



SPRING-MAR COOPERATIVE PRESCHOOL

# Panda Post

Learning Through Play



Issue No. 11 | Oct. 2025

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER



Goodbye summer and hello fall! As the leaves are falling and the season changes, we're excited for our upcoming autumn traditions. Our Fall Festival is always a favorite, with decorating pumpkins and jumping in the hay. Spring-Mar families look forward to our Costume Parade, with festive songs and adorable costumes.

A couple of cooler-weather reminders:

- Dress your child in layers (it is often much cooler during the morning than it is when classes go outside).
- Pack cold-weather accessories (gloves, hats, etc.). Even if it isn't that cold now, keeping these in your child's bag will ensure they have them when they do need them.
- Be sure to LABEL all of your child's layers/accessories!

There are many community and school events ahead for everyone to enjoy. With my son graduated from Spring-Mar and my daughter just starting, it makes me appreciate our wonderful community even more and how quickly things change.

Time will fly by, so enjoy this chance to take part in all of our fun activities, get to know other families, and create wonderful memories with your kids. I look forward to seeing you and getting to know your families more!

*Briana Raines*  
President, 2025-2026

## IMPORTANT DATES



- OCT. 18 Bake Sale**  
**OCT 14-15 Fall Festival**  
**OCT. 20 NO SCHOOL**  
**OCT 22-24 Class Coffees**  
**OCT. 28-29 Fall photos**  
**OCT. 30-31 Costume Parades**  
**NOV. 3-4 NO SCHOOL**  
**NOV. 8 Restaurant Fundraiser**  
**NOV. 11 NO SCHOOL**  
**NOV. 15 Dinner and a Movie**

## SOCIAL MEDIA



[Spring-Mar Cooperative Preschool](#)



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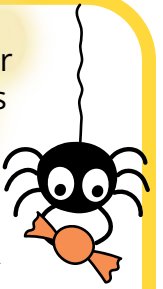


# MEMBER SPOTLIGHT AWARD



Every month, the board votes to recognize a member of our school who has gone above and beyond. This month our member spotlight is on:

## The Boyd and McIntosh Families



Thank you to our amazing room parents for hosting the September Comfort Coffees! They created a cozy space with delicious food and drinks, allowing everyone to spill their feelings about their little ones starting preschool. Your efforts make Spring-Mar a wonderful community.

*-Board of Directors*



## Fall Photo Day



Get those smiles ready for our fall photo day!

Tuesday, October 28  
(Explorers A, Pioneers, and Inventors A & B)

Wednesday, October 29  
(Explorers B and Navigators A & B)



## COSTUME PARADE

**Come one, come all to the Spring-Mar kids' costume parade!**



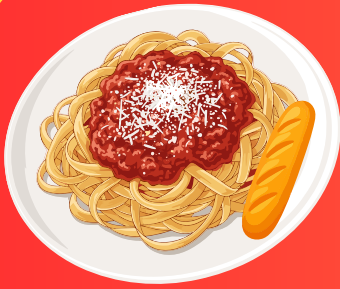
Our kids will be parading in the sanctuary upstairs with song and dance. Feel free to bring the whole family to watch!

**Thursday, October 30, 9:30-10:00 am**  
**Explorers A, Pioneers, Inventors A & B**

**Friday, October 31, 9:30-10:00 am**  
**Explorers B, Navigators A & B**

Check your email from the President for more details. Don't forget your kiddo's costume!





## DINNER AND A MOVIE

**SAVE!**  
THE DATE

**Saturday, November 15, 2025**

**Doors open at 5:00 PM, and the movie fun begins at 5:30 PM in the sanctuary.**

Bring your blankets, pillows, or anything cozy to create your own floor picnic spot and settle in for a spooktacular double feature perfect for the whole family! Enjoy a pasta dinner or bring your own picnic—your choice.

**Cost: Donation**



Click here to reserve your spot or scan the QR code!



## Class Coffees



Join us **October 22–24** for our Class Coffees — a 30-minute chance to meet your child's teacher, hear class updates, learn about co-oping, pick up family tips, and get important classroom info.

