

# ROCKING HORSE ACADEMY

May-August 2017



EDITOR-IN-CHIEF  
Linda Ashness



Rocking Horse Academy is an accredited school. What does that mean to you?

Every 5 years, we are inspected and evaluated to assure our families that we maintain the highest educational and ethical standards. In addition, they check our financial status to ascertain our stability as an operating school. We are accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools -their early child care division- and AdvancEd. All public schools and universities in Texas are accredited by this association—Austin Community College, Hays CISD, UT, Austin ISD, etc. Texas Education Agency recognizes us as a school and holds us to the standards in Texas law as well.

This year was our year to be evaluated. Rebecca Eichen, our Director, has been preparing for this visit for months. In addition to her “day job”, she’s worked nights and weekends to be sure we were ready. She had a good team to help her put together our supporting documentation; a special thanks to Ms. Amber (Pintos) and Ms. Marissa for outstanding assistance. Our administrative team all had sections of the master report to research, develop and write and they did an outstanding job.

Our evaluator praised our initial report. She stated that it was near perfect—an excellent example of the quality they like to see. For our site visit, two of my former colleagues from Austin Community College-Professor Mark Butland and Assistant Professor Aimee Finley- volunteered their day to serve as members of the evaluating team. 5 of our parents volunteered to give up

their lunch time to meet with the team to express their opinions of the school. We truly appreciate their wonderful words of support and their time to help us with this process. Thank you, Chelsea White, Travis Irby, Sasha Jones, Abel Gonzales, Mira Guirguis.

All of the team and parents had nothing but the highest praises for our teachers and their classrooms, our administrative staff, and our school overall. We received the highest score ever given by this state evaluator in her 15-year career, and she said it was well-deserved. She went on to say that she’d like to suggest that the state office use us as a model and a training facility for their evaluators.

I couldn’t be more proud of everyone for the job that they did that day and every day. I couldn’t run this school without such an incredible team. A very special Congratulations and THANK YOU goes to Rebecca Eichen. She did an amazing job. I can’t thank her enough for her sacrifice and her time to see that we achieved this goal.

Teacher Appreciation is in May. Please check your classroom and sign up. It means the world to these teachers to be recognized that week. These teachers work so hard every day to provide all of the children with fun educational activities and loving care. Let’s make this one week very special for them.

Thanks again to everyone who helped with accreditation and making us an Exemplary School.

# IN THE KNOW

.....

Foals I	3
Foals II	4
Colts	5
Ponies	6
Chargers I	7
Chargers II	8
Pintos	9
Wranglers	10
Mustangs	11
Trotters	12
Broncos	13
Corral Kids	14

## Tuition Due

May	8th 22nd
June	5th 19th
July	3rd 17th 31st
August	14th 28th

## Date Night

May	20
June	17
July	15
August	19



**Teacher Appreciation Week**  
**May 1-5**

**Pre-School Graduation**  
**May 26, 2017**  
**11:00 a.m.**  
**Luncheon Follows**

**RHA Closed**  
**May 29**  
**Happy Memorial Day**

**RHA Closed**  
**July 4**  
**Happy Independence Day**



**First Day of School**  
**August 28, 2017**

## FOALS I

I would like to start off by saying how excited I am to be going back to school to ACC-Child Development Certification. I am learning so much more and so thrilled to be able to share what I am learning into our classroom.

Fine motor skills involve coordinating the small muscles of the hand, wrist, and fingers. Some fine motor skills development include:

holds and shakes rattle

eyes and head follow moving objects

grasping objects

looks at an object in hand while bringing it to mouth

drops and puts small blocks into a container

While playing on our mat or enjoying time in our bouncy seats or exersaucers, our babies practice these skills. Our American Sign Language requires the development of fine motor skills. We begin teaching infants these signs early. They may not be able to perform them, but they do attach meaning quickly and once they do master more fine motor skills, they will begin to use them to communicate their wants and needs.

