

CAMPUS CONNECTIONS

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF CEDAR CREST ACADEMY



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HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

A note from the Executive Director, Heather Carpenter

As we celebrate the holiday season and enjoy this special time with family and friends, I would like to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt gratitude to all who help make Cedar Crest Academy an extraordinary learning community.

As I reflect on the past year, I would like to thank our parents for their continued partnership and support. Thank you for sharing your children with us and entrusting them into our care. It is during this memorable time of giving that we are reminded daily of our good fortune to be gifted by their genuine smiles, unbridled enthusiasm for learning, true resiliency and strength, and unabashed hope and joy.

After almost two years of offering our Distant Learning and Delayed Start programs, we are beyond grateful to be welcoming all students safely back to in-person learning on January 3, 2022. It is the faces of our students that best express the true meaning of this holiday season.

On behalf of Cedar Crest Academy, I wish you much peace, joy, hope, and happiness this holiday season and throughout the New Year.



REDMOND

Pre-Kindergarten
By Ms. Linda

Halloween is always a favorite time of the year for the children here at Redmond campus. It is one of the first main events that we celebrate at school and is an opportunity for everyone to get a little silly in their costumes, including parents and staff who get to connect with a laugh. Although Covid once again thwarted our usual Trick-or-Treat walk around the neighborhood, we switched things up by celebrating with our first-ever Trunk-or-Treat. The parents who volunteered jumped on board with enthusiasm, and we had some fabulous Trunk décor! Despite a gloomy start to the day, everyone enjoyed themselves, and the students were delighted with their goody bags.

In Pre-K, October is when the daily activities get a little more academic and a little more challenging. By this time, the teachers know the children better and can differentiate their lessons to accommodate each child's learning pace and mode. In language lessons, the students continue to review letter sounds and writing, but in Math, they are already exploring time and money, 2D and 3D shapes, and more advanced patterns. They are so proud of their new skills!





BELLEWOOD PRE-PRIMARY

Preschool
By Ms. Ashely



Cedar Crest Academy believes in challenging the mind and nurturing the heart. In addition to our academic program, we believe in the importance of teaching children how to grow their character. Two of our character traits that we focus on during the school year are responsibility and compassion. While these may seem like challenging concepts to guide a 3 or 4-year-old to understand, we implement a variety of discussions, books, and activities that demonstrate the importance of being a compassionate and responsible citizen in our school community and in the larger community as well.

Students are asked to show their responsibility by cleaning up after themselves when they make a mess, talking to a teacher when there is conflict, telling the truth, and staying focused on an assigned task. Students are reminded of the importance of responsibility through seeing the natural consequences of lacking responsibility. For example, a book might have a torn cover if we do not care for it responsibly.

Part of being a good citizen also requires someone to show compassion. During the holiday season, we encourage our students to find a variety of ways to show compassion to one another by using kind words, helping each other when someone gets hurt, and being a good friend. Some of our students took the time to show compassion to our local firefighters by visiting the fire station and delivering handwritten thank you notes.

We encourage our students to grow their character each and every day and we believe that providing a foundation for these important traits will help them grow into well-rounded citizens.

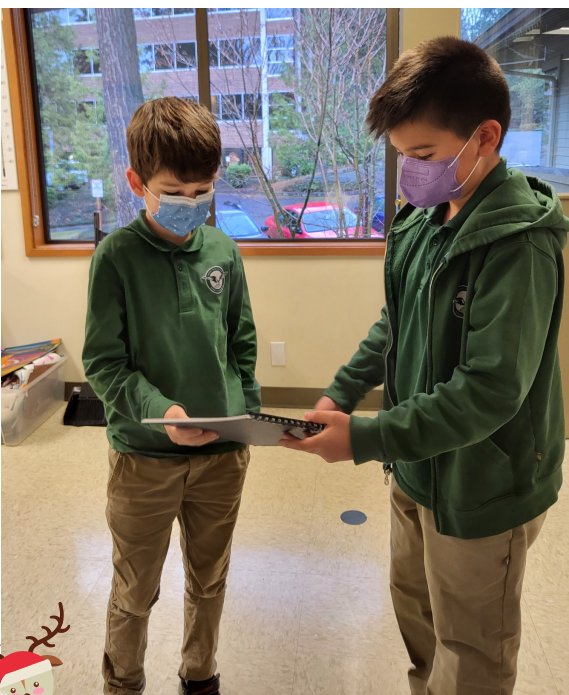
BELLEWOOD ELEMENTARY

By Ms. Vijay

Cedar Crest Elementary has continued to focus on the social and emotional well-being of all students within our program. In the last few months, our teachers have trained on the various aspects of empathy and processing emotions. We created Feelings Thermometers both as a school and as individual classes to help acknowledge our students' emotions and find strategies to work through them.

Another important part of our elementary program is giving back to the community through philanthropy. As students enter our elementary program, they begin applying the Ten Pillars of Character Education through their daily interactions within the school and community events outside school.

