The World of Kindergarten

Parent Welcome Packet
July 1, 2015

Dear Kindergarten Families,

Welcome to the Kindergarten classroom! We are thrilled to begin thinking about the start of a new school year. We want to share some information with you at this time in the hopes of answering any questions you may have regarding the Kindergarten program. The enclosed packet will provide an overview of your child’s year, program goals, developmental domains, and curriculum development.

We see this experience as an evolution. We will spend a significant amount of time establishing our community in the beginning weeks. As our group becomes more cohesive, our program and path will be uniquely our own. We invite you to be part of this journey and look forward to you becoming an essential part of our team.

We would like to invite you to a Family Open House on Thursday August 20th from 4:00-5:00 pm. You can come any time during these hours to visit the classroom, play, talk with teachers and meet other parents and children. Please mark your calendars for this important event! We are looking forward to seeing you there.

Sincerely,

Karen and Jamie
Child Study and Development Center
Kindergarten Declaration of Intent

Foundation:

Our philosophy of educating young children is based on our collective belief that children are competent, insightful, resourceful and intelligent young people eager to share themselves and experience their world. They possess an inherent curiosity and wonder about the unknown and are constantly seeking to deepen their knowledge and understanding of it. We value children's uniqueness and individual capabilities and, as such, aim to fully support their evolving development. Each child brings with him or her unique experiences and it is from these that we hope to build meaningful learning endeavors.

We believe children construct knowledge within a social context, in collaboration with others. As such, our primary goal for Kindergarten is for children, teachers and parents to work in partnership to develop ideas and topics that are meaningful and relevant to the children. Teachers create rich experiences to support the exploration, discovery and extension of children's knowledge and theories as it is related to such topics, as well as to those spontaneous “teachable moments” that arise throughout the course of a day. These experiences are developed based on the understanding that children have many ways to express themselves. Each child's unique style of learning will always be fostered and respected. Through this partnership with children, parents and teachers, our goal is to support the development of learning skills including resourcefulness, problem solving, critical thinking and autonomy. It is our belief that these are integral components of a successful and enjoyable journey of life-long learning.

Framework:

In our Kindergarten environment we strive to create diverse, enriching learning opportunities for our community of young learners. In our efforts to do so, we have established a flexible schedule, which includes a balance of large and small group experiences, teacher and child-initiated activities and opportunities for individualized instruction. Our environment has been created to encourage the development of autonomy among children while at the same time providing teacher support, assistance and guidance as they face new challenges in their learning endeavors. Interaction among children is encouraged and facilitated as we see this as critical to the construction of knowledge.
The availability of a variety of media in our classroom allows children to explore the many facets of learning and to integrate their experiences in ways that are truly meaningful. There are multiple opportunities for children to experiment with and extend early literacy and math skills, as well as to develop an appreciation and understanding of science, social studies and the arts. Revisitation of experiences is critical to the success of constructing new knowledge, as well as to the learning process in general. Therefore, we allow a significant amount of time for the children to revisit and extend their involvement in activities. This includes encouraging the extension of activities at home and the reverse, bringing home activities to school. We appreciate the thoughts, talents and interests of parents and invite you to share your expertise with us throughout our year together.

**Intentions:**

In our community, children will work towards becoming more autonomous and responsible in their learning endeavors. As children work with one another to solve problems they will develop and strengthen critical thinking skills and become resourceful learners. In their efforts to resolve conflicts children will utilize collaboration, negotiation and compromise. By doing so, they will develop a respect and appreciation of the thoughts, opinions and ideas of others. They will develop an appreciation of diversity and culture among themselves, which they will then be able to generalize to the community outside of our school. Children will support and encourage one another leading to the development of strong relationships and the establishment of a community in which children feel safe, comfortable and confident expressing themselves and taking risks. Children will develop an enthusiasm and excitement for learning that we hope will remain with them on their life-long educational journey.
The Hundred Languages of Childhood

