Greetings Parents,

Last Tuesday the EY children attended a musical performance by the ACS Orchestra in the Lower School Auditorium. This group meets after school once a week and is made up of ES, MS and HS students. Our children were excited to be there, and started moving their bodies as soon as they heard the music. As we have all experienced, our bodies cannot but respond to musical input, and music is a language that moves us all, emotionally as well as physically. This was a wonderful opportunity for EY children to see and hear a variety of instruments played live, and to experience the huge range of musical expression possible with such a variety of instruments. They heard music that they know, the theme from Star Wars, and music new to them: excerpts from the musical Westside Story by Leonard Bernstein, and Hungarian Dance nr. 5 by Brahms. They heard slow and peaceful expression as well as loud and forceful expression; lovely lyrical melodies and dynamic rhythmic motives. They heard music written to convey nuanced emotions, where happy and sad become joyful, noble, dignified, heart wrenching, playful, comic. The children listened with rapt attention followed by excited chatter and applause, and talked about their experience throughout the day.

Research on music shows that the languages, math and music are related in the brain from early in life. Concepts such as patterning, sequencing, counting and one-to-one correspondence, which are all Early Years objectives, are shared between math and music. Texture, rhythm, thematic motive, color, space and dimensionality are shared qualities of the languages of visual art and music. All of the one hundred languages of children have ideas and concepts in common, and seeing the world in this way develops creative and critical thinkers.

“Every day learning experiences, such as listening to music, are especially important in supporting developing mathematics concepts in children from infancy to 5 year olds.”(Linder, Powers-Costello & Stegelin 2011)

Music activities and materials promote patterning, and emergent mathematics and patterning is the foundation of our numerical system. Songs have patterns in the words as well as in the beats and rhythms and they do not just have to be children’s songs. From lullabies to jazz to rock and roll and classical music our brain registers patterns which play a key role in the development of literacy, mathematics and cognitive development.

The Early Years Recycling Committee met with the head of Facilities and Operations Mr. Ziad El Hdary who shared with us the ACS long term plan to tackle many environmental issues which include, just to name a few, creating solar panels up in Deir El Amar, creating an environmentally safe water irrigation system, and adding a recycling containment area here at ACS to hold all of our recycling and to keep it in a safe and sanitary holding spot. In our meeting, Ziad complimented our team on being the division with some of the highest amounts of recycling materials! He was very impressed by our enthusiasm and our rock-solid commitment to the “Go Green” initiative.
At ACS, the children are recycling paper and plastic (food residue is removed from plastic containers) that go in 2 different bins. Organic waste, food and tissues go together in the black bag in the trash bin.

As our children recycle at school, we highly urge you to support and reinforce the learning at home by starting the two-bag system; the black bag is for organic waste (food refuse, paper and tissue), and the blue bag is for the other waste mainly plastic and metal. Engage your children in a discussion before you start this system at home. The only difference between home and school is the fact that we recycle paper separately at school while at home it goes in the black bag to absorb the food juices. Your home support is highly required to help the children internalize the learning and perceive themselves as responsible citizens. Below is a link to learn more about the two-bag system for recycling to start at home. The following is a quote that was written about this exciting new initiative.

“The hope is that this streamlined initiative– which is being spearheaded by Lebanese recycling guru Ziad Abi Chaker– will take on a life of its own, by encouraging dumpster divers (the poor folks that dig through our garbage every night) to also participate. By sorting your own garbage in this simple way, you can encourage them and help them become more efficient and productive.”


One KG2 class that started the 3R initiative very early this year has now started vermicomposting. Vermicomposting is the product or process of composting using various worms, usually red wigglers, white worms, and other earthworms to create a heterogeneous mixture of decomposing vegetable or food waste, bedding materials, and vermicast. Vermicomposting will soon become a divisional focus.

The children have been reusing junk creating different art projects with them. After they keep their project for a few days, they then disassemble and recycle the pieces.

Reducing has also been discussed. As I was visiting classrooms during snack time, a group of KG2 children jumped up to me and pointed out how they are reducing plastic waste; they shared with me how they are not packing their food items in plastic bags anymore. They have been counting and graphing the number of plastic wrappers over the week. They pointed out how the number has gone down from 12 to 1, their target is to get to 0. These children have become very reflective and conscious of their behaviors through meaningful and authentic learning experiences.

Starting children on the right pathway will help them develop a sense of citizenship that will enable them to make their own decisions and to take responsibility for their own lives and communities. The sense of citizenship gives the children a voice: in the life of their schools, in their communities and in society at large.
Upcoming Events & Dates to Remember:
March 9th       Teacher’s Day—No School
March 18th      Parent Coffee on ‘Curiosity’ at 8:15 in the LS Auditorium
March 25th–April 3rd   Spring Break

Respectfully,
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