

SPRING-MAR COOPERATIVE PRESCHOOL

Panda Post

Learning Through Play



Issue No. 15 | JAN 2026



PRESIDENT'S CORNER



HAPPY
New Year

I hope everyone has been having a lovely start to the new year! As we close out the first half of the school year, I want to issue a reminder that the 8 required community hours for the first semester are **due by January 31st**. Your hours must be logged on your committee's log (found on the website) and approved by a committee chair by the above deadline.

A fine of \$50 per hour will be assessed for any outstanding hours.

In need of hours? Please **don't wait** to let us know! Send an email to your committee chairs and myself (president@spring-mar.org) ASAP! There are always projects to be done around Spring-Mar, and we are happy to help you find a task to meet your required hours.

Briana Raines

IMPORTANT DATES

- 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

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.

DRESS LIKE A PANDA DAY!



Show your school spirit on Dress Like a Panda Day or get creative!

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!

Valentine's Party

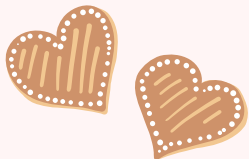
Come join for our cookie decorating and crafts with Ms. Patti and Ms. Alison!

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! A sign up link will be coming soon!



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:

Carolyn Rieger

Carolyn has been incredibly helpful, supportive, and consistently maintains a positive attitude. She possesses extensive knowledge of various marketing tasks, ranging from newsletters to social media and alumni emails. She played a crucial role in coordinating the team for all silent auction social posts, and her responsiveness and quick handling of social media and newsletter needs have been outstanding. **Thank you, Carolyn, for everything you do!**

Sincerely, - the Board of Directors

STAFF WISHLIST

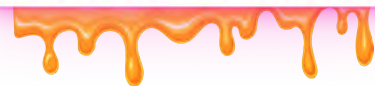
Help us create a vibrant, inspiring learning environment by supporting our staff wish lists! From books that spark curiosity to classroom items that bring lessons to life, your donations make a real difference. Every contribution helps enrich our students' educational experience and shows our teachers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

[Giftster
Wish List](#)

[Book List](#)



Pancake Breakfast



**Saturday
February 28th, 2026**

**9am - 11am
@Spring-Mar Preschool**

Cost: Donation

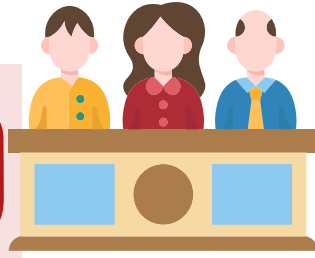
Invite your family, friends, and neighbors to grow and support our Spring-Mar community!

Musical guests!

Jackie and Thomas from the Blue Grass Band Karma Creak



Join the **BOARD**



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

- Vice President
- Special Events - 1 Chair
- Property - 1 Chair
- Membership (non Board) - Backgrounds Coordinator



We are currently seeking members to serve on the Spring-Mar Board for the 2026-2027 school year!

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).

Play School



Do you or someone you know have a **12-24 month old** child born between **September 7, 2023 – September 15, 2024**?

Are you looking for a way to **introduce your child to school** with you alongside them?

Spring-Mar's playschool is a parent and child class that meets for an hour and a half on Monday mornings. Participants experience a shortened Spring-Mar day full of activities and fun. Registration for the 2025-2026 school year is still open for our 11:00am-12:30pm class! Spots are limited!

For more information or to get on our email list about registration, please **email** playschool@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

- **Raising Your Spirited Child,**
by Mary Sheedy Kurcinka
- **Your Parenting Mojo**



A message from your teacher...

Indoors Activities in the Winter

by Marisa Dittmer



WINTER SURVIVAL: INDOOR FUN FOR UNPREDICTABLE WEATHER

The winter chill has officially arrived! As we face the unpredictable weather—and the inevitable days stuck indoors—I wanted to share a few low-prep activity ideas I used with my own children.

When my oldest two were preschoolers, I found that keeping a small "boredom buster" stash made all the difference. These items are easy to store and offer endless possibilities:

- The Basics: Painter's tape, construction paper, and a large roll of paper.
- Crafty Fun: Pom-poms, pipe cleaners, stickers, and dot paints.
- High Energy: Playdough, balloons, and glow sticks (perfect for "glow baths" or dark hallways!).
- The Classics: Paper lunch bags (for puppets) and those ever-present empty Amazon boxes.



GET MOVING!

- Indoor Obstacle Course: Use pillows, chairs, and blankets to create a path to crawl over, under, and through. You can even play "The Floor is Lava" to add some extra excitement!
- Glow Stick Dance Party: Turn off the lights, turn up the music, and let the kids move! Adding glow sticks makes a standard dance party feel like a special event.
- Scavenger Hunts: Hide a "stuffy" or a bear and play "Hot or Cold" to help them find it. Let the children take turns hiding the toy for you, too!
- Balloon Play: Try a game of "Keepy-Uppy." It's a great way to burn energy without breaking anything!
- The "Add Water" Trick: The best parenting advice I ever received was: When things get rough, add water. Throw some glow sticks into a dim bathroom for a "Glow Bath"- it works like magic to reset a fussy afternoon.

PAINTER'S TAPE MAGIC

- Floor Tracks: Use tape to create balance beams, hopscotch squares, or car tracks across the carpet.
- Animal Rescue: Tape small plastic toys to a wall or sliding glass door and challenge your child to "rescue" them by peeling them off.
- Tape-Resistant Art: Place tape designs on cardboard and let the kids paint over them. Once dry, peel the tape away to reveal a masterpiece!



QUIET CREATIVITY

- Fort Building: Build a classic blanket fort and grab flashlights for a cozy "reading camp-out."
- Sensory Playdough: Add small plastic animals or cars to your playdough to create footprints and tracks.
- Paper Bag Fun: Create classic hand puppets or play "Guess What's in the Bag"- place a secret object inside and have your child feel the bag to guess what it is.
- Mural Making: Roll out a long sheet of paper (the Ikea rolls are perfect for this) and let them go to town with stickers, dot paints, and crayons.



JANUARY

Jumping into the new year with giggles, games, and lots of fun! Our little learners are keeping warm and busy this January with play, friendship, and smiles all around.





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



Custom hand-painted
banners for any
occasion



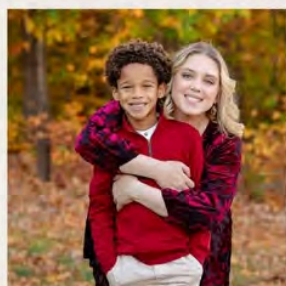
@BANNERBABE_STUDIO
TheBannerBabeStudio@gmail.com

Little moments, forever memories.



www.AlexisCentersPhotography.com

LOVESTRUCK
images



FALL, HOLIDAY & SANTA
Mini Sessions
NOW BOOKING

katie@lovestruckimages.com

lovestruckimages.com

@lovestruckimages



Contact us at
Marketing@spring-mar.org



WINTER

COLOR BY NUMBER

- | | |
|--------------|----------|
| ① DARK BLUE | ⑤ BLACK |
| ② LIGHT BLUE | ⑥ RED |
| ③ BROWN | ⑦ YELLOW |
| ④ ORANGE | ⑧ GREEN |