The child
is made of one hundred.
The child has
A hundred languages
A hundred hands
A hundred thoughts
A hundred ways of thinking
Of playing, of speaking.
A hundred always a hundred
Ways of listening of marveling of loving
A hundred joys
For singing and understanding
A hundred worlds
To discover
A hundred worlds
To invent
A hundred worlds
To dream
The child has
A hundred languages
(and a hundred hundred hundred more)
But they steal ninety-nine.
The school and the culture
Separate the head from the body.
They tell the child;
To think without hands
To do without head
To listen and not to speak
To understand without joy
To love and to marvel
Only at Easter and Christmas
They tell the child:
To discover the world already there
And of the hundred
They steal ninety-nine.
They tell the child:
That work and play
Reality and fantasy
Science and imagination
Sky and earth
Reason and dream
Are things
That do not belong together
And thus they tell the child
That the hundred is not there
The child says: NO WAY the hundred is there--

Loris Malaguzzi
Founder Reggio Philosophy
**Kindergarten Intended Curriculum 2015-2016**

Our intended curriculum serves as the foundation for the ideas and concepts that are projected to be explored and investigated throughout the year. To create this document teachers gather information based on five and six year child development (across the domains of physical, social, emotional and cognitive development as well as across disciplines, language, literacy, mathematics, social studies, art, music, physical education and health), relevant educational resources, and National Association for the Education of Young Children Developmentally Appropriate Practice. This framework partners with our philosophy of an emergent/inquiry based curriculum model. We base our core curriculum on observations, interests and the relationships children have with themselves, each other, their family, teachers, the materials and classroom environment as well as their surrounding community. Our intent is to honor the many avenues through which children may express their knowledge and understanding related to the goals included below. All of this supports our belief that children have the right to learn in an engaging, authentic and dynamic learning environment.

I. **Social/Emotional Development**

Learning Goals: Children will develop a sense of self, others, being socially responsible, acceptance of differences, and standing up for social justice issues. They will develop and implement an understanding of respect and responsibility and exhibit, altruistic and considerate behaviors.

A. **Self-Identity**
B. **My Family**
C. **Community**

II. **Language Arts**

Learning Goals: Children will work with rich, authentic and meaningful literacy engagements throughout the classroom. We will provide many opportunities for children to be immersed in listening to and reading a variety of genres, as well as have experiences to think within, beyond and about the text. We foster an appreciation for literacy as we offer a print rich environment and authentic opportunities to engage in the reading process.

A. **Written Expression**
B. **Listening and Speaking** (read alouds and storytelling)
C. Interaction with books- from book handling to making meaning through illustrations to using strategies to understand text.
III. **Mathematics**

Learning Goals - Children actively explore these foundational skills to encourage curiosity about mathematical ideas. We aim to support a developing interest in mathematical experiences to actual life experiences.

A. **Number Sense**
B. **Algebra** (e.g. patterns, estimation)
C. **Measurement**
D. **Geometry** (e.g. spatial relationships, symmetry)

IV. **Science**

Learning Goals - Children will observe, develop an appreciation of and express theories about the world around them. They will document observations; develop hypotheses and questions using a variety of media and explore different scientific cycles.

A. Respecting and caring for the natural world (plants, animals, environment)
B. Observing, recording, developing hypotheses and analyzing data about scientific inquiry
C. Comparing/contrasting different ideas, materials and observations

V. **Physical development**

Learning Goals - We will encourage all children to participate in gross and fine motor activities. Our intent is for children to learn to move their bodies safely and purposefully both outdoors and within the classroom and to understand the purpose of different kinds of exercise and how it helps our body grow, be healthy and strong.