Let's Enjoy Our Summer

The themes for **May** are: Transportation, Maps, Tools, Building, Inventions, and Technology. Our Spanish words are: May-Mayo, transportation-transportacion, friends-amigos, and name-nombre. Spending time together on the mat is always fun and we love to sing songs which are "Old McDonald," "Ants Go Marching," and "Bingo."

Talking with the infants is so important which helps them to build their vocabulary. For story time we will read "Pet the Cat," "The Ants Go Marching," "Little Owls Colors," and "Puppy Love."

Gross motor skills development includes:

turns head from side to side

rolls from back to stomach

holds head and chest up when lying on stomach

uses arms and legs to move forward

when on stomach or back

begins to sit without assistance.

We ensure that each child gets tummy time every day to encourage these developments. We use the boppy pillows to help teach the muscles how to hold ourselves up while "sitting."

Our school wide themes for **June** are: Summer Fun, Ocean, Beach, and Camping. As we make conversations with the babies we talk to them using our Spanish words which are: June-Juno, summer fun-vevanodivertido, and ocean life-vida en el oceano. Two new songs this month are "Wheels on the Bus," and "Hey Diddle." Books we will read are: "Five little Ducks," "Busy Farm," "Shapes," and "In the Forest."

Infants develop strong social and emotional skills when their needs are met consistently by an adult they trust and when the interactions among the adults and children are positive. Ms. Sonia and I enjoy singing to the babies while we hold them during feeding time. They love Ms. Sonia's Spanish lullabies.

Themes for **July** are: American History, Space, and Jungle animals. Everyday

we speak to the babies in Spanish, English, and Sign Language. Spanish words for this month are: July-Julio, American-Americanana, history-historia, and jungle-selva. Fun songs we will sing "Five Little Monkeys," "I'm a Little Teapot," "Teddy Bear," and "Hokey Pokey." For story time, we will read: "Ten little Bluebirds," "Snuggle up Sleepy Ones," and "Colors Colors Everywhere."

We speak gently to infants throughout the day including during routines such as diapering and feeding in both Spanish and English to introduce both languages at this important developmental stage. We try to incorporate additional words into their day to expand their vocabulary by describing what we are doing.

Themes for **August** are: Manners, Safari animals, and Pets. Spanish words for this month are: August-Augusto, safari-safari, manners-modales, and pets-mascotas. Songs we will sing are "Where is Thumbkin," "open shut Them," and "Apples and Bananas." Books we will read are: "Olivia Counts," "Little Alphabet," "Helping Hands," and "Favorite Things."

Please help us by checking your child's drawer routinely to make sure he/she has extra clothes and they are weather appropriate, plenty of diapers and wipes, extra formula, and other supplies. Also, please make sure to label everything with his/her name. If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to ask.

Thanks,

Foals I Staff

*Everyone smiles in the same language*

*Author Unknown*

## FOALS II

Welcome to Summer time!

How time flies when you're having fun! Happy Birthday to all our summer babies. We are going to have a great time these next 4 months.

In the month of **May**, we will learn about Transportation, Tools, Maps and Inventions. We will be making a special gift for our fabulous mothers. We will learn about transportation by singing Down by the Station and Wheels on the Bus. We will make a green tractor and a red firetruck using our feet, for our art projects. We will also play with our cars with our friends, by rolling them to our friends. Our next theme will be Tools. We will read Daddy and Me. We will point to the tools in this book. We will also learn sign language for tools. The third theme will be Maps and we will learn about Texas. We will finger paint the state of Texas. With our finger prints we will also make bluebonnets. The last theme we will learn about is Inventions. We will make bottles, pacifiers and blankets. We will also play a hide-and-seek game with baby items. Our Spanish words for the month of May will be: mother: la madre, flower: la flor, bus: el autobus and train: el tren.

