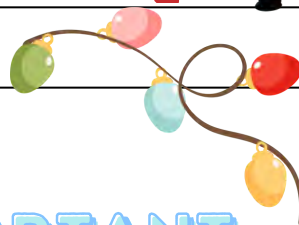


SPRING-MAR COOPERATIVE PRESCHOOL

Panda Post

Issue No. 13 | DEC 2025

Learning Through Play



PRESIDENT'S CORNER



I hope everyone is looking forward to a long (and hopefully, restful) winter break! As a reminder, Spring-Mar will be **closed from Monday, December 22 - Friday, January 2**. Classes will resume on **Monday, January 5**.

Thanks to all of you and the wonderful donations you gathered, our annual auction was a huge success! This is our biggest fundraiser of the year, and the impact is enormous. It supports a significant portion of our operating expenses and helps to ensure that our school can continue to **thrive and grow** for years to come.

Our annual Open House for prospective families is on **Monday, January 19**. As we all know, the best way to share our love for Spring-Mar is by word-of-mouth! Share our social media posts, tell your friends and family, or leave us a Google review. Every share/referral can help our **amazing little school community** continue learning and playing together for another 60 years!

See you in the new year!

Briana Raines

IMPORTANT DATES

- DEC. 18-19 Class Winter Parties
- DEC. 22 - JAN. 2 WINTER BREAK
- JAN. 18 Mid-Year Work Party
- JAN. 19 Open House - No Class
- JAN. 29-30 NO SCHOOL
- FEB. 7 Kids Valentine's Party
- FEB. 16-17 NO SCHOOL
- FEB. 28 Pancake Breakfast



MID-YEAR WORK PARTY

Toy cleaning! Vacuum maintenance!
Mulch leveling! Dirt scrubbing! And so much more!

January 18 | 2:30-5:30

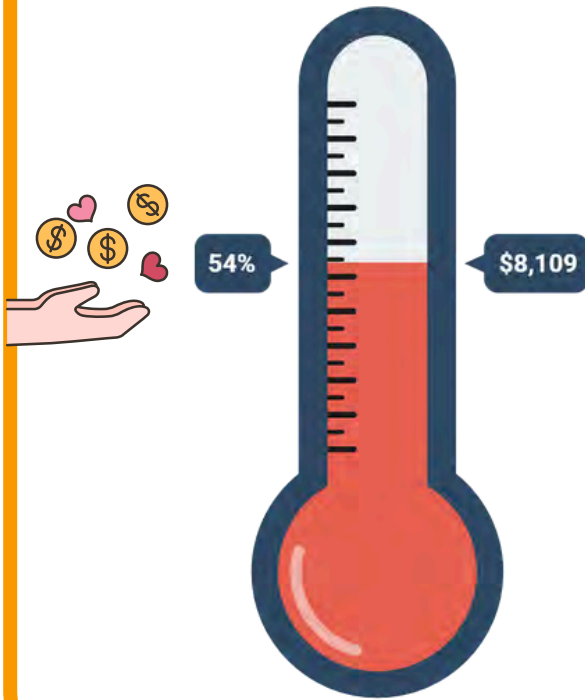
[Click here to sign up today!](#)

All Spring-Mar families are required to attend at least one Work Party each school year

Special Events Fundraising Goal

GOAL: \$15,000

Thank You to Our Amazing Supporters!



We are so grateful to everyone who has contributed to our fundraising efforts. Whether you donated, participated in the auction, or joined us at one of our special events, **your support means the world to us.** Thanks to your generosity, we've raised \$8,109 toward our \$15,000 goal! Every contribution helps us provide enriching opportunities for our little learners.

If you haven't had a chance yet or would like to make an additional donation, we would be deeply grateful for your support. Let's keep the momentum going - together, we can make a big difference!

DONATE



DRESS LIKE A PANDA DAY!



Show your school spirit on Dress Like a Panda Day!

February 3rd and 4th

Send your child to school in their panda gear! More info will be provided by your teachers.

If you would like to purchase spiritwear, you may contact marketing@spring-mar.org.



2025-2026 Mid-Year Enrollment Still Open

We still have limited openings in **Explorers A, Navigators** and **Inventors B (3-day)** for the current school year!

Please help spread the word—whether you're at the park, playground, gym, or community classes, every mention helps!

Contact membership@spring-mar.org for more info!

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:

Karen and Geoff Kater

Karen and Geoff have consistently gone above and beyond their required duties, setting up or breaking down every event this fall and taking care of a lot of pesky grounds issues at the beginning of the year. They are outstanding members of our community, and we are so thankful to them for their hard work!

-Board of Directors

**JOIN US FOR OUR
WINTER
CLASS PARTIES**

December 18th & 19th

We're excited to announce our upcoming winter class parties to be held in the sanctuary upstairs! We need your help to make these events extra special.

December 18th

- Inventors A: 9:30 - 10:00am
- Pioneers: 11:00 - 11:30am
- Explorers A: 11:45am - 12:15pm
- Inventors B: 12:45 - 1:15pm

December 19th

- Navigators B: 9:30 - 10:00am
- Navigators A: 10:45 - 11:15am
- Explorers B: 11:45 am - 12:15pm

Room parents will be reaching out with more details soon!