With the month of Thankfulness behind us, we are proud that one of our Elementary 4th Grade students, Bodhi Klinke, led our Northwest Harvest Food Drive and raised over \$400 by creating and selling his own kid-friendly cookbook at the Bellwood campus. Many students also shared their gratitude to local community workers through kind notes, pictures, and posters. These were delivered to local firefighters, nurses, food vendors, and delivery persons within each child's community.





KIRKLAND

Kindergarten
By Ms. Heather

November was filled with fun at the Kirkland campus. We explored new subjects and holidays, and found moments to reflect and be thankful for a fantastic first few months of school.

Over in the Kindergarten class, we started a unit on penguins and studied their environments, habitats, and characteristics. The students also learned about six different penguin species and had an opportunity to “dive deeper” into one breed of penguin by completing a research project. They also created a model of their selected penguin. To celebrate the completion of the unit, the Kindergarteners had a “March of the Penguins” where they presented their findings and displayed their penguin models.

To further strengthen our home-to-school connection, our kindergarten parents also joined us via Zoom to celebrate Diwali and Thanksgiving. Parents volunteered to help us with Diwali celebrations by preparing and hosting a step-by-step workshop on how to create traditional crafts. Some parents also read stories about the holiday. As for Thanksgiving, our Kindergarteners had a delicious Harvest Feast to celebrate the holiday. Both in-person and distance learners had lunch together via Zoom, and family members hopped on to join as well.

While Kindergarten feasted with their parents on Zoom, pre-primary students sent their parents videos of their Thanksgiving songs, dances, or poems. Each class, including our staff, enjoyed a delicious traditional Thanksgiving lunch prepared by our fantastic school cook, Ms. Ana.





PARK HIGHLAND

By Ms. Brunetta

December at Park Highland is always full of magical fun! This year the students and staff have transformed our hallways into Santa's Village. We have a Toy Shop, Reindeer Crossing, Gingerbread House, Elf Village, and Christmas Tree Village. The student's eyes shine so brightly every time they enter the hallways.

We also take this month as an opportunity for our young learners to explore worldwide holidays in December, including Christmas, Kwanzaa, Hannukah, Las Posadas, and more. Every culture celebrates in its own festive way to make their holidays bright. Some of those involve dishes or treats that only appear once a year. Others give gifts that carry a particular meaning, and some decorate in different ways, hold festivals, parades, or parties to ring in the season. We enjoy sharing these various celebrations with our students as it celebrates our differences and similarities.

Also, in the spirit of giving, we held a special toy drive to benefit those in need this holiday season. Through our toy drive, we donated 90 toys to the Marine Toys for Tots! We have also spent this month preparing for our Virtual Winter Performances. Everyone worked hard as we practiced and danced to many of our favorite Christmas tunes. This year, the holiday might look different for a lot of us, but that doesn't mean we can't keep many of our most treasured traditions. Happy Holidays!





FESTIVE PEPPERMINT BARK PRETZEL BITES

These delicious peppermint treats are sure to bring holiday cheer to your home! Even better, these bite-sized treats are easy to make with your children with only 4 key ingredients. Click [here](#) for the full recipe.

- Square Pretzels
- Hershey's Candy Kisses
- Peppermint M&M's
- Colorful Sprinkles



BRINGING PHILANTHROPY FROM SCHOOL TO HOME

Philanthropy plays a huge role in Cedar Crest's philosophy. The act encourages students to give back to their community and demonstrates kindness and empathy. Each year, every Cedar Crest campus picks an organization or two to raise funds for, including Northwest Harvest and Change 4 Children.

This year, we encourage families to bring philanthropy into their homes. You can work with your neighborhood community, friends, or family members to help those in need this holiday season. Click [here](#) to see a list of local opportunities, from giving trees and toy drives to food drives and more!



HOLIDAY CARDS FOR ESSENTIAL WORKERS

Spread the holiday cheer! Essential workers play a huge role in the fabric of our communities. They deliver or bag groceries, work countless nights as nurses or doctors or collect your garbage to keep our streets and homes clean. This year your family can start a new tradition by making some joyful thank you cards to share with your local essential workers. By working with your children to create these cards you can educate them about the importance of community and provide them with resources to share their gratitude. Click [here](#) and [here](#) for some free printable cards that you can customize to your liking.



HOLIDAY FUN AROUND THE SEATTLE AREA

Explore the magic and wonder of this season during Winter Break! Check out the following events around the Seattle area:

- Winterfest & The Interactive Exhibition of Lego Models — Seattle Center
- Wild Lanterns — Woodland Park Zoo
- Meet a Reindeer — Watson's Nursery
- Van Gogh: The Immersive Experience
- Christmas in Color Drive-Thru - Wild Waves & Enchanted Village Theme Park
- Holiday Magic — Washington State Fair
- Dinosaurland Train & Holiday Fun — Swanson's Nursery
- Ice Skating Rink — Bellevue Downtown



Upcoming Cedar Crest Events

January 14

MLK Day Peace March at all four campuses

January 17

Martin Luther King Jr. Day – No School

January 22

Bellewood & Kirkland Open House

January 24 – 28

Great Kindness Challenge Week

January 28

Backward Spirit Day
Pre-Primary Progress Reports Distributed

January 29

Park Highland & Redmond Open House

January 31 – February

Pre-Primary Parent-Teacher Conferences