Dear ELC Families,

Welcome to Spring Quarter! I hope you were able to experience some form of Spring Break and are starting the season refreshed and ready!

* First, a warm, sunny welcome to our new families! We know it can be a lot for you and for your child, as you start new routines and build new relationships. Please let us know how we can help, and remember that your questions and ideas are always welcome.

* A temporary change in your front desk welcome—Loanne has had to return for more work on her shoulder, so will be off work till June, Please say hello to Mike Sedeghian who will be helping out with billing 10-12 hours per week.

* We are re-opening T5! Jackey will move over from T6 with some of the T6 children, and co-lead with Paula. The T5/T6 community will have continuity as Diane joins Donna as co-leads in T6.

* Congratulations to Wendy, who after 8 years as an Assistant Teacher, has accepted a Lead Teacher Position and will be moving into P4, partnering with Chisaki.

* Preschool Staff Assignments—In preparation for a couple more teachers to come on board during Spring Quarter, and for the graduation of our PreK classes in June, P3 Teacher Page, and P1 Teacher Iryna will be switching places starting Spring Quarter. They know many of the children already—and of course will stay connected!

Please consider helping to advocate for the ELC as we present to the S&A Fees budget committee on Tuesday April 5. We need families who would be willing to write a letter or come to our 15 minute appointment at 2:00 in C225 to share with the committee what the ELC means for your family.

Along with the coming of spring, I am appreciating all the ways ELC families contribute to support the center and each other!

 Kelly Davidson
 Director, ELC

4/4/16
First Day of Spring Quarter

4/5/16
S&A Fees Budget Request Meeting
2:00 PM
C225

4/14/16
PreK Family Meeting
6:00-7:30

The most engaging preschool experiences rarely come home in a back pack.

Teach Preschool

Even if you are not able to come to Family Nights, remember you are always welcome to spend time in your child’s classroom.

Come observe, learn, share and engage! (If you want to you can even finger-paint...
What’s new in the Infant and T1 Rooms?

**Infant Room: Teachers Lisa Ann, Mahboobeh and Diane**

Thank you for attending our Family Night event. It was great to see the infants and young toddlers show their parents what they are learning and enjoying. We have some older infants moving over to the young toddler class soon. The parents and infants went over to explore the Toddler 1 classroom together. Families had time to meet and talk with T1 teachers Brian and Yen-Chui and were able to watch as their child explored a new and challenging toddler-sized environment.

On our professional day we had time to enhance our learning environments. We visited other rooms and saw how the older toddlers were enjoying a crib drawer filled with soft pillows. We came back to infants and set one up for the infants to explore. It was amazing how they first climbed in and sat, then started taking toys and books in, and eventually used it for a place to meet and “talk” to each other. Now when they see different items in it they get excited to crawl in and explore. The older infants have even learned how to step in and out of the drawer. Small changes—big learning!

**T1 Room: Teachers Bonnie, Brian and Yen-Chiu**

The family night turned out well as families that have been here for many months finally got to meet each other. The saw how the children have thoroughly enjoyed exploring the new kitchen set and risers that have been introduced, they’re always investigating them and finding new ways to use them.

We hope to try visiting the grass outdoor area with the children now that they are a little steadier on their feet. We will practice walking as a group both using the rings and teacher assistance to reach the grass. It will be a new opportunity to experience nature around them and observe things passing by that we wouldn’t get to experience from our classroom window or enclosed playground.

Pictures! If you are able to share pictures of your child and family enjoying the outdoors, we would love to display them in the classroom. The pictures posted in the class do get pulled down by the children from time to time, so only pictures that are okay if they don’t make it back to you in one piece!

**Specialist for Infant Room and T1 Rooms: Bonnie MacGregor**
What’s new in the Toddler Rooms?

**T3 Room: Teachers Annie, Parisa and Khazal**

On Professional day on March 8th, we learned more about two aspects of how each toddler classroom will be measured for Early Achievers when we will be re-rated in September. Basically, a tool called CLASS (Classroom Assessment Scoring System) rates our interactions with children and another called ITERS (Infant Toddler Environment Rating Scale) rates our classroom environment. We also had a rare chance to visit other classrooms and help each other with new ideas to enrich our classroom environment. We went through the ITERS Materials Checklist to be sure that we had all the supplies that we are required to have in our classroom to support our children’s learning at this specific age.

The kinds of interactions we have supports language development skills. And then also, by developing the language skills our children can express their needs, ideas, and feelings with each other so they are developing socially. Oral language and listening comprehension provide the necessary foundation and are an ongoing support for literacy.