**Meetings will be upstairs in the sanctuary** (enter through the upstairs door near the ramp, the co-op entrance). Children will stay downstairs with their class.

If you're co-oping that day, you can join your class coffee too! Participants will earn 30 minutes of parent education credit.

We look forward to connecting and sharing what's brewing in the classroom!

**Wednesday, October 22**  
Explorers B: 9:20 – 9:50 am  
Navigators B: 10:00 – 10:30 am

**Thursday October 23**  
Explorers A: 9:20 – 9:50 am  
Pioneers: 11:45 am – 12:15 pm  
Inventors B: 12:15 – 12:45 pm

**Friday, October 24**  
Inventors A: 10:00 – 10:30 am  
Navigators A: 11:30 am – 12:00 pm

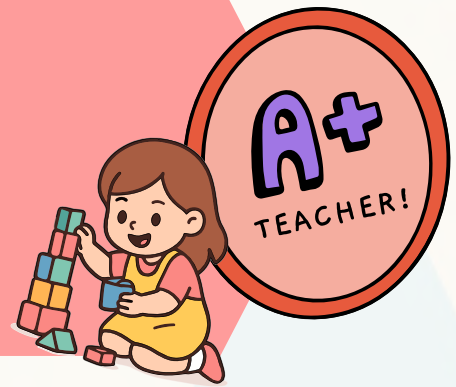




A message from your teacher...

# Play-Based Learning 101

By Alison Heald-Webb



## What is Play Based Learning? Play based learning is...

**Child-Led:** Learning is driven by the child's interests and choices.

**Process-Oriented:** The learning experience is more important than a specific outcome.

**Invested in Holistic Development:** Children's growth is fostered across various domains.

**Adult-Facilitated:** Adults facilitate learning without being overly directive.

## What are the benefits of Play Based Learning?

Play-based learning offers a powerful approach to early childhood education, fostering development across multiple domains, including the following:

### Executive Functioning

Play strengthens executive functioning skills such as paying attention, self-control, problem-solving, and flexible thinking.

### Growth Mindset

Play encourages children to explore, take risks, and learn from mistakes in a low-pressure environment. Instead of focusing on getting the "right" answer, children engage in critical thinking, creativity, and experimentation.

### Social Skills

Interactive play allows children to engage with peers, helping them learn cooperation, turn-taking, sharing, and conflict resolution. These experiences are essential for developing strong social relationships and effective communication.

### Emotional Development

Through imaginative and cooperative play, children practice identifying, expressing, and managing their emotions. This helps build emotional intelligence and resilience.

### Physical Skills

Play supports motor development. Activities such as climbing, drawing, and building develop fine and gross motor skills, including coordination, strength, and dexterity.

### Language and Communication

Pretend play and group play foster language use and comprehension. Children naturally expand their vocabulary and learn to articulate thoughts, negotiate roles, and share ideas with others.

### Engagement and Empowerment

Because play is rooted in curiosity and interest, it naturally increases student engagement. Children take ownership of their learning, gaining confidence and a sense of accomplishment as they explore at their own pace and in their own way.



### More reading:

[The Importance of Play-Based Learning](#)

[The Power of Playful Learning](#)

[Benefits of Play-Based Learning](#)



# 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.

**Megan Brown**

*Parent Education Coordinator*

## Resources

No Drama Discipline, by Daniel Siegal M.D. and Tina Payne Bryson Ph.D

Busy Toddler



## STAFF WISHLIST



Help us create a vibrant, inspiring learning environment by supporting our staff wish lists! From books that spark curiosity to classroom items that bring lessons to life, your donations make a real difference. Every contribution helps enrich our students' educational experience and shows our teachers how much they're appreciated. Thank you for helping us keep the joy of learning alive at Spring-Mar!