A. Body and spatial awareness
B. Motor planning-sequencing multiple motor movements
C. Develop large motor coordination and movement concept
D. Strengthen small muscles to accomplish fine motor tasks

VI. **Creative Expression**

Learning Goals - Children are given opportunities to explore a multitude of media through which to express their thoughts, ideas, emotions and perspectives. Honoring the many ways children express themselves.
Parent Communication

We firmly believe that you know your child best, which is why we feel your involvement in the Kindergarten program is essential. Therefore, it is extremely important for us to develop an open and honest relationship with each of you from the start so that together we may support your child as best we can and help him or her to get the most from this experience. As many of you know, having conversations at arrival or departure can be quite difficult whether due to the necessity of you getting to work or us being involved with a group of children. This is a dilemma we have attempted to resolve by establishing a variety of ways we will communicate throughout the year. We hope these will help us to establish and maintain an open dialogue as well as keep you informed of your child’s time in Kindergarten.

Welcome Packet: You are currently reading it!

Parent Gatherings: Our first parent gathering will be held within the first few weeks of Kindergarten. We will notify you of the date and time once we have scheduled it. We will hold additional parent gatherings throughout the year. These may have a designated topic of discussion to which we invite a guest speaker or they may simply be a time for all of us to come together and chat about ideas, questions or concerns. We welcome your suggestions and input. In the spring, we typically host a night when we invite back alumni parents to share their experiences and advice from when their children transitioned to the public school.

Bulletins/Newsletters: We will be sending home weekly newsletters regarding children’s experiences in Kindergarten. We send these via email, so please let us know if you prefer a hard copy. We expect our adventures with children to be ever evolving with unexpected twists and turns occurring when we may least expect it. Therefore, we feel it will be more effective for us to keep you abreast of developments if we do so more frequently. Our newsletters will review what has been happening and what is expected to come next, as well as any important announcements or special events. Special Bulletins are always possible and will be utilized when necessary and sent electronically.

Daily Notes: We will post daily messages on the white board hanging on the observation booth door outside of our classroom. Please be sure to take notice daily as there may be important reminders and/or it will give you insights into our day that may help initiate a conversation with your child about his or her day.

Developmental Profiles and Assessment: During our days in Kindergarten, teachers observe and work with children both individually and in large
and small groups. We collect information about each child and their developmental capabilities through various means of documentation including anecdotal observations, child journey books, photographs and journal work. Our goal for assessing children is to share each child’s experiences in our classroom. We share this information with families via conversations, parent conferences, Kindergarten Individual Learning Profiles (checklist/report), journey books and child interviews.

As part of our assessment process we implement the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Literacy Assessment System. This system allows us to incorporate specific elements into our curriculum and document children’s learning at different times of the year always considering individual children. We will implement various pieces throughout the school year and the more formal reading assessment towards the end of the year (late April/May). Two important reasons for this assessment are to expose children to a type of formal assessment that they will encounter in public school and to create a common language in which to share information with public schools about each child’s literacy knowledge. All of these pieces of information we gather from these various tools are meant to provide you with an overview of your child’s progress, growth and development across all areas as we observe in the classroom.

**Parent Conferences**- We will schedule two parent conferences during the year, one in November and the other in April. They are certainly not limited to only these two times as we invite you to request a conference whenever you feel it necessary. We will also do the same. These conferences will be devoted to all of us sharing information regarding your child’s growth, development and overall experience in Kindergarten, as well as to establishing goals.

**Phone Calls/Emails**- These are two other possible modes of communication to be utilized. Please feel free to call (especially if your child will be out) or email at any time, if you have any questions, information to share or want to check-in. We strive to check email daily in the afternoon and respond as quickly as possible however please keep in mind that the best way to communicate with the classroom regarding an important message is to call. You are also welcome to call the main office and someone will transfer you down to our classroom or you can call directly at 862-4819. If it is not a good time to talk, we will let you know and call you back at a more convenient time.

We hope the use of this wide variety of communication modes will meet your family’s needs and help us to establish an ongoing, open dialogue. We are looking forward to having a relationship with you and are excited to share in this special time in your child’s life.
Centers and Curriculum Development
As you will note from the schedule of our day, a good portion of the morning in Kindergarten is devoted to Center Time. This section focuses on elaborating the specifics of this time of day, including our goals and intentions of having centers as an integral part of our program.

