

September 24, 2009

Dear Families,

Second graders are off to a great start! Your children are moving happily into the school year and getting settled into the routines of their day. They are a delightful group of children and we are well on our way to becoming a caring and cohesive second grade community. It has been a real pleasure getting to know all of you as well. We also really appreciate the knowledge we gained of your child through the very thoughtful letters you wrote to us. If you haven't had a chance to do so and would still like to, it's not too late. Your input is so valuable. We're looking forward to an opportunity to share more about Second Grade with you and answer any questions you may have during our Curriculum Night, which is scheduled for October 1<sup>st</sup>.

In the classroom, we are focusing on building our community and learning new routines. We have been thinking about ways we can support one another within our community. We have been talking about how to be a good friend, about our needs as readers, and how to be a good partner when playing a math game or problem solving in the block area. Children are taking responsibility for some of the tasks that help our classroom run smoothly. For example, last week we discussed the different jobs we should include on our community job chart. Children thought of jobs such as snack helper, table wipers and a feelings buddy. They have all been very excited to eat lunch in the lunchroom. In fact, we recently overheard two children discussing how they were "falling in love" with the lunchroom!

Building a sense of community within our classroom is an important first step in our study of New York City. We will begin with an exploration of our school neighborhood and slowly expand our view to include the many neighborhoods that make up New York City. To begin, we read My Perfect Neighborhood and asked children to think about what they would consider a perfect neighborhood. This gave us insight into each child's interests and provided an opportunity to think about a building a neighborhood in the block area that would meet everyone's needs in our class. It is no surprise that the following buildings were chosen for what second graders consider a perfect place...an ice cream shop, an arcade, a candy shop, penny store, music store, Lego factory, skate park, library, hotel with swimming pool, a city garden and a forest! Children have been having a lot of fun working together to build structures & create details and signs for this neighborhood.

Next week we will take our first of many trips to explore the communities and neighborhoods that make up the city of New York. As we continue to build our

own classroom community, it seems fitting to visit a place that is about community on many levels. We will visit The Highline this Wednesday to see for ourselves what can happen when people come together to make a difference in their community. We will leave school at 10:45 to enjoy a picnic lunch. We will travel by subway on the ACE. If you would be interested in joining us on this trip, please look out for a sign up sheet that will be posted on our bulletin board tomorrow morning. We will need four chaperones. If you cannot make this trip we will have many other opportunities this year for you to join us. Please remember to send your child to school that day with a packed lunch.

Last but not least, we are looking forward to spending more time with you on October 1<sup>st</sup> for our Curriculum Night. Please join us as we discuss the many things that we will be learning about this year in the Second Grade.

Sincerely,  
Colleen & Lindsay