[Giftster Wish List](#)

[Book List](#)

## Spring-Mar BAKE SALE

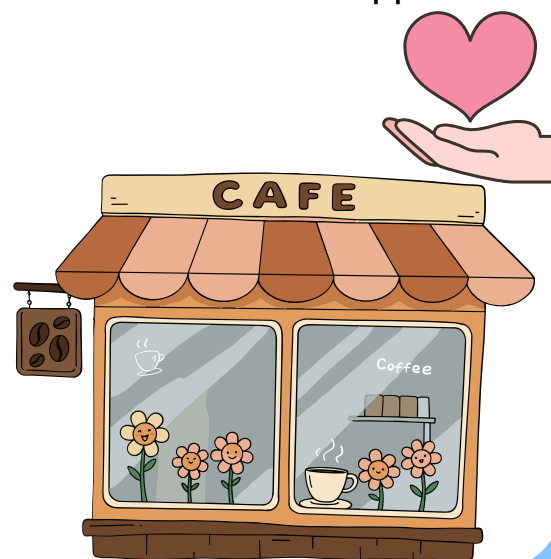


# RESTAURANT NIGHTS



**A big Thank You** to everyone who stopped by **Chipotle on October 9th** to support Spring-Mar - we're so grateful for your participation!

Up Next: **Clifton Café Fundraiser**  
Join us on **Saturday, November 8,**  
**from 8 AM-12 PM** at Clifton Café.  
It's a cozy spot to enjoy coffee,  
crepes, and community while  
supporting Spring-Mar.



## ART TO REMEMBER IS COMING!

Order forms will be sent home in **late October**, and your child's creations will arrive just in time for the holidays! These unique, handmade treasures make **perfect gifts** for family members or keepsakes to brighten your fridge.

Be on the lookout for your order form and get ready to celebrate your little artist!



## SPRING-MAR AUCTION donations wanted

Our **December auction** may feel far away, but now is the perfect time to start collecting donations!

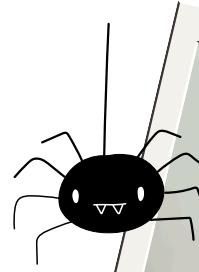
Do you have an **item, experience, or service** you'd like to donate?

We'd love to hear from you!  
Reach out to us at  
**specialevents@spring-mar.org** to get involved and support Spring-Mar.

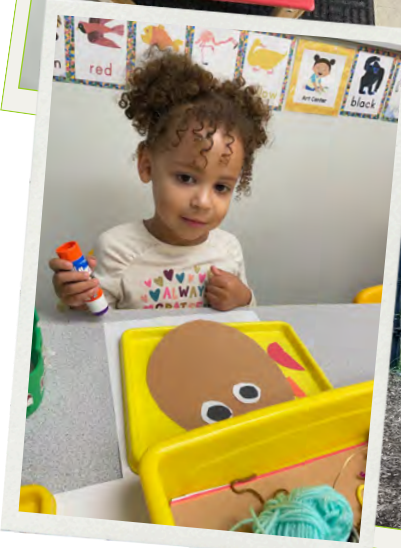




# OCTOBER



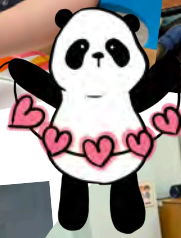
From jumping in leaves to checking on our growing tadpoles, every day was full of discovery and laughter! Our kids are settling into the school routine, making new friends, and having fun exploring!





# FAMILY FUN DAY

On September 27<sup>th</sup> we hosted a very successful Family Fun Day! The kiddos had a blast having their faces painted, getting temporary tattoos, running around an obstacle course and decorating delicious sugar cookies! Pizza and popsicles were enjoyed by all! **A special thank you to all of the parents who volunteered their time.** We couldn't have had such a great day without all of your help!





