November Staff Newsletter

All this information and more is on the linktree at linktr.ee/pchstaff
The lunch menu is also attached

--If you have received this newsletter, and are no longer with us, please reply and let us know to take you off the list.



🍂 November Schedule Reminder 🍂

November 11th:

- Staff Development Day

November 23rd - 27th (Thanksgiving Week):

- VPK (Narwhals) and Butterflies: No class all week
- Sharks & Penguins: Care available Nov 23rd, 24th, 25th
- School Age Care: Available Nov 23rd, 24th, 25th (Nov. 23rd will go to Common Ground Park)



Staff Development Day - November 11th

All staff are expected to be at work from **8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.** on this day. The schedule will include time in your classroom, staff training, and a team meeting. Your regular work hours will apply.

If you have children who will need care during this time, please speak with Kelly and Arika ahead of time to make arrangements.

Please remember that this is a scheduled workday, and attendance is expected of all staff. Thank you for your flexibility and for helping us make the most of our time together!

🦃 Thanksgiving Luncheon Reminder 🦃



Our **Thanksgiving Luncheon** will be held on **November 18th & 19th**.

You can find:

- A list of children signed up for lunch
- Scheduled times

📌 Both will be available on the **Canvas in the DM Channels to each classroom**
📌 To access:

1. Open Slack
2. Tap **More** at the bottom
3. Select **Canvas** for quick access

📌 Don't forget—#pchannouncements also has **pinned messages** with important details. While in the channel, just tap **#pchannouncements** at the top and select **Pins**. This will be especially helpful as we move into the busy holiday season.



Training Reminder

All staff must have **12.5 hours of in-service training (5 hours for part-time staff)** completed by **December 1st**.

You have plenty of free options to choose from, including:

- Cox Campus
- Procare
- DCF
- Teaching Strategies
- …and more!

Many of these trainings already include CEUs for staff with Credentials—making it even easier to stay up to date.

Don’t wait until the last minute—please have your hours completed and submitted by **December 1st**.



Staff Credential (CDA) Reminders

Renewing your Staff Credential is FREE with our support—no need to pay outside agencies!
What you'll need:

- 4.5 CEUs (last 4 years)
- Current First Aid/CPR (we handle this)
- Membership (PCH pays through Children's Forum)
- Experience Verification (directors complete this)
- Letter of Recommendation (we provide a template)

Why get one?
It shows your growth, strengthens our school's quality rating, opens doors for career advancement, and reflects your commitment to children.

Time Off Reminder

Our time-off calendar is now ***full*** through the end of 2026. Due to staffing needs and previously approved requests, we cannot accommodate any additional time-off requests at this time.

As a reminder, each staff member is scheduled for two full weeks off per year, with the center closed December 24th through January 2nd.



We allow up to two approved absences per day, but please remember that unexpected absences can affect coverage. We appreciate everyone planning ahead and using time off responsibly to help us keep classrooms staffed and running smoothly.

If you have a true emergency and need time off, please speak directly with Arika.



🍽️ Food & Drink in the Classroom

Just a friendly reminder to be mindful about food and drinks in the classroom:

- Please avoid having visible items like soda cans—if you grab a drink from the fridge, transfer it to a cup or tumbler, unless your out of the classroom.
- Hot liquids must always be in a covered cup.
- Snacks should not be eaten in front of children outside of designated snack/meal times.

- If you need a quick bite, please step aside or do so discreetly—not in front of the kids.
- If you are ordering food, please try to do so during times we are eating with children or during your own break time.

These guidelines help maintain professionalism, encourage healthy eating habits for children, and keep classroom routines consistent.



Don’t Forget! Daylight Savings Ends

Sunday, November 1st, we “fall back” an hour!

- Enjoy an extra hour of sleep (you’ve earned it!)
- Be sure to adjust classroom schedules accordingly—it will be odd those first few days.
- A little reminder to double-check clocks around the building too!

With the time change coming, it’s a perfect opportunity to make sure both home and school are safe:

At Home:

- Check smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.
- Talk with children (if age-appropriate) about how to safely exit your home in case of a fire.
- Make sure medications are up to date and stored safely.
- Check first aid kits and car safety kits if you have them.
- Adjust timers, clocks, and appliances as needed.

