



JANUARY 2018 NEWSLETTER

DECATUR FIRST CMO 300 E. PONCE DE LEON AVENUE | 404.378.4541, x111 | CMO@DECATURFIRST.ORG
Nurturing your child's development in a loving, Christian setting

CIRCLE UP FOR ADVENTURES IN THE NEW YEAR!

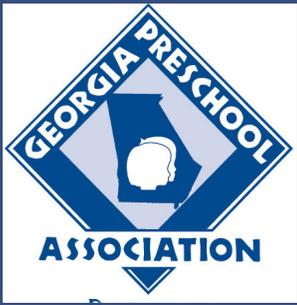
We hope you enjoyed the holiday break and are ready for a fresh start. We pray for God to bless the New Year and the CMO community in 2018. We welcome the new families to our school that started in January and we are anticipating wonderful new adventures for all the classrooms, through music and storytelling, outside or in the gym on cold days. In fact, because of the record cold temperatures, we will be starting our spring and summer garden indoors with seed germination in the classrooms. We are excited to start our garden indoors with the children and then have them take the seedlings outside to plant in our CMO garden in the spring. In the next few weeks we have plans for a Music Station to be built on the playground. It will be a "center" where they can "make a joyful noise" during their outside time with repurposed pots and pans.

While we are excited about some new adventures, did you know that all of our classrooms, with the exception of our Beginner Room, have been enjoying a Circle Time each school day all year? Having a structured time together helps prepare kids for school beyond CMO and also builds classroom community. Nursery rhymes with felt board characters are sung and displayed, yoga moves are practiced, seasonal games and poems are learned, and older classes are introduced to the days of the

week and months, classroom jobs, like checking the weather, and given additional practice of their names and classmates names, and all types of practice with letters and numbers. During Circle Time, children are learning to be good listeners, take turns, and how to participate and cooperate with their teachers and friends in a typical school setting.

If you want to practice more "Circle Time" with your child outside of CMO, you can for free through baby and toddler activities at the public library or at the City of Decatur's beloved local bookshop, Little Shop of Stories. Circle Times happen at 11am on both Thursday and Friday mornings weekly and lasts around 20-30 minutes, depending on the restlessness of the crowd! The Thursday storytime is more traditional and best suited for ages 2-6, whereas the Friday storytime is great for all ages under 3, including babies, and includes songs, interactive play, along with fun, age-appropriate stories. Traditional storytimes are also offered at Little Shop of Stories on Tuesdays and Sundays.

We are so proud of all of the amazing skills your children have already acquired this school year, and know by the end of this school year we will be in awe of the many more ways the children have matured and developed. What a blessing to be partnering with parents in this most precious time of life.



STAFF GETS EDUCATED IN STEM AND MORE

As an accredited preschool program, DFUMC CMO invests in teacher training at least twice a year. Our teachers have already been incorporating many of the fantastic tools they

learned from Cornell University and Wheelock College-trained early childhood education expert Merry Bentley-Barlow this past fall. Mrs. Bentley-Barlow is all about "hands-on, minds-on" play-based learning, so she encouraged CMO teachers to focus more on the "process" of learning and less on the "product." You may have noticed the evidence of this in less "picture-perfect" art coming home, as teachers are making the effort to incorporate more divergent, exploratory art "experiences" for your children. This kind of learning not only helps grow little minds through choices and problem-solving, but also little hearts because they have more ownership and pride in their independent work.

On March 3, all CMO teachers and staff will attend

the Georgia Preschool Conference at the Cobb Galleria for a full day of continuing education, as well as the opportunity to network with area preschool professionals to share ideas and techniques, which lead to providing quality and developmentally appropriate education for your young children. We are especially excited about hearing from keynote speaker Steve Spangler, a television personality, author, and science teacher, who will be speaking on how to create unforgettable learning experiences.

Spangler has appeared on the Ellen DeGeneres show 20 times over the last ten years, transforming simple science experiments into large-scale, over the top, eye-catching demonstrations. "Every time Steve (Spangler) is on the show, you can't help but be inspired by his passion for making science fun. He is a real STEM superstar," said Chris Cucci, producer of the Ellen Show.

We know our teachers will be equally-inspired by Mr. Spangler and we can't wait to incorporate some exciting new STEM ideas into the CMO classrooms, among other skills our teachers and staff are sure to acquire at the conference.

A LOOK BACK AT THE HOLIDAY SEASON

During this magical time of year, it is easy to keep children busy at CMO with the Christmas nativity story, Santa Claus, and Christmas and New Year traditions from around the world.

During December and January, we focused on the colors red, green, blue and white, and also spent some time talking about the season of winter, like weather changes and what animals are up to during the winter, even at the zoo! "The Mitten" book by Jan Brett is a favorite in each of the classrooms.

We especially enjoyed getting to bring the Christmas story to life with our annual Christmas Program. The children had so much fun preparing weeks for the program and then getting to sing in front of all of their family and friends. Thanks for coming out to enjoy the show. We hope you enjoyed all the holiday art (and keepsakes) made by your children in December and all the joy of the season on your break.



CMO CALENDAR AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Congratulations to big sister Mia from the Explorer Room who welcomed new baby sister, Zoe, on December 30, 2017.

- **MONDAY, JANUARY 15**
No CMO, closed for MLK Day
- **FRIDAY, JANUARY 19**
Storytelling at CMO with Ms. Christy from Kids Go Wild
- **SATURDAY, JANUARY 20**
Run with the Dogs 5K and 1-Mile Pup Trot @ Decatur High School, 8:30am
- **MONDAY, JANUARY 22**
CMO and Preschool Open House, 9-11am
- **FRIDAY, JANUARY 26**
CMO Priority Registration Opens online

- **WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 31**
CMO Priority Registration Due
- **MONDAY, FEBRUARY 5**
CMO Registration Open to the Area-Community
- **SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 10**
Decatur Education Foundation Mead Road Mardi Parade, 10am-Noon
- **MONDAY, FEBRUARY 19**
CMO Closed, President's Day
- **FRIDAY, MARCH 2**
CMO Parent Coffee & Work Day
- **SATURDAY, MARCH 17**
City of Decatur and Dekalb Co. Touch a Truck event; East Lake MARTA Transit Station, North Parking Lot; 10am-1pm

"The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness." Lamentations 3:22-23



"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!" 2 Corinthians 5:17