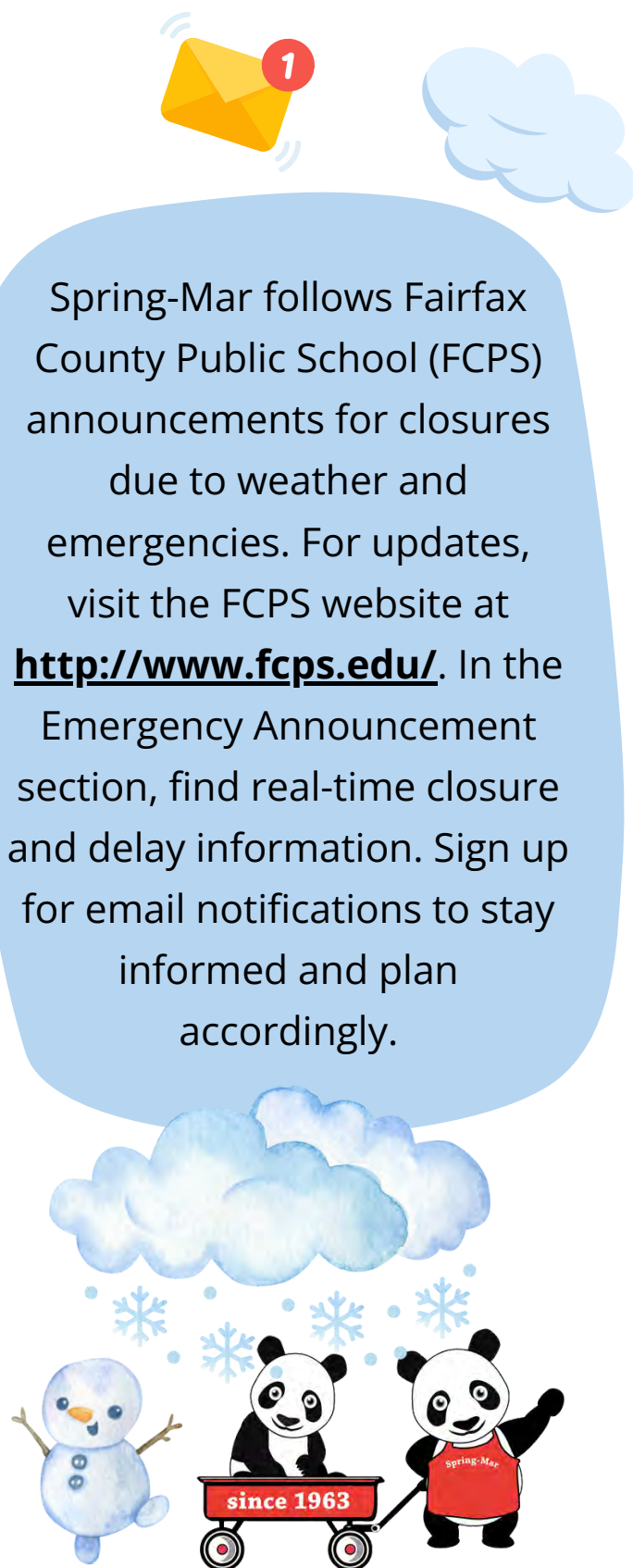
# Inclement Weather Policy

**In case of any needed weather or emergency closings, delays, or early dismissals, an All-School Email will be sent out to inform you.**

## Fairfax County Public Schools:

- **Open two hours late:** Spring-Mar will also open two hours late at 11:15 and dismiss at 1:15 p.m. All children should bring a heartier lunch-type snack.
- **Dismiss early:** Pick up your child as soon as possible. Check your email for the most accurate information. Staff will stay with students until all parents arrive. If you cannot come before 12:15 p.m., please call the school to report your estimated arrival time.
- **Are closed:** Spring-Mar is closed.

If, at the discretion of the President and/or the Director, conditions warrant the closing of Spring-Mar, even though the Fairfax County schools have not closed, an All-School email will be sent out.



# ..... In the Neighborhood .....



Cleanart Services, your trusted family owned cleaning company! Our friendly professionals provide top-notch cleaning services to businesses in the area and homes in our neighborhood. Supporting local matters! Choose us for a sparkling clean home and support our commitment to community.

Book now and experience the difference!

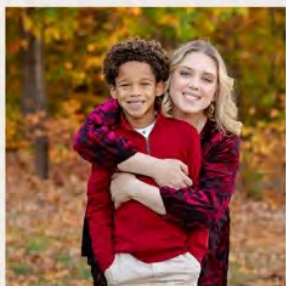
(571) 210-0097 or  
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Contact us at  
[Marketing@spring-mar.org](mailto:Marketing@spring-mar.org)





# HALLOWEEN

## Scissors Skills

Carefully practice your scissors skill by cutting from the bottom to the Halloween items.

