

Panda Post



Issue No. 1 | September 2024



Pandas AT PLAY!

This summer, Spring-Mar hosted three all-school summer play dates at different local playgrounds. New and returning friends and families were able to gather in the sunshine for lots of fun! Getting the opportunity to play together before school starts allows our community to build excitement for the upcoming school year. Thank you to all the families who were able to join us.

The Hospitality Committee looks forward to hosting more all-school play dates and events this year!

Alexis Centers & Kristin Hampshire
Hospitality Co-Chairs

Welcome Back!



from the
DIRECTOR

I hope you are as excited as I am to be starting another fun year at Spring-Mar!

Spring-Mar has a unique cooperative model, a learning-through-play philosophy, and a long history. Families play an important role in running the school and helping in the classroom. The learning-through-play approach encourages your children to be curious, experiment, problem solve, and practice independence, all while developing important skills. And you get to be curious and play along with them!

Of course you will not always be in the classroom with your child, and, when you are, you will help the entire class. It is natural to be a bit nervous about leaving your child at school. Often families are more nervous than the children! Since you set the tone for your little one, be loving and supportive about their feelings, but also establish quick routines around drop-off and pick-up times, and exude confidence so your child feels confident as well.

Also be sure to lean on the incredible Spring-Mar community in these first few weeks! Attend the comfort coffees if you can, chat with other families, and become involved on your committee. I remain friends with members of the Spring-Mar community that I made when my children--now ages 16, 14, and 12--attended! I wish the same experience for you!

Please feel free to reach out via email or stop by the office and say hello when you are co-oping!

Sara Mitcho

Director, 2024-2025

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

WELCOME BACK to another amazing and fun-filled year at Spring-Mar! For those who don't know me, my name is Chelsi and I am beginning my third year as Board President. I have been at Spring-Mar since 2018, and my youngest will graduate this spring. It is certainly bittersweet starting my final year at a place that has become a second home for our family, but I look forward to enjoying every last second!

A few quick reminders to set you up for a successful year:

- Check and DOUBLE-check the co-op calendar!
- You MUST be available to be called in on your scheduled on-call days.
- You cannot swap or cover someone's co-opping day when you are also scheduled as the on-call family.
- Always, always, ALWAYS read the Panda Post newsletter! It is how we communicate all our important information, noteworthy dates, and upcoming events.

Spring-Mar truly is the most special place, and I hope you will all become a part of the community and have as many wonderful experiences as my family and I have had over the years. Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions!

Chelsi Shafal

President, 2024-2025

NOW

Enrolling!

Spots still open!

Welcome, new and returning Spring-Mar families! We hope you're enjoying the start of another great year! We currently have limited spots available in our Explorer's (2's) class and Inventors (pre-k) class. If you know of anyone who's interested, they can contact us at membership@spring-mar.org to set up a tour.

Dani Saini & Bria Schmuck
Membership Co-Chairs

Play School



Have you heard about our Playschool?

You may notice our tiniest future pandas around the building on Mondays. Help us welcome our Playschool group by giving them a wave or a hello! This parent-child class meets once per week on Mondays and is led by the amazing Ms. Sarah!

Interested in joining? Have a friend with a young child? Playschool is now enrolling for children ages 12 - 24 months! Email playschool@spring-mar.org for more information or to get enrolled today!

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT AWARD

Every month, the board votes to recognize a member of our school that has gone above and beyond. This month we are recognizing two outstanding members: Manpreet Singh and Robert Kim. Manpreet and Robert have kindly lent us their time and expertise this summer as we worked to make some big transitions to our emails and website. Thank you, Manpreet and Robert for all you do to help make our school great!

Board of Directors



PARENT ED CONNECTION

As a reminder, ALL CO-OPING ADULTS are REQUIRED to complete **4 hours** of parent education each year. Each month, you will find some highlighted resources right here in the Panda Post! These will address specific topics our school wants to emphasize and are a great way to complete this requirement.

