



## December 2014

### **Principals Message:**

Dear Families,

Happy Holidays!

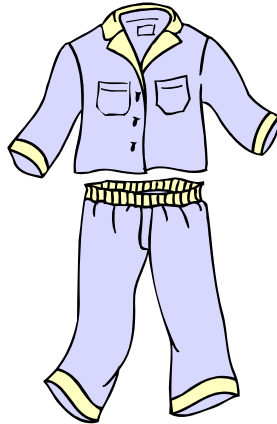
As we approach this Holiday season, we want to express how grateful we are to have such a supportive community of families in our school. We appreciate all of you and your generous donations and participation throughout the year.

We hope that you and your family will find the time this Holiday to enjoy all the love, happiness and joy of this wonderful season and throughout the New Year.

During the week of December 16<sup>th</sup> the classrooms will be putting on different programs during morning and afternoon for the holidays. Parents are welcome to attend the festivities. Please see your child's classroom newsletter or our website for dates and times.

Happy Holidays from our families to yours,

Melinda Carvalho / Principal  
and  
Jen Hayes / Assistant Principal



**Isabellasgift.org**  
**Pajama Drive**  
**For**  
**Rady's Children**  
**Hospital**  
**Dec. 4<sup>th</sup> to Dec. 18<sup>th</sup>**

**Discovery Isle will be collecting pajamas, slippers and robes for children who will be staying at Rady's Children Hospital during this holiday season. Sizes toddler to teens will be collected. Donations can be dropped off in the donation box located at the front office.**



**Discovery Isle will be open till 4:00 pm on**  
**Christmas Eve, December 24<sup>th</sup>**  
**&**  
**New Year's Eve, December 31<sup>st</sup>**

# A message from our Nobel Education Department

## Branching Out with STEM

*"Too often we give children answers to remember instead of problems to solve."*

*-Roger Lewin*

There is a wide recognition that American students need broader and deeper science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education; however, many schools do not introduce this interdisciplinary approach until middle school. At Nobel Learning Communities, we believe that starting STEM education in preschool is important to help students build problem-solving, reasoning and critical thinking skills, as well as self-confidence and self-direction.

This fall, all of our principals and teachers have participated in professional development sessions to create innovative lesson plans featuring STEM activities. Both students and teachers are having fun exploring real-world problems together.

Below are a few ways that we integrate STEM in our classrooms and some ideas to try at home.

**Science:** In our classrooms, students participate in various science projects to practice close observation and experimentation. They make volcanos using baking soda, food dye and vinegar, observe the result of soda bottle geysers, and create rain clouds using shaving cream and food dye. Perform a science experiment at home by making a lava lamp using a plastic bottle, water, oil, and food dye. Ask your child to make predictions on what would happen to the ingredients in the bottle. Will the oil and water mix?

**Technology:** We integrate technology into our academic curriculum by providing opportunities for students to explore changes in technology over time, use technology to express themselves creatively, and learn terminology relevant in this digital age. For instance, they explore sun dials, analog clocks and digital clocks and discuss how each item is used to tell time. At home, have your child look for different forms of technology such as computers, tablets, telephones and cell phones. Ask him to share the differences and similarities he sees.

**Engineering:** Our students work collaboratively to design and create inventions, while building communication, creativity and cooperation skills. They build boats and cars using cardboard boxes, make containers to grow plants, and build cities out of blocks. Continue the learning at home by asking your child to build a fort using pillows, assemble a tower from magazines, or create a necklace using macaroni and string.

**Mathematics:** We give children hands-on experience with math concepts such as pattern, size, shape and quantity. For example, student sort and count different types of cereal and graph their favorites. Take a nature walk with your child and have him collect leaves or small rocks in a basket. When you get home, ask him to count the objects and describe the colors, shapes and textures.

In summary, we provide numerous fun and challenging STEM projects to encourage collaboration, problem solving, decision making, creativity and innovation. Through these activities, our students build the foundation they need for a lifetime of learning.

- Lauren Starnes, PhD- Director of Early Childhood Education