**June** is going to be a fun month. We will learn about the following themes: Summer Fun, Ocean, Beach and

Camping. The first theme we will learn about is Camping. We will mix colors to make a campfire flame and make a tent. The second theme will be Ocean. We will read books on the Ocean. One of the books we will read is Bubble Fun. We will make fish and octopus with our hands; we will also paint a starfish with sugar paint. We will work on our gross motor skills by popping bubbles. The third theme is Beach. We will play catch and roll with a beach ball. We will also play with a pail and shovel by scooping up toys and putting them in the pail. For art we will paint a beach ball and umbrella, and making crabs with our hands. We will work on our fine motor skills by looking at books about Beaches. The last theme will be about Summer Fun. We will make a watermelon, make ice cream cones and hot air balloon. We will be learning the signs for ball, shovel, crab and fire.

The month of **July**, we learn about American History, Space and Jungle Animals. The first theme we will talk about is American History. We will show the infants pictures of our current President. We will also paint our flag red, white and blue. We will also sing Yankee Doodle Dandy. We will also make fireworks art in a bag using a ball. Our second theme is Space. We will read a book about Space and Stars. We will sing Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star. We will paint a star and a sun

yellow; we will make a moon with bubble wrap for texture and a space shuttle. Our Spanish words for the month July are star: la estrella, sun: el sol and moon: la luna. The last theme for the month July will be Jungle Animals. The books we will read this month are 5 Tumbling Tigers and Jungle Fun. The finger plays we will do are 5 Little Monkeys Swinging in the Tree. Our art projects for this theme is making an alligator with our hands and parrot with our feet. We will learn how to make a lion and an elephant sound.

The month of **August**, we learn about Manners, Safari animals and Pets. The first theme is Manners. We will teach the infants to sign please, thank you and more. We will also encourage them to use the signs when playing or wanting something. We will learn gentle touches with our friends and teachers. We will read a book called Manners. The second theme is Safari animals. We will make a giraffe with our hands, peacock with our hands and feet and a monkey. We will sing 5 Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed, Itsy Bitsy Spider and In the Safari. Just a reminder: Please label all your infants items with first name and last letter of last name..

Foals II

***We must always change, renew, rejuvenate ourselves;  
otherwise we harden.***

***Johann Wolfgang von Goethe***

## COLTS

We want to thank the Colt parents for providing photos for the "I Am Special" project. The children were very proud to show their friends pictures of their family and pets. It also gave the teachers an opportunity to get to know the children a little better especially our friends who are new to the Colt Room.

We've noticed many of our Colt friends becoming more and more independent as they practice using their spoon/ fork during mealtime and walk into the classroom instead of being carried by Mom or Dad. Good job! You've been doing your homework. Here are a few reminders and suggestions for the upcoming months:

**WARM WEATHER SAFETY:** Since we will be playing outside in the atrium twice a day, please apply sunscreen on your child before leaving home in the morning and make sure there is an extra tube in the classroom for use in the afternoons. (We don't use sprays.) And don't forget to bring your child's water cup each day.

**CLOTHING:** Please check your child's cubby to make sure he/she has weather and age appropriate clothing. Also, Rocking Horse Academy policy states children should not come to school in open-toed shoes such as sandals or flip flops. Our Colts are much safer wearing tennis shoes especially when playing outside.

**LABELING:** Please label clothing, backpacks, bed linens, food containers and lids, lunch bags, extra snacks, cups and any supplies such as diaper cream and wipes. Morning drop-off is

a busy time, and we want to make sure these items get to the right child. We're also requesting parents write their child's initials on each individual diaper using a Sharpie pen. Shifting this responsibility to parents will enable the Colt teachers to spend more time with the children. Thank you!