The development of a variety of centers in the classroom allows us to address several goals simultaneously. Each of these goals relates directly to processes of learning that we believe are important to foster in Kindergarten. As such, they are primary to our intended curriculum, broad goals and objectives for children in our learning community. These include collaborative learning, creativity, critical thinking, problem solving, resourcefulness, autonomy and perspective taking. In addition, we feel it is equally important to provide children with opportunities to build strong foundations across a wide variety of areas so as to ensure a successful transition into their first grade environments.

Each day there will be five to seven centers available for children to choose from. We strongly believe in the value of time and feel it is extremely important to give children ample time to explore, discover, research, revisit and learn. Therefore, Centers will often remain the same for several days. This affords children numerous opportunities to re-visit materials and extend their knowledge, ideas and hypotheses. We encourage children to develop theories, research them and test them in different contexts utilizing a variety of media. Through careful observation of children in our environment, we determine their interests and respond to these by providing them with multiple experiences to further explore their ideas and extend their thinking. By listening carefully to children we are able to discover topics that are truly meaningful to them and develop centers accordingly. Children are active participants in this process as we often present them with our interpretations and engage them discussions about how to best approach the topic of interest. This interactive dialogue leads to what we call a “negotiated curriculum”, and it is from here that we move forward in our development of center activities.

In addition to our emergent, negotiated curriculum we also develop an intended curriculum. Our intended curriculum serves as a foundation for the ideas and concepts that are projected to be explored and investigated throughout the year. The teachers gather information based on five and six year old child development and in relevant educational resources. We base our core curriculum on observations, interests, and the relationship children have with themselves, each other, their family, teachers and the materials in the classroom as well as the natural world. All of this supports our belief that children have the right to learn in an
engaging, authentic and dynamic learning environment. An essential component of all Kindergarten curricula are providing children opportunities to discover and make connections while exposing them to Developmentally Appropriate Practices (DAP) and relevant innovative curriculum.

It is important to note here our belief in the benefits of engaging children in long-term investigations and how these relate to the development of specific centers. In-depth investigations can be of a particular topic, material or medium. An essential component of these are children’s active participation for this is how they construct ideas, develop and test hypothesis, formulate opinions and learn. For example, if children have displayed an interest in experimenting with light and shadows, we would offer them numerous experiences to interact with materials that would afford them opportunities to deepen their understanding of these concepts. Centers allow us to do this while at the same time allowing us to respond to the very diverse ways in which children express themselves and make meaning of their experiences.

Stated below are a few specific examples of how we focus on the processes of learning mentioned previously as we develop centers for children. The first example relates to collaborative learning, problem solving and resourcefulness. Example: The topic of study is dinosaurs and two children approach a teacher with a question about Pterodactyls. The teacher may pose the question, “What do you think?” or tell them she doesn’t know and ask them where they think they might be able to find the answer. She encourages them to utilize other experts in the class and invites them to also work together on the computer or with books to research their question further.

The second example relates to critical thinking and perspective taking. Example: A group of children have been involved in a long-term investigation of ramps and inclines. The majority of their work has been done with blocks and there have been several conversations among children about which model of an incline is best. The teacher invites the children to graphically represent their structure and explain why it is the most stable design. The children are later asked to try and re-construct one another’s designs using the illustrations. As they do so, the teachers facilitate conversations among the children encouraging them to share their perspectives, elaborate on each other’s ideas and hence formulate new theories; deepening their metacognition.

We hope this information has helped you develop a deeper understanding of this piece of our Kindergarten day and given you insight
into our purpose, intent and goals of Centers. If you have any questions or would like further elaboration, please do not hesitate to contact us.

**Birthday Celebrations**

A child’s birthday is a special opportunity to celebrate the uniqueness of each individual. It is a symbolic marker for the passage of time and a year of growth, as well as a memory of birth. As teachers, we believe it is important to find ways for children to give meaning to birthdays and to share the excitement of a friend’s special day. Over the course of the year, children and teachers will think carefully about each person’s personality, talents, and interests to come up with a fitting way to celebrate the individual.

