

# Chesterbrook Academy –Preston

# December Newsletter

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**From the Principal's Desk**

Happy Holiday Season to everyone!  I can hardly believe that December is upon us.  The school year is flying by!  I was so impressed when I was reading our November Parent Reports and witnessing the educational growth of our students.  Our teachers and students are working very hard and it shows!

        I would love to invite you all to come to our **Holiday Celebration on Friday, December 16th at 3:00 – 4:30**.  We will have an afternoon of goodies in our classrooms with a special visitor--Santa.  Santa will be our special guest!  Santa will be in our Atrium so you can enjoy watching your child see Santa! Each classroom will take a turn visiting Santa between the hours of 3:00 – 4:30. If you are coming to our celebration, please block out the entire 1 ½ hour as I cannot tell exactly when each class will go up to see Santa. Classroom parties will go on at the same time so you can enjoy that while waiting for your turn. Please also extend the invitation to grandparents or other relatives that may be in town!  The more the merrier!

                 Hope you all have a wonderful holiday season and a great month!

           Tawni S. Connor, Principal

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**Important Dates in December**

* December 1 – Tuition’s Due
* December 7 - Happy Birthday Miss Claudette!
* December 14 – Happy Anniversary Miss Faryal!
* December 16 - Holiday Celebration!
* December 18 – Happy Birthday Miss Christina!
* December 26 - School's Closed!
* January 2 - School's Closed!
* Every Tuesday: Soccer Shots
* Every Wednesday: Tap and Tumble Gymnastics / Dance Class
* Every Thursday: Amazing Athletes

**Holiday Community Service Project**

           In the spirit of giving for this holiday season, we will be holding a food drive in support of the BackPack Buddies program. The BackPack Buddies program provides children from food-insecure homes with a backpack containing six balance meals and two healthy snacks at the end of each week to take home for the weekend. A separate email will be coming home with more details. We will collect food up until Monday, December 19th. Thank you for supporting this program.

**Holiday Celebration**

        We will have an afternoon Holiday Celebration in our classrooms on Friday, December 16th from 3:00 – 4:30! A special guest will be in our Atrium--Santa! We are asking that each parent brings in a wrapped gift for your child to receive from Santa. Please have the value be no more than $10.00. Your child will receive this gift so please clearly mark your child’s name on the gift. Please bring in all wrapped gifts by Wednesday, December 14th. Mark your calendar now so that you will be able to attend! Grandparents and older siblings are also invited too!  If you have

**Education Article - December**

***Exploring Holiday Traditions from Around the World***

**By Lauren Starnes, PhD**

**Director of Early Childhood Education**

The holiday season is here, providing a wealth of opportunities to enrich the children’s understanding of diverse cultures and traditions around the world. In addition, our students will share their own traditions with others. Below are age appropriate activities that we use in the classroom, as well as activities for you and your child to do at home.

**BEGINNERS (ages 2-3):**

**In the classroom:** As they near the age of two, children begin to recognize the sights and sounds of holidays celebrated by their family.Parents visit our classrooms to share holiday traditions, including unique books, songs and activities.

**At home:** Gather family photos and point out traditions, such as unwrapping presents, eating holiday dinner at grandma’s house, and making a snowman. Encourage your child to talk about what he sees in the photos.

**Recommended reading:** *Children Around the World Celebrate Christmas* by Christine Tangvald, *Happy Hanukkah, Corduroy* by Don Freeman, *My First Kwanzaa* by Karen Katz

**INTERMEDIATES (ages 3-4):**

**In the classroom:** Children sing holiday songs from around the world and are introduced to holiday symbols that they may see in their communities, such as Christmas trees or Hanukkah menorahs.

**At home:** Take a drive with your child or bring him to various holiday festivals in your community. Encourage him to look for and identify holiday decorations.

**Recommended reading:** *Christmas Around the World* by Calliope Glass, *Hanukkah Hop* by Erica Silverman, *Li’l Rabbit’s Kwanzaa* by Donna Washington

**PRE-K/PRE-K2 (ages 4-5):**

**In the classroom:** After learning about holiday traditions around the world, our older preschoolers identify countries on a globe. For example, they might learn about Diwali, the festival of lights, and then find India on the globe. They might make tamales, a dish often served on Christmas, and then find Mexico on the globe.

**At home:** Ask your child to help you prepare your family’s favorite holiday foods. Talk about the long-standing traditions in which these foods are rooted. For instance, you might explain, “I used to bake cookies for the holidays with my mom. Now we can start baking cookies together!”

**Recommended reading:** *Children Just Like Me: Celebrations* by Anabel Kindersley, *Light the Lights: A Story about Celebrating Hanukkah and Christmas* by Margaret Moorman, *The Story of Kwanzaa* by Mary Washington

Exposing children to various holiday traditions helps them build strong social skills, establish a sense of self, and respect the differences of others as they transition into elementary school and beyond.