessions: November 5, 19 and December 3, from 1:00—3:00 or from 4:00—6:00 for a total of 6 hours.
- **Adult-Child Interactions within the HighScope Curriculum.** Establishing a supportive climate using the Program Quality Assessment (PQA) as a guide. This course is appropriate for teachers with experience in HighScope through the advanced level. 4 sessions: January 14, 28, February 11 and March 4, 2013, from 4:00-6:00 for a total of 8 hours.
- **Introduction to HighScope Conflict Resolution.** Beginner to Intermediate: We will explore the importance of conflict resolution in the preschool classroom. We will look at the role of the teaching staff and how to implement the six steps of Betsy Evan's Problem Solving Model. 2 sessions: January 17 and 31 for a total of 4 hours.
- **Book Study: "You Can't Come to My Birthday Party: Conflict Resolution with Young Children."** Teachers will discuss the book and its application. Teachers will try out strategies and share their impact with the other participants. This session is appropriate for teachers at the intermediate level. 4 sessions: March 7, 21, 28 and April 11, 2013, from 4:00—6:00 for a total of 8 hours.
- **Book Study: "You Can't Come to My Birthday Party: Conflict Resolution with Young Children." - Advanced Level.** Teachers will discuss the book and its application. Discussion will focus on teacher's current interactions, challenges, and strategies using the HighScope Curriculum's approach to problem solving. 4 sessions: January 10, 24, February 7 and 28 for a total of 8 hours.
- **Other sessions may be added to AVATAR throughout the year.** If you have difficulty accessing AVATAR, please check with the Technical Support Teacher who works with your site.

Settling into the Daily Routine in the First Weeks of Preschool

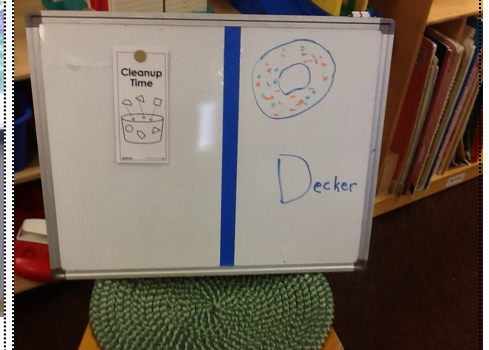
The Daily Routine and Message Board - Two Essential Components of HighScope

The Daily Routine Displayed *submitted by Joie Markham*



Joie Markham has had great success with the daily routine at The Community Place of Greater Rochester UPK. She credits the daily routine books for the children and families that went home before school started. The children had a chance to practice the book before they started and also have it to practice with at home with their families. One boy in particular who already has the schedule down, has been helping the other children. When one little girl said she wanted snack, he took her by the hand and led her over to the schedule in their classroom and said, "first we did greeting time, then large group, after large group we had planning time, and now we are at work time. We have to do clean up time, recall, and small group. Then we eat snack at snack time." He always knows what time it is in their room and is helping others to know as well.

The Message Board at # 41 *submitted by Barbara Decker*



School 41, Jean Moe and Leah Carpenter, use message board to talk about the daily components of HighScope and introduce their guest for the day.

Teaching Staff who want to learn more about the Daily Routine should check out our course offerings on AVATAR. See page 2

Children Choosing Their Letter Link is One of the First Tasks in Preschool -

submitted by Paula Wooters, St. Paul Day Care Center

One of our UPK students selected "AUK" as his LetterLink this year. Never mind the fact that he had no idea what an auk is. When it came down to it, I had no idea what kind of bird an auk is, either. But that didn't stop us. It simply became a teachable moment for all of us. I went home and looked up "auk" on the internet and reported back.

Auks are seabirds that look similar to penguins, although they are not related. Unlike the penguin, the auk can fly. They spend most of their lives in the open sea, coming ashore only to breed. Did you know that the puffin is in the auk family? We learned that the Great Auk has a larger, longer bill than a penguin.

Sadly, the Great Auk depicted on the LetterLink has recently become extinct. So imagine our surprise when we "discovered" one during outside time! We found a statue of a Great Auk at the George Eastman House gardens. The children recognized it right away and claimed it for their classmate. For the rest of their lives our UPK class will think of it as "Auggie's Auk"!

It would have been easy to steer this student away from the auk to a more recognizable LetterLink, but we would have missed a wonderful opportunity to expand our learning!



"Auggie's Auk" at the George Eastman House



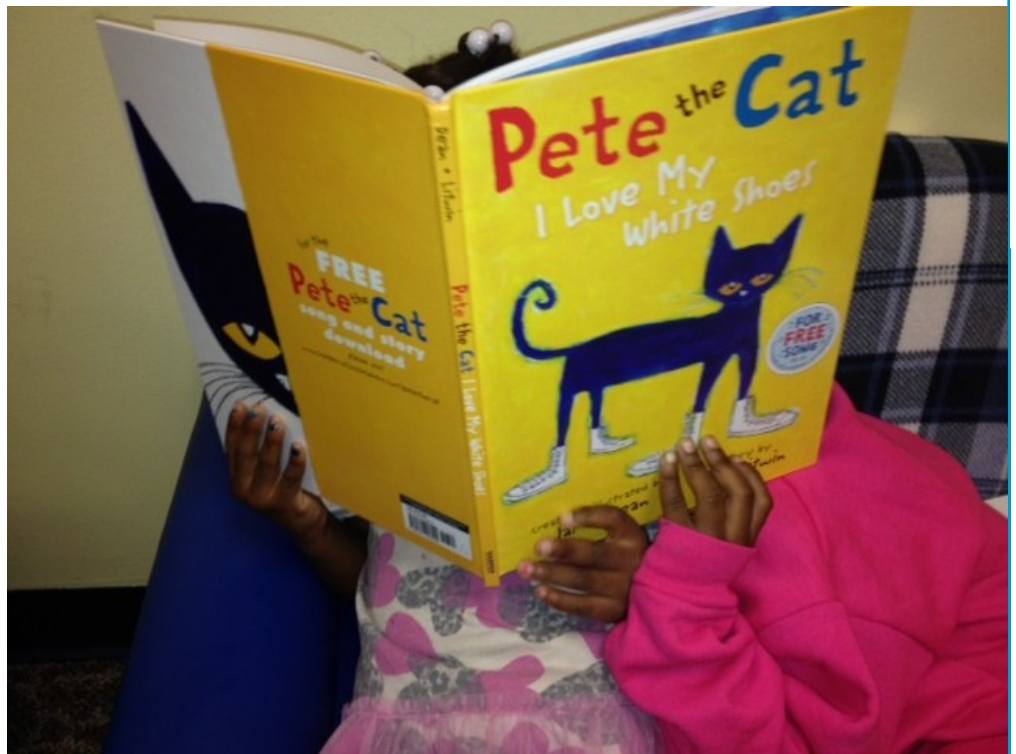
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Experiences with Books *submitted by Sandy Hess*

As I travel to UPK pre-school sites I often bring new books to share with children. I find it fascinating to watch groups engage with a book for the first time. I usually leave the new book behind for the teachers to use and am always curious about the feedback when I return. If you have not discovered [Pete the Cat: I Love My White Shoes](#) yet by Eric Litwin, it is worth borrowing from the library. There is a video online of the author performing the contagious story with children. In my travels, I have found groups of children instantly captivated by the simple text, steady rhythm, vibrant illustrations, and engaging story. Eric Litwin has now also published [Pete the Cat and His Four Groovy Buttons](#) and [Pete the Cat: Rocking in My School Shoes](#).



What a wonderful classroom site! Two children totally absorbed in a good book!