Initially, a teacher will pose the question, “What would ______ like for his/her birthday?” to a small group of children in the classroom. Children brainstorm together and once we have a list of possibilities, we discuss the choices and come to an agreement on the one that best represents our friend. This process may happen quickly or over the course of several days. Once we have reached a decision, preparations begin. On or around the child’s birthday (or half birthday for those that fall when we are not at school during the summer) during story and share children present the birthday child with what they planned. The birthday committee shares about the process and answers questions. Parents are invited to participate in the celebration by joining the planned activities.

We have repeatedly been impressed as we witness the careful, thoughtful and genuine attempts to make each birthday special and unique. The children’s ideas reflect how well they know each other and how keenly they observe one another’s individuality. The child who is celebrating a birthday is asked, “What is your favorite snack?” We ask this question to learn more about the individual child’s likes and to try to have different snacks other than cake and cookies. We then prepare the food and share it during lunch to celebrate the child’s birthday.

**Toys from Home**

We believe our classroom and school has a wide variety of rich materials and experiences to offer the children throughout their days. If there is a special area of interest in the classroom, we can provide additional materials to meet the needs of the children. Therefore, our policy in the Kindergarten classroom is that toys from home stay at home. Because we understand it is important for children to share things from outside of school we have a designated share from home time (see below) and ask families to respect this. In keeping with our move toward more natural
and diverse materials, manufactured materials do not fit into the classroom curriculum. We are looking for materials that allow children to use their imaginations and be creative without a pre-set plan to follow. In order for us to achieve this goal, we limit the number of materials with one designated purpose and, together with our families, discover and use a wide variety of both natural and authentic materials. It is important to remember that children and families have access to different resources based on their values, beliefs and economic levels.

Please know that things such as music or books (non-commercialized) are always welcome. In addition, if you have other materials that will assist us in an investigation that we are working on, we would love for you to share your supplies and knowledge. This way we can bring home and school together through a common interest or topic. If you have any questions or need clarification please come talk to us. Your cooperation and support with this is greatly appreciated.

**Allergies**

We have a number of children throughout the Center with serious food allergies. Nuts seem to be the most serious and prevalent allergy and therefore food with nuts are NOT allowed at the Center. We recognize that this policy will inconvenience some families but we ask for your help since for some children exposure to nuts poses a serious health risk. In fact, for some children the allergy is so severe that simply smelling nut products or touching an exposed surface can lead to a dangerous reaction. Staff will adhere to this practice as well.
## Kindergarten Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7:30</td>
<td>Open choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:30</td>
<td>Outdoor play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:10</td>
<td>Morning Gathering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:45</td>
<td>Centers, Journals, Snack</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shared Reading, Investigations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30</td>
<td>Curriculum Share and Read-a-loud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00</td>
<td>Outdoor Play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:40</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:10</td>
<td>Clean-up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30</td>
<td>D.E.A.R. Drop Everything and Read</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:45</td>
<td>Rest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:15</td>
<td>Wake up with quiet activities/afternoon trip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:45</td>
<td>Outdoor play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:30</td>
<td>Afternoon Gathering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:00</td>
<td>Snack, Open Choice or Special Activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:00</td>
<td>Clean up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:30</td>
<td>Center closes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We believe that it is a flexible but structured time table that incorporates a multidimensional approach to both teaching and learning. There are varying degrees of choice for children with a balance between large group, small group and individual learning experiences each day. There will be plenty of movement opportunities and time for social interaction as well as independent activities.

### Trip information:

**Tuesday:**  
11:30 - 12:00 Travel via campus shuttle and walking to the Durham Public Library  
12:00 -12:30 Library; listening to a story and choosing books  
12:30-1:00 Travel via walking and campus shuttle to CSDC

**Wednesday:**  
1:45 - 2:00 Travel via campus shuttle to the field house  
2:00 - 2:30 Gymnastics  
2:40 - 3:05 Travel via campus shuttle to CSDC  
3:05 – 3:30 Playground
**Explanation of the day:** It can be difficult to understand the components that structure our school day simply by reading a schedule. We have tried to effectively expand upon the routine to give you some idea of what your child will be experiencing each day and what we intend to carry out. This whole schedule cannot be accomplished the first few days of the program. We all need time to work towards this goal. Children need to be able to understand what each part of the day means for them and predict what will be coming next. We all may feel anxious about starting Kindergarten because we don't know what to expect. It will take a lot of patience from teachers, the children and you. We thank you all in advance.