At School:

- Check your classroom and outdoor areas for safety.
- Ensure timers, clocks, and equipment are set correctly.
- Make sure that your items are getting cleaned, and maybe plan a deep cleaning if you can of things that are bigger, such as sensory tables and the shelves.

Small checks like these help keep everyone safe—thank you for taking a moment to do them!

Flu & Cold Season Reminder

As we enter the colder months, it’s a good time to revisit our illness policy and refresh best practices for keeping children healthy and safe.



Key Points to Remember:

- Observe closely: Pay attention to how each child is feeling overall—not just one symptom. Look at energy level, behavior, and comfort.
- Handwashing matters: Model and encourage frequent handwashing with children and practice good hygiene throughout the day. Remember when entering other classrooms, be sure to wash your hands when you go in.
- Collaborate with Admin: If you are unsure, please involve administrative staff. They will help assess timing, severity, and whether the child truly needs to go home.
- Parents’ role: We have also reminded parents to be diligent about keeping children home when they are sick.
- Use professional judgment**:** Not every runny nose, pinkish eye, or mild symptom requires sending a child home immediately.
- Our Illness Policy was created with a pediatrician from Lakeland Regional to align with current medical guidance. It helps staff distinguish true health concerns from minor, common symptoms in children. The policy meets DCF standards in most cases and has been reviewed with licensing. It’s fair, practical, and age-appropriate, offering clear guidance while supporting each child’s well-being.

 These steps help balance health, safety, and consistency while avoiding unnecessary disruptions for families. Thank you for taking the time to thoughtfully observe and assess each child—your attention makes a real difference this season.

Staff Reminders:

- Do a react emoji of or on Slack for bathroom breaks
- Keep child info confidential
- Ask for help if needed
- Team communication: Share updates with colleagues during shift changes.
- Parent questions: leave notes or follow up if unsure for the morning teachers



- Behavior/incident reports: be factual, include redirection/what first aid administered, note triggers on behavior reports. For head injuries, a courtesy call to the parent to let them know that it happened and you are sending an incident report is required.
- Professionalism: Model respectful language, patience, and consistency.
- Classroom transitions: Give children warnings before switching activities.
- Positive behavior reinforcement: Praise effort and kind choices frequently.
- Remember to Share the Good, Too!: Conversations with parents can focus heavily on behavior concerns. Remember to share the positives, too! Talk about what children are doing well, celebrate their progress, and take pictures when you can. Keep age-appropriate behaviors in mind, and approach concerns with understanding and support. When we work together with families, we can celebrate the good while addressing challenges as a team!

Afternoon Classroom Routines & Departure Reminder
Please begin closing and cleaning routines when you are down to the last 2–3 children so your classroom is ready and you can leave by 6:00 PM.
If you are regularly staying late, notify a Director so we can address any scheduling or support needs. All overtime must be approved by a Director in advance, and schedule adjustments may be required.
If you need help closing your classroom, please ask the front desk for assistance!



Device Inventory Reminder
Inventory of devices are happening this month

1. Login Information

- Device unlock PINs/codes/passwords (These will be updated)
- Procare login and password (if known) If Procare has a 2 factor verification, this verification should go to the iPad's email address. It should not go to a phone number.
- Slack login and password(If Applicable)
- Remember - the notes apps in the iPad should have this information all times.
- If you do remember when you received your devices, please let me know - if not, no worries, but this will be for the future monitored more closely.

2. Device Notes
Please let Sam know if there's anything unusual or noteworthy about your device, such as:

- Cracks or damage (even if minor)
- Error messages
- Update issues or uncertainty if updates are working (e.g. iOS refuses to update to latest versions)
- Slow performance
- Connectivity problems
- Windows update limitations (e.g., cannot update to Windows 11)
- Any other concerns

If Sam can troubleshoot while inspecting devices, it will be beneficial for both of you.

3. Important Device Policies

- Some of you may have updated passwords for certain apps; moving forward, iPads should have unlock IDs updated annually to maintain confidentiality and privacy.
- Do not use Touch ID on any iPad; if it is enabled, please remove it.
- Apple Wallets should not be used on PCH devices.
- Emergency numbers on devices should not be changed to personal numbers, as Sam (or Julie, who I'll be updating) manages these for device resets.

Thank you for helping make this inventory process smooth and efficient!