**T2 Room: Teachers Liliana, Rita and Khazal**

Our children have been having fun and doing lots of learning this month, requesting their favorite songs, building structures, and bringing a favorite book to share with the class at story time. It has been interesting watching the many different creations come to life at the block center, where the girls especially have been showing interest in the wooden hollow builders and the magnet tiles, building many amazing structures!

Rita received a special request from a child who is a Michael Jackson fan. So she arranged for “Beat It” to be added to the circletime songlist! He was so happy—and amazed—that he and other children burst out in movement showing off their dancing skills. It was great to see the confidence in their bodies and their moves! On family night a few of the children had fun showing off their skills, as they danced with their parents.

It was so fun to prepare snacks and dance with parents, brothers and sisters too, on our March 8th Family Night, **Building Healthy Brains, Healthy Bodies**.

**Specialist for Toddler Rooms: Vanessa Von Papp**
April 2016

What’s new in the Toddler Rooms?

T5 Room Opening Starting Spring Quarter

We are delighted to be partnering Jackey and Paula to reopen T5!

Some of the children are coming over from T6 with Jackey who has been co-teaching with Donna in Fall and Winter Quarter. Together they have been visiting the room, and getting to know Paula.

Paula and Jackey have also been getting to know some of the children coming from T1, as well as a few who are just enrolling for the first time at the ELC. Welcome to T5!

“"The radical truth about toddlers? Toddlers have a capacity for generosity, compassion, and perspective-taking. Toddlers have an insatiable curiosity and a passion to discover the workings of the world. Toddlers build verbal language where none existed before, and use that language in increasingly sophisticated ways. Toddlers understand what we say, and are capable of working together with us when we make space for them."—Emily Plank from http://abundantlifechildren.com/2013/10/18/one-radical-truth-about-toddlers/"

T6 Room: Teachers Donna, Jackey and Wendy

On our staff development day we were busy focusing on environment. Our teaching teams went to the other pods to give each other feedback on our rooms. By collaborating with our peers we found ways we could improve our own classrooms. The T5/6 classrooms are currently awaiting a display case, making it easier to switch out visuals. When we put up new displays, it often prompts the children to ask questions and is a great way to engage in conversation.

Sometimes we introduce new visuals, but a lot of the time it is something we have already been talking about, for example we added posters of insects and bugs. The children even suggested we bring the visuals over to the resin bug blocks to compare the pictures to the bugs.

In April Jackey will be moving next door to open T5 with our new teacher Paula, and Diane will be joining Donna as co-lead teacher in T6. All of them have been visiting and enjoying getting to know each other better, or again!

Specialist for Toddler Rooms: Vanessa Von Papp
April 2016

What’s new in the Preschool Rooms?

P3 Room: Teachers Karen, Page and Joy
We would like to take the time to thank all the parents that were able to attend our Spring Family Night! The children had fun creating musical instruments with their parents and eating healthy snacks that are served here at the ELC. We are Building Healthy Bodies, Healthy Brains every day, helping developing self-regulation and their executive function skills.

Professional Development Day was very meaningful to us. It gave us rare uninterrupted time to develop strategies and collaborate toward our goals for the Early Achievers Standards and Washington State Early Learning and Development Guidelines, helping us to promote a positive nurturing environment for you and your children’s success here at the ELC.

In April, we are excited to have Teacher Iryna join the P3/P4 pod, partnering with Karen as co-Lead Teacher. Teacher Page is going to move over to PreK1. When children transition to the PreK rooms, they will have a familiar face waiting for them!

During the month of April, P-3 will be doing a “Treasure Hunt. Collecting, Discovering, and Organizing Materials.” We would like to investigate what it means to children when they have sought out, discovered, and collected materials themselves. We would like for you to help them look for useful materials to bring to school to enrich their exploration and creativity in our classroom. Items they can create collages and other inventions with. We hope you will be scouting out treasures that you have around your home. We will send home a bag with each child for collecting materials with the poem by Rita Harris

P4 Room: Teachers Chisaki, Margarita and Joy
Have you noticed our display of children’s amazing works? Children created all these unique things by using recycled materials. We were so impressed by their imagination and creativity, showing it in the way they made decisions, arranged, connected, attached and described their work. Using these recycled materials gave them the idea that trash could become treasure. They had fun and felt proud. We saw an opportunity to connect into the curriculum the question. “What can we do to help our world?”

We walked around our building and picked up the litter and put it in the trash can or recycle bin. Then we created “P4 recycle station” in the classroom. Recycling with our children and creating a “litter patrol” was not only a big success, but helped our children learn about things we can do for nature and people in our community. We learned if we cleaned up it will not only make areas look better, but will actually make it safer for animals, plants and people.

We will continue to move to the next step in recycling as we study trash and garbage this month. This study of trash and garbage will offer opportunities for first hand exploration, information gathering, consciousness raising, and more problem solving! What to do with “old paper?” Paper making will not only answer this question, but will give us an opportunity to participate in this process of transformation. Please join in your child at home to think about things we can do to help this world around us.