**7:30 Open Choice:** Children will have the choice to play wherever they would like in the classroom. Highlights are bound to be blocks, dramatic play, games and creative expression.

**8:30 Outdoor Play:** This will make for an easier transition for children coming in and is a good time to be involved in important movement experiences. We may play games in the large room during this time if we are not able to go outside due to weather.

We ask that all children be at school by **9:00** so that we can all start the day together. Our morning gathering is an important time of the day where we do a lot of community building activities. It helps children know what to expect and helps them be an active and important member of the group. Please try to arrive before gathering begins, as we are unable to touch base with parents when engaged with children at gathering and people entering the classroom during gathering is a distraction. Thank you in advance for your cooperation with this.

**9:10 Morning gathering:** This group time will be a bit different from the traditional circle time with which many children are acquainted. We will have a variety of activities that reflect cognitive challenges and will vary on a daily basis. A very important piece of our morning gathering is our attention to building a strong learning community for children; one based on mutual trust, respect and responsibility. This time of day allows many opportunities to promote these shared values through in-depth discussions surrounding issues that are significant and relevant to the children. For example, perhaps several children have been using hurtful words with one another. We would present this problem to the children and ask them to give their thoughts and opinions and to also come up with possible solutions. Not only do such experiences enrich our Kindergarten
community as a whole, but they are also extremely empowering for all of the children involved. They see that their ideas are truly valued and are critical to all that happens in our classroom. This responsive teaching technique creates an environment that allows children to truly become invested in their community and work.

Other morning gathering activities might include whole group discussions about a topic of interest or a particular activity we have planned for the day. Such a forum allows us to hear the perspectives and ideas of all of the children and also gives them an opportunity to expand upon and extend one another’s thinking. We use this time to do more specific skill building activities in relation to literacy and mathematics including counting the days of Kindergarten, keeping track of our calendar, secret word games and more! The possibilities are truly endless and are sure to continue to evolve over the course of the year.

Finally, we will have a “Classroom Assistant.” We go through the list alphabetically by first names and repeat this cycle throughout the year. The children will each have a turn to accomplish the routine jobs of the day, assist teachers and children with a variety of tasks, invite a friend to rest with them in the treehouse and be assured a chance to be “first” in line, which always seems so important to Kindergarteners.

**9:45-11:25 Centers, Journals and Snack:**

**Centers:** There will be at least five but up to eight learning centers developed in the classroom each day. The specific contents of these will be elaborated upon in a following section. However, as an overview, each center will have a designated open ended activity, problem to solve or question to answer that will vary in complexity and potential depending on the child, the time of year and the current topic of focus. Please refer to the section on Centers and Curriculum Development for a more complete description of the intent and purpose of this time of day.

**Journals:** We believe everyone needs their own private space to write and draw. Children will use their journals each day to create their own illustrations and stories. At the beginning of the year we will work on writing at least one word to describe their drawing. As the year progresses, words will be linked to make sentences and perhaps sentences into paragraphs. Dictionary spelling will not be the focus. The goal is for each and every child to see themselves as writers. Our aim is for children to hear the sounds in words and represent them to the best of their ability. Each day they will draw their picture and identify at least one thing in their drawing to write about. Usually at the beginning of the year, children do this with the assistance of an adult, enunciating the word for them. This becomes a more independent task in the weeks and months ahead.
Children will develop letter recognition, letter/sound connections, phonemic awareness, developmental spelling and the understanding that several letters linked together makes a word. Once this is accomplished, we can work on the intricacies of the craft, such as learning the dictionary spelling of familiar words.

