Greetings Parents,

The Healthy Heart month will start with Coach Kim and the Homeroom teachers tomorrow. Exercise as well as other healthy habits will be discussed during February. We will conclude this month on February 26th with ‘Pump it up’ day where parents are invited to join us for an hour in the morning (8:45-9:45). In case of rain, the event will take place the next day, February 29th.

Last week I walked into KG2C during their snack time. One of the children called Layla walked towards me and said, “Ms. Sawsan, how come you allow children to drink strawberry milk? It has more sugar than a cereal bar.” I asked her how she knew and she replied, “Mommy told me.” I promised Layla to look into the matter as she is absolutely right. The reason we ask parents to send healthy snacks with their children to school is because their physical wellbeing is one of the areas we focus on to ensure healthy growth and development. We provide milk, laban and fresh juice every week. If your child does not drink one of these drinks, you may send any other fresh juice or plain milk. Starting next week, the teachers will ask children to put away any sweetened juice or milk. Your cooperation is vital in educating our children in their choice of eating a healthy diet and leading a healthy life. More on healthy habits will be shared with you during our Healthy Heart month.

Research says, for children to become skilled readers they need to develop a rich language and conceptual knowledge base, a broad and deep vocabulary, and verbal reasoning abilities to understand messages conveyed through print. A rich vocabulary in early childhood has been identified as one of the most important indicators of later schooling success (Pellegrini 1985).

Here are some strategies you can use to help your child develop vocabulary to use in conversation:

- Be conscious of the words you use when talking with children. Embed new vocabulary in your language as children are involved in their play and active learning, ensuring your language is natural and meaningful to their activity. For example, while making fruit salad, use specific words when talking about the names of fruit and the tools and actions you are using. Rather than say “Pass me those,” say “Pass me the Kiwi fruit,” or label what you see your child doing by saying “I can see you’re cutting the banana into slices. You’re being very careful with the sharp knife.” Balance listening to the children with your role in modeling new vocabulary.

- Use correct terms for objects and actions when you talk with children. For example, use the words “pupa” and “chrysalis” when discussing the life cycle of butterflies.
• Use a wide vocabulary that is related to meaningful ideas in children’s prior knowledge. For example, when cooking together in the kitchen, instead of “cooking,” you can sometimes “bake,” “grill,” “fry,” “prepare,” “chop,” or “toss”.

Respectfully,
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**Upcoming Events & Dates to Remember:**

Feb. 9        St. Maroun Holiday
Feb. 18       Early Dismissal at 1:00
Feb. 26       ‘Pump It Up’ Day: 8:45-9:45