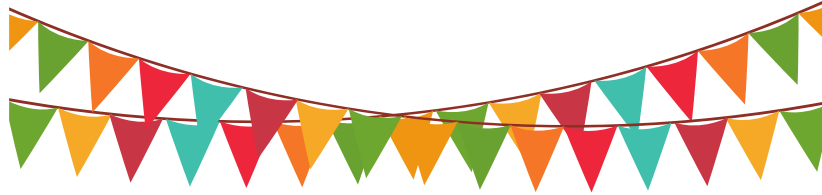
Gina Park
Parent Education Coordinator

Articles

- "Has P-L-A-Y become a Four Letter Word?"
- "Play Based Vs. Academic Preschools"

IMPORTANT DATES!

- **Sept. 28:** Family Fun Day, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
- **Oct. 3-4:** No School
- **Oct. 8-9:** Fall Picture Day
- **Oct. 14:** No School
- **Oct. 18:** Dinner and a Movie
- **Dec. 4-8:** Online Auction
- **Dec. 9-20:** Priority Registration
- **Dec. 19-20:** Class Winter Parties



FAMILY FUN DAY AND PICNIC

Saturday, September 28, 2024
10 a.m. – noon

10125 Lakehaven Ct,
Burke, VA 22015

We need your help to make this a successful event! Sign up to help!

<https://tinyurl.com/Spring-Mar-Family-Fun-Day-2024>

NEW THIS YEAR

Order pizza to have as your picnic!
RAFFLE for a parking space!!
Pre-order and pay here:

tinyurl.com/Family-Fun-Picnic-2024



Logowear Sale Coming Soon!

Keep an eye on your email for a link to our **Fall 2024 Logowear Sale!** This is your chance to stock up on Spring-Mar t-shirts and other gear.

Look out for fun new options, including **new colors** and car magnets, back by popular demand!

The sale will be live for 2 weeks--don't miss it!



Dinner & a Movie Friday, October 18th

Join us for this early evening event. We will be serving a pasta dinner and showing a movie for the whole family to enjoy!



Keep an eye out for more details to come!



October 8th-9th: Fall School Photos

Get those smiles ready for Fall Picture Day! Our fantastic school photographer, Katie Whitestone, a former Spring-Mar parent, will be taking photos of all of our students.

Send your kids to school in their favorite outfit!



Welcome BACK TO School



As the classrooms fill with laughter and curiosity, we're excited to see both familiar and new faces ready to explore, learn, and grow together. This year promises to be filled with joyful play, hands on activities, and countless opportunities for your little ones to develop important skills in a nurturing environment.

Let's make this school year one to remember!



Meet the Teachers



Sara Mitcho
Director

Hello! My name is Sara Mitcho, but the kiddos call me "Ms. Mitcho." You'll often find me in the office, but I love visiting with the kids throughout the day. Please say "hello" when you are at

the school to help and feel free to ask me any questions!



Alison Heald-Webb
Teacher - Pioneers & Navigators B

Hi! My name is Alison Heald-Webb (Ms. Alison) and this is my fourth year as a classroom teacher at Spring-Mar. This year I'm excited to be teaching the Navigator B

AND Pioneer classes! I love to sing and play ukulele both at home and all around our beautiful school. I can't wait for another year of fun at Spring-Mar!



Michelle Brenner
Teacher - Inventors (Pre-K)

Hi! My name is Michelle, (some of my kiddos call me "Miss Chelle"), and this is my third year teaching the Inventors class. If you see me in the hallways, check out my ears! I have an extensive

earring collection to go with all of our fun Spring-Mar themes! Looking forward to a fun year in the blue room!



Katie Heald
Teacher - Explorers A & B

Hi, my name is Katie and I am excited to teach the Explorers class for a second year! Outside of the classroom, I love to craft, so we are always digging into a new art project in the red

room! I can't wait for another fun-filled year with the 2's!



