

December 14, 2018

Dear Parents,

Social Studies in kindergarten and first grade involves teaching children about the similarities and differences among and between children, families, and communities of the world, as well as the holidays, symbols and traditions that unite us as Americans.

In our lessons, we emphasize that all people are the same on the “inside” and have many, wonderful differences on the “outside.” We celebrate and respect diversity in the way people look, dress, speak, and celebrate holidays. Because many of our families celebrate a holiday in December, the children are very interested in sharing their holiday traditions with their peers. We help them see that their holiday traditions have many things in common--- *family, food, prayer, lights, gift-giving, and love!*

The children will enjoy a whole-school Sing-Along next Friday. (It will also be Pajama Day!) We will sing music from three December holidays- Hanukkah, Christmas, and Kwanzaa. We know that by celebrating and honoring diversity, we are teaching our students important lessons about respect.

If you would like to continue the conversation at home, try reading books to your children about the traditions of families that may be different from your own. Of course, there are many, many wonderful books to be found in the library and book stores. Try series books such as *My First Holiday* series by Karen Katz and *Rookie Read About Holidays* to help you explore holidays and traditions around the world. There are also wonderful videos, such as ones produced by Sesame Street, that teach children about diversity in the world.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0sjC13dFRS8>

The teachers, staff, and I hope you enjoy talking with your child about diversity and all s/he is learning about holidays and traditions. We thank you for your ongoing support of our work.

Warm regards,
Lynn Herschlein