In April, we are delighted to announce that Assistant Teacher Wendy has accepted a Lead Teacher position and will now partner with Chisaki in P4!

Preschool Program Manager: Karen Virta
What’s new in the PreK Rooms?

P1 Room: Teachers Mala, Iryna, Ghousia
In April the prekindergarten class is going to explore the campus of Bellevue college by going on field trips to the library, bridge, quadrangle etc. Spring is finally here and we are going to see the changes it brings to the nature on our walks.

We will start with a nature walk where children will be looking for signs of spring, and collecting some natural objects to add to the classroom discovery area. On another of our walks the destination will be the college library. The librarian will read stories to the children and we will explore the space together.

As we see plan, take and review our walks, we will be expanding vocabulary. We will be on the look out for signs, taking time to recognize letters and their sounds. Back in the classroom we will build a “word wall” with our new words.

P2 Room: Teachers Linda, Karen V. and Ghousia
In March we took a fieldtrip to our Campus Operations department. There we mailed out a thank you book to Fire Station 2 which we visited last month.

During the month of April we will take field trips to explore changes that spring will bring to the environments around us. Our class will investigate changes we note through measurement, plant samples, rubbings, our senses and more. Keep an eye out for our documentation board of changes we observe coming soon.

Our class is looking forward to our field trip to our college campus library in celebration of National Library week. There we will listen to a storybook read aloud by the librarian as the pictures in the book will be projected onto a screen.
What did teachers learn on the March 8th Professional Day?

“I learned what the Early Achievers assessment tools really measure, and what I can do to meet those standards.”

“We had time to communicate and make decisions together.”

“There is a lot to learn about pluralism and diversity at the ELC.”

“We shared ideas about how to solve conflicts so children learn the most from them.”

“Time to reflect on and share what we are discovering about individual children.”

“Having time to visit other classrooms and try the environmental checklists in each space was really helpful.”

“When we use open-ended questions and open-ended materials, children are more creative, expressive, problem solving.

“There are ways to make portfolios for children’s work meaningful and manageable.”

“What we can learn from and what we can accomplish when we work together, not just in our room, or for our class but for the whole center.”
What is the difference between normal conflict between children, and bullying? What can I do to make sure my child knows what to do?

Recently a family shared with us a valuable resource. Eyes on Bullying in Early Childhood, by Educators Kim Storey and Ron Slabey describes what bullying looks like in early childhood, how it develops, and what teachers and parents can do. It is a worthy read in its entirety and available at http://www.eyesonbullying.org/pdfs/eob-early-childhood-508.pdf but I will share a few highlights here:

What does bullying look like in early childhood?
Bullying can be emotional or physical and has three defining characteristics:
- **Deliberate**—A bully’s intention is to hurt someone
- **Repeated**—A bully often targets the same victim again and again
- **Power Imbalanced**—A bully chooses victims he or she perceives as vulnerable.

Young children may make mean faces, say threatening things, grab objects, push others aside. These behaviors should be addressed by adults, and children taught more appropriate ways to get their needs met. However, it is when they are done deliberately and repeatedly to hurt another less powerful child they become bullying behaviors.

What factors lead to bullying?
**Bullying is not inevitable or unsolvable.** It does not suddenly and mysteriously appear full-blown among children. Children experiencing or witnessing aggression or violence, including through media that glorifies or rewards violent behavior, are more likely to initiate bullying behavior in early childhood settings. Bullying can spread in any group.

How can I help my child?
No parent wants their child to be a bully, a victim or a bystander. There are specific kinds of effects, risks, learning needs and interventions for children experiencing each of these roles.

**All parents and teachers can help their children develop the important social skills needed to prevent bullying:**

- They can help their children develop **empathy** by labeling feelings, modeling helping behaviors and kindness, and encouraging their children to help others and show kindness. They can help their children understand and appreciate differences among their friends and family members.
- They can help their children develop **assertiveness** by encouraging them to ignore minor provocations, to keep cool during confrontations, and to say no to playmates’ demands. They can encourage their children to respond to bullying by standing up, speaking up, or getting help.
- Parents can help their children **solve problems** by encouraging them to think ahead about alternative responses to bullying and to anticipate the consequences. They can prepare their children to be helpful bystanders by encouraging them to stand up and speak up when they see or hear about bullying.

**PreK Families, interested in learning more about this subject and other social emotional skills relevant to success in kindergarten and beyond, are invited to a:**

**Family Meeting on Thursday, April 14, from 6-7:30.**

Limited childcare, for ELC enrolled children only, will be available for families who sign up in advance.