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# Kindergarten News

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October 23, 2009

Forest Hills Lutheran School  
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We had a great time at the pumpkin patch. The children had the opportunity to ride the train through the spooky tunnel and take the boat through the lake with the shark and dragons. It was a fun and exciting trip. The students scoured the pumpkin patch in search of the perfect pumpkin. We found lots of great pumpkins; each one unique and different.

We were able to use our pumpkins for math and science learning. The children developed their understanding of estimation by guessing how much their pumpkin weighed. We also measured our pumpkins with string and used unifix cubes to measure how tall they were. We described the differences we observed in our pumpkins based on color, shape, size, and stems. We made a book about our pumpkins in which we were able to record all the wonderful things we learned about them.

Next week we will have the chance to continue our work with our pumpkins by carving them with our buddies. This is a great opportunity for the children to interact and work together with an older student to accomplish a task. The students brainstormed a face for their pumpkin and drew it out so that their buddy knows their vision for their pumpkin. We will then have the chance to toast some of our pumpkins seed and taste them. This field trip has provided us with many opportunities to experience our learning in a hands on way which is most valuable!!

I want to give a big thank you to all the parent that attended our first field trip. Thanks for making it a great experience for the children!

## Important Notes and Reminders

- Please bring in 1 or 2 rolls of toilet paper for the Halloween party by Wednesday next week.
  - Halloween party Thursday, October 29th at 1:30. Please send your child's costume to school and we will change into them at 1:30 before we start the party!
  - There will be no school Friday, October 30th. The day is scheduled as a work day for the teacher's to prepare for conferences and get report cards done.
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## Classroom Environment

Last week I had the opportunity to listen to a wonderful speaker at the teacher's conference. She has done a tremendous amount of research on classroom environment and the affect that the environment has on students ability to pay attention and learn. At this conference, I gained a tremendous amount of insight into helping students continue to be successful learners in the classroom. One of the pieces of information I was able to take from the conference and apply to the classroom was the use of pillows.

As adults, we want to be comfortable in our work place. Many offices has ergonomic chairs for employees to support productivity. The question was posed, "why would we expect anything less for students that we require to perform and learn for a 6 hour period of time?" This got me thinking....how often do I have a child squirming on the carpet or at the tables? Did I ever stop and ask the child why they were squirming? Maybe it was an easy fix....their bottoms were tired of sitting or they weren't comfortable in their chairs. Children are asked to sit for a length of time, but no thought is given to the comfortable of the child. So, I decided to bring pillows into the classroom for children to use during Our Daily 3 and eventually anytime throughout the day to give them a comfortable spot and help them stay focused.

I introduced the pillows to students this week and we talked about how we don't have enough pillows for everyone to use at the same time. The students then started talking about how we could get more pillows. I tell this story because your child may have come home and tried to take your couch pillows to school and you may wonder why he or she got this crazy idea in his or her head. I am not looking for families to go out and buy pillows for the classroom, but if you have any pillows you are getting rid of or aren't using any more we would love to have them in class. The students have really enjoyed being able to get comfortable and I have noticed children putting them behind their back when sitting in their chairs. Thanks for your ongoing support of our classroom learning and providing me with the opportunity to teach your children.

## Newspaper and Pumpkin Carving Tool Needed...Monday

- If you have old newspapers lying around waiting to be dropped in the recycling bin, please bring it to school on Monday, October 26th. We can put them to use during our pumpkin carving with our buddy class
- If you have pumpkin carving supplies we can borrow for a day, we would love for your child to bring them to school on Monday, October 26th in a bag labeled with his or her name. Your child can use them when carving their pumpkin with their buddy and the tools will be send home the same day!! Thanks for your help!