Claire Read
Teacher - Navigators A

My name is Claire Read (Ms. Claire) and I cannot wait to start my fourth year as the Navigators A teacher. Some of you may know I like to run but I also love live music and musicals. One of the things I

love the most about Spring-Mar is its kind and caring community. I love seeing familiar faces when I'm shopping, at my kids' school events, and around town. Spring-Mar is home to me and I hope it is for you and your family too!



Sarah Abernathy
Playschool Leader & Aide

Hi! My name is Ms. Sarah, and I have a couple new roles at Spring-Mar this year. Instead of teaching Inventors like I've done the past few years, I am going to be teaching our littlest pandas in Playschool

and will also be an aide on Thursdays. I am so excited to get to know our younger students and meet all of our amazing new families!

Meet the Teachers



Patti Barber
Art Teacher & Aide

Hello! My name is Patti Barber, and I have been teaching in the Art room since 2005. In my room, you'll find the best homemade play doh, lots of glitter, and kids getting messy creating fun, artistic projects. I'm excited for another great year creating memories with the Spring-Mar families.



Liza Strydom
Aide

Hello! My name is Liza Strydom. I am the aide on Mondays and Fridays. I love to do all kinds of crafty projects and reading in my free time. I am looking forward to another great year at Spring-Mar, and I cannot wait to meet all the new families.



Linda Cooper
Music Teacher

Hi there! My name is Linda Cooper and I so enjoy teaching music at Spring-Mar! My three kids all went to Spring-Mar (2 engineers and a doctor... I think influenced by role playing in the block room.) In music class we'll start out doing "Name that Tune" and simple songs and movements and work our way through the holidays and seasons adding many musical plays as the year goes on. I've collected lots of cool instruments over the years and the children enjoy seeing and playing them at the end of each class.



Laura Davis
Movement Teacher & Aide

Hello! My name is Ms. Laura - also known as Ms. Movement! I am starting my second year as a teacher at Spring Mar and lead the movement class. Excited for a year of "moving and grooving" with the kids!

2024 – 2025 Board of Directors

Executive Board



Chelsi Shalal
President



Erin Stafiej
Vice President



Tara Wyzik
Treasurer



Kayla Wilkinson
Secretary

Spring-Mar's Director serves on the Board of Directors as a "non-voting member".

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Hospitality



Kristin Hampshire
Hospitality



Brittany Clark
Human Resources



Briana Raines
Marketing & Communications



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Marketing & Communications



Danielle Saini
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Bria Schmuck
Membership



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Jessica Sackett
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Kelsey Fliegel
Special Events

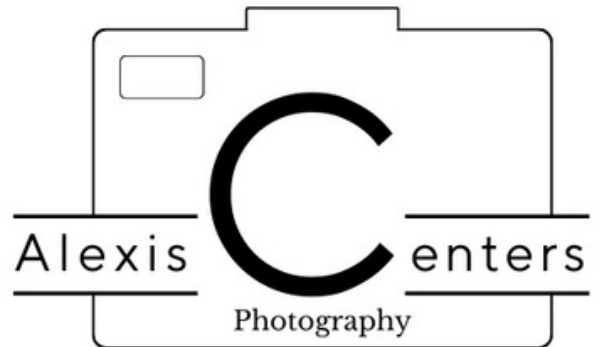
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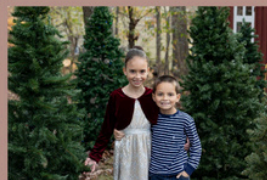
Fall Minis



Holiday Minis



Santa



Tree Farm

www.lovestruckimages.com

Owned by a former Spring-Mar parent & our school portrait photographer!

October 19th 2024

Fall Mini Sessions with
Alexis Centers Photography



Morning: Occoquan Regional Park (9751 Ox Rd. Lorton, VA 22079)

Afternoon: Burke Lake Park (7315 Ox Rd, Fairfax Station VA 22039)

Want to advertise with us?
Contact us today at: Newsletter@spring-mar.org!

BACK TO SCHOOL

Draw a line and help the children get to the school.