Pancake Breakfast

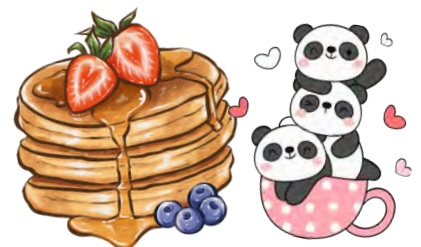
Save the date for our second annual Pancake Breakfast:

**Saturday
February 28th, 2026**

9am - 11am
@Spring-Mar Preschool

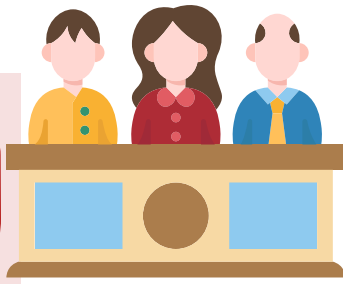
Cost: Donation

Invite your family, friends, and neighbors to grow and support our Spring-Mar community!





Join the **BOARD**



We are currently seeking co-chairs for committees for the 2026-2027 school year!

POSITIONS OPEN IN THE '26-'27 SCHOOL YEAR:

- Vice President
- Membership - Backgrounds Coordinator
- Hospitality - 2 Chairs
- Special Events - 1 Chair
- Property - 1 Chair



Serving on the board gives you the opportunity to vote on important policies and contribute your voice and talents to help improve and sustain our school. It is a wonderful way to get connected and give back to this amazing community.

If you're interested in learning more about the open seats, please contact Briana (president@spring-mar.org).



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

- **[Busy Toddler's Guide To Actual Parenting by Susie Allison](#)**
- **[Mama Knows Nutrition Instagram](#)**

CHILD FIND

If you haven't heard of Child Find, **it is a program through the Fairfax County School System**, and is an early intervention resource that identifies children with potential special education needs as well as educates the community about child development and the importance of early intervention. Child Find services are provided for children ages 20 months through 5 years by the FCPS Early Childhood Identification and Services (ECID&S) program. Note: The Child must turn two no later than September 30.



Child Find screenings are free to children ages 20 months to 5 years old who are Fairfax County or Fairfax City residents. Click here to learn more: [FCPS Early Childhood Child Find](#).

If you are interested in Child Find, our Director, Sara Mitcho, is a wonderful resource as well!

SAVE THE DATE

Valentine's Party

Save the date for our cookie decorating and crafts with Ms. Patti and Ms. Alison!

**Saturday
February 7, 2026**

9:15am - 12:15am
@Spring-Mar Preschool

Cost: \$35

Open to current Navigators, Inventors, and elementary school aged alumni. Spots are limited! Sign up coming soon.

OPEN HOUSE

Join us for our **Open House** and get enrolled for 2026-2027!

January 19
9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Spots for classes next year are VERY limited!

Explore our programs, take a tour, and secure your spot.

Tours provided—bring checks!

Questions or advance tours? Email membership@spring-mar.org.



A message from your teacher...



Talking to Preschool Children about Different Traditions in Their Communities

By Elli Davou

Children often have questions about why people do things differently. These questions tend to arise during the holidays, when differences are more visible, as people celebrate distinct traditions or celebrate the same tradition in varying ways. So, how do you explain this to a preschooler?

Start by letting your child's question guide you. As with many topics, it's best to let their curiosity lead the conversation rather than offering random information. Once the question is posed, explore the answer together as a family. Technology can be a helpful tool, but don't overlook the value of your local library, which likely has a wide selection of children's books about cultural traditions. And don't hesitate to ask friends or neighbors about their customs—personal stories can be especially meaningful.

Moreover, conversations about cultural differences shouldn't be limited to the holiday season. Seek opportunities throughout the year to explore other cultures. Visit cultural centers or museums, try cooking dishes from different cuisines, and stay open to discussing how people do things differently in everyday life.

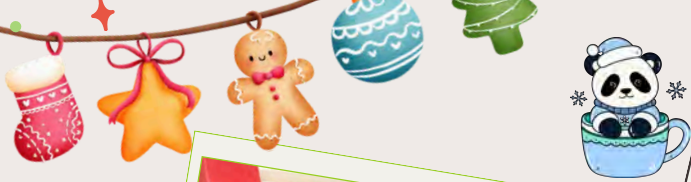
Last, what can you do if your child wants to adopt a tradition from another culture? Begin by exploring its significance together. This helps explain that practicing a tradition without understanding its meaning can feel disrespectful to those who hold it dear. However, if you are adequately informed you can always figure out ways to incorporate a tradition or some of its aspects into your own family's life in a respectful way. Those meaningful discussions help your child grow into someone who values diversity.

Below are some additional resources to help you talk with children about different holidays: Search for "holiday diversity" or "cultural diversity" for a great list of resources in the following websites:

- <https://www.pbs.org/parents/>
- National Association for the Education of Young Children
 - <https://www.naeyc.org/resources/blog/anti-bias-and-holidays>
 - [Michigan State University: How can you teach your young child about different holidays?](#)



HELLO december



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.



Spring-Mar follows Fairfax County Public School (FCPS) announcements for closures due to weather and emergencies. For updates, visit the FCPS website at <http://www.fcps.edu/>. In the Emergency Announcement section, find real-time closure and delay information. Sign up for email notifications to stay informed and plan accordingly.



In the Neighborhood



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NOW BOOKING

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Contact us at
Marketing@spring-mar.org



WINTER FIND AND COLOR

Name: _____