It is our expectation that children will write and draw each day. As the year progresses children may begin to do this work in connection to other endeavors in the classroom.

**Snacks** are provided by the Center along with milk or water. Snack will be a choice during center time so children can come as they wish, when they feel hungry, and help themselves to a serving amount posted on the snack sign located on the table. Snack lists are posted outside of the classroom and in the kitchen.

10:45- Centers will remain open while some children may choose to move onto other opportunities such as Storytelling, Shared Reading, Birthday committees and studio work.

**Storytelling:** At least once a week children will be invited to participate in storytelling. We may do this individually or with a small group in which they create a story together. This activity involves three parts, allowing children to represent their thoughts and ideas using three different media. These include oral, graphic and dramatic representations. Children first dictate their story to a teacher as she records it by typing it on a laptop. Next they are asked to represent some part of the story using a medium of their choice, including drawing, blocks or anything else they may think of that helps them express their words. Children are also invited to use alternative means (e.g. blocks, painting or puzzle pieces) to share their story. Finally, the whole group comes together for the dramatic portion of this process where the group acts out their story or individual storytellers invite others to join them in acting out the story. Together these pieces combine to create a rich experience for children in which several areas of the curriculum are integrated including arts, math, literacy and social growth. We welcome parents to join us for our storytelling adventures.

**Shared Reading:** Reading happens throughout our days in a variety of different contexts, from group stories to the sharing of a book with a child individually. Shared reading is an opportunity for us to invite small groups of children to be involved with the actual reading of the book. This typically begins to take place regularly during mid to late spring however this is flexible so we are able to respond to individual children’s interests and needs and therefore may begin earlier in the year. Beginning reading books are chosen which encourage children’s active participation in the process and therefore supports their evolving view of themselves as readers. As time progresses and children’s abilities develop and grow our choice of books will expand in our efforts to assist
children in moving forward. This work is intended to compliment our many other early literacy endeavors that support children in developing a foundation of these skills. Our goal is to offer children opportunities to engage in the process of meaning making and reading development rather than striving towards reading at a predetermined reading level upon leaving Kindergarten. Yes this may happen for some children but for others it may not.

**Studio Work**: Our newly created studio space allows for teachers and children to work together in a more intimate setting. In this space children may explore a variety of art media, collaborate with other classrooms or work on specific investigations.

**11:30 Share and Story**: This time of the day will be dedicated to children's accomplishments. We will share our successes and difficulties from our center work. This will give children the opportunity to benefit from each other's experiences in order to enrich their overall involvement in the program. What we hope will evolve during this time of day is a chance for three children to share a journal entry or other work they have created at school. The audience will have a chance to ask questions and make comments as we notice and compliment one another's careful work. This time is designated for things accomplished at school. However, we understand and appreciate children's need and desire to share things or experiences from outside of school. Therefore, we have set aside this time on **Fridays** for the more traditional show and share in which children will be invited to bring in something from home. share experiences, stories or something else they might choose. **Items brought to school must fit in their cubbies as we simply do not have the space to store larger items.** We would like the focus to be on something they have created, books, photos, discoveries or special artifacts collected on a family adventure and **NOT** toys. We have found that when children share items such as these the experience is much richer for everyone and we therefore request that you please help your child choose such an item.

**Tuesdays: Trip to the Durham Public Library** We will take a trip to the Durham Public library each week where a volunteer or the librarian will read us a story before we check out books. For our trips to the library we take the Shuttle to T-Hall and walk the remainder of the way. This is a bit of a walk so on days of inclement weather we will have to cancel our trip. At the beginning of the year children are paired together by teachers and walk with the same partner all year. Please be sure your child has appropriate shoes for walking on library days; sneakers/tennis shoes are best.

