**Looking back on November……………..**

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**Dear families,**

**November was a short but busy month in preschool! Children were very engaged as they got ready for the “Thankful Potluck”. Thank you families who were able to attend and contribute to our delicious assortment of foods at our festive potluck, it was a fun time had by all! In preparation for the celebration the children decorated the invitations to be sent home, made a festive table cloth with apple printing, created corn husk dolls in our woods spot to place on their plates and practiced the songs we sang at our final gathering on the rug. We celebrated the upcoming holiday through song, story and go-arounds. We focused on the word peace and what it means to us as individuals, as a classroom community and to the bigger world around us. The children’s ideas of what brings them peace are represented on their flags. We like to instill the idea of having peace within ourselves and offering it to one another around the holidays, for we believe this is what brings true happiness for ourselves and to the world.**

**We continue to act out the stories that are told in the woods, this gives the children opportunities to build such skills as sequence, literacy, memorization and dramatic play skills which are all prerequisites for academic success in future years. The last story we acted out in the Loose Parts Play area was Jack and the Bean Stalk. The brown bags being sent home are a new addition to our program. I witness here in school all the wonderful skills that children obtain from listening to and acting out the old fables told in the woods. The stories told are carefully selected to highlight important life lessons that are intriguing to young children and are relevant to their lives. We thought the brown story bags would be a wonderful way to engage with your child and connect what they are learning about at school to their home lives.**

**At the art table we had the favorite story Little Yellow Little Blue along with yellow and blue play dough that the children mixed together to make green. In the woods we worked on math skills such as number, order and measuring by finding sticks of various lengths and putting them in order from largest to smallest. This was a wonderful challenge for many of the children, it is an activity we will revisit multiple times throughout the year to see what skills we have adapted and gained over time. At our meetings the children have been practicing estimation, counting, number recognition and writing by guessing how many activities are on our schedule for the day. The children love this math activity.**

**On our hike through “Wood Pecker Pass” we saw many trees with large and small holes in them. We talked as a group about how the holes got there, who made them and why. When we returned from our hike we watched a short video showing the woodpecker in action. The children now point out holes in trees as we pass them on other hikes.**

**We have lots of love to share in our classroom, the children like showing how they care about others through sharing hugs. As a class we talked about how it is important to ask a friend if they would like a hug before giving one. Children acted this out in front of the class to model what this looks like. We also talked about other ways to show people you care about them such as drawing them a picture, asking a friend to play, using your words and telling someone you care about them. You can talk about the ways you show love to one another at home as well, or ways you show love to the Earth and nature.**

**Important Reminders**

* **We are collecting non-perishable food goods during the month of December to donate to the Marshfield Food Bank. Please drop them off in the classroom at any time or send them in with your children to school. The final day to make donations will be Wednesday, 12-21-16. Thank you for generosity and support!**
* **Winter break will be from Monday 12-26 to Monday 1-2, we return to school on Tuesday 1-3.**

**I will leave you with this song…………………….**

**“Are you sleeping, are you sleeping, little bear, little bear**

**You will sleep all winter**

**You will sleep all winter**

**Little bear, little bear**

**Are you waking, are you waking, little bear, little bear**

**You will wake in springtime, you will wake in springtime**

**Little bear, little bear.”**

**Warmly,**

**Elaina, Emily, Dianne, Brittany, Becca and Denise**