**12:00 Outdoors**: We will venture outside to our natural playground or front yard.
12:40-1:30 Lunch and cleanup: We will have lunch in our Kindergarten classroom. Children bring their own lunches and the Center will provide milk or water. Please include a **cold pack** in your child’s lunch box, as our lunch boxes are stored on the shelf above the cubbies. **This is a limited space in which 20 lunch boxes need to fit, as we do not have any other space to put them.** Therefore, we appreciate your thoughtfulness in choosing a convenient size lunchbox with your child. We will all sit together after washing our hands, unpacking our lunches and saying a poem when everyone is ready. Then a teacher will escort children with heat-ups to the kitchen to heat their lunches.

1:30-1:45 D.E.A.R. Drop Everything and Read: This will be a time for individual reading in which children are asked to settle down with a book on their own. It provides children with a personal time and also helps to create a quiet environment, as we get ready to rest.

1:45-2:15 Rest and Relax: At this point, children are asked to lie quietly for 30 minutes in order to get some rest and rejuvenate themselves before our afternoon. Some children who are used to napping at this point of the day tend to fall asleep. If we are not going on an afternoon trip, those children are able to continue sleeping until 2:30. The others are able to get up and choose quiet activities until it is time to go to the playground. If you have specific requests regarding the amount of time your child sleeps, please let us know.

**Wednesday Afternoon Trip to gymnastics:** We will begin going to gymnastics during the third week of school. We get to this exciting place by University shuttle! We hop on the bus and they drop us off in front of the Field House. For the last several years the Kindergarten has gone to gymnastics at the UNH Field House with UNH gymnasts. One of the UNH Assistant Gymnastics Coaches along with 2-3 UNH gymnasts work together to teach the Kindergarteners. We will let you know which day of the week it will be for sure once time gets closer, typically we go on Wednesdays.

2:45 Outdoors

3:30 Afternoon Gathering: We reflect on our day and write what we have done on our classroom calendar. This is a great way to document and continue to think about all we learn and do each day. It will be a perfect time for us to discuss any problems that have come up during our day and brainstorm some possible solutions to them or to discuss the possibilities for the following day. Or, we might play a cooperative group game or do group stories in which children are actively involved.

3:45 Snack, Open Choice
5:00  Clean up and quiet activities

5:30  Center Closes- Please arrive by 5:20 to pick up your child so as to ensure that you have enough time to leave by 5:30. The front door will lock to parent codes at 5:25. After this time parents are considered to be late and will have to check in with the office. Please keep in mind that some children need more time to make the transition out of school and we ask you to plan accordingly if such is the case. Also, if it is important for you to have conversations with us at the end of each day please take this into consideration when planning the time you will come. We ask that you respect this time frame so as to allow us to end our day on time.

This schedule should be considered “in transition.” We will be making adjustments over the first several weeks to fine tune these plans as we get to know one another and establish our own group routine. It is also quite difficult to be kept exactly to this time frame. These are estimates. We need to be flexible in order to respond to the needs of the group as a whole and to those of individual children.

You should feel comfortable to pick up your child whenever it is best for you. We have tried to pace children throughout this long day, so as not to burn them out by focusing on most things in the morning. We have worked to put the majority of programming between 9-4, but you do not have to be bound by these times unless they are best for you. Please feel free to do what is best for you, your child and your family.
**Items your child will need in Kindergarten**

- A water bottle- we do not provide them for children in Kindergarten. We also ask that you take them home to be washed everyday, as we will not wash them at school. In the past, parents and children have found it helpful to have the water bottles with long straps and a case, which make them easier for children to carry on hikes and trips.

- A stuffed animal for rest time if they choose- with limited space and many children, please be sure it will fit in your child’s cubby!

- Please apply sunscreen at home in the morning before arriving at school. We will reapply it later in the day when we go outside or on a trip as needed.

- A change of seasonally appropriate clothing (labeled please) and stored in a backpack or bag on your child’s hook in the hallway (please no plastic bags)

- Lunchbox that will fit on our lunch shelf located over the classroom cubbies with an ice pack (heat-ups stay in lunch boxes)

- Comfortable shoes each day that allow your child to run, walk and explore and move freely. No open-toed shoes or flip-flops please!