**MONTHLY THEMES AND ACTIVITIES** Moms will be the focus as we begin **May**. We'll be making a special Mother's Day gift and reading the books "I'llama, I'llama Red Pajama", "Just Like My Mommy" and "A Big Hug for Little Cub". Transportation will be a fun subject to explore. The Colts will be creating a one of a kind painting using the wheels of a car instead of a paintbrush. In Circle, we'll sing songs such as "Wheels on the Bus" and "Down by the Station" as well as read "Planes" by Byron Barton, "Chugga-Chugga Choo Choo" and "Tugger-Tugger" by Kevin Lewis. Themes for the last two weeks of May will be Inventions/Technology and Tools/Building. Our Colts will be building with Legos and blocks and reading "Machines at Work", "Tonka Mudslide:" and "Goodnight, Goodnight Construction Site."

In **June**, the Colts will surprise Dad with a Father's Day gift, and we'll read "Me and My Dad", "Just Like My Daddy" and "Daddy and Me". We will have some summer fun as we learn about the ocean and seashore by reading books such as "Bubble, Bubble" by Jack Tickle, "On the Seashore" and "Sea Creatures" by Pamela Clark. The Colts will create some sea creatures of their own so look for them on display in the hallway.

The themes for **July** are American History, Space, and Jungle Animals. Some of the books we will be reading are "Yankee Doodle", "My Book of Planets", "On the Moon", "Imagine at the Zoo", "Animal Babies" and "The Animal Bop Won't Stop!". To celebrate the 4th of July, we will decorate our wagons and have our very own Patriotic Parade wearing red, white and blue hats we've made ourselves. Some of our crafts will be painted jungle animals, stars and planet earth. In August, our themes will be Manners, Safari Animals and Pets. Colts will love reading "Someday We'll Have Very Good Manners" by Harriet Ziefert, "Excuse Me" by Karen Katz, "Dot and Dash Learn to Share", "Five Tumbling Tigers", "How Do Dinosaurs Love Their Dogs?" by Jane Yolen and Mark Teague, "Playful Pets-Woof!", "Dogs Don't Brush Their Teeth!" and "Every Pet is Special". In Circle, we will practice using good manners, learn "please" and "thank you" in ASL and talk about how we should use gentle touches with our pets. There will be plenty of opportunities to make some great looking crafts too such as lions, elephants, dogs and cats.

Finally, reading is a very important part of our day. If your child has a favorite book that he/she would like to share, we would love to read it to the class. If the book relates to one of our weekly themes, that's even better.

Thank you for your continued support! If you ever have any questions or concerns, please contact us during nap hours (12:30-1:30).  
Mrs. Jackie

*The truest wisdom is a resolute determination*

*Napoleon Bonaparte*

## PONIES

The Ponies are very excited to see that spring has arrived, and we are anxiously awaiting summer! As the weather warms up, please check your Pony's cubby to make sure he/she has cool attire and that clothing fits properly. Keeping your little Pony hydrated is very important to us, so please be sure to bring a labeled water cup for your child each day. Also, as the children begin wearing their new summer clothes, please remember that for their safety, it is recommended to always bring them to school in closed-toe shoes (preferably tennis shoes). Finally, with hot sunny days, it's very important to use sunscreen. You should apply it in the morning before arriving, and we will reapply some after nap in the afternoon. We will be checking for a sunscreen consent form in your file, and we'll also let you know if your Pony is running low on sunscreen. Please make sure it is the lotion type.

We have been working on so many things during circle time in the Pony room. We have been exploring colors, shapes, numbers, as well as singing songs such as, Twinkle Twinkle, Bumble Bee, ABC's, Itsy Bitsy Spider, and more. The children also enjoy singing Jump Up and Down while learning to jump and dance. We read many books while in circle time and the children have their favorites like Bubble Bubble, The Watermelon Seed and Please Mr. Panda.

We are very excited about the upcoming season. The following is a preview of what to expect in the next few months...

In **May**, our Ponies will learn about Transportation, Tools, and Dinosaurs. Your Pony will learn how to say bus-autobus, car-carro, and airplane-avion in English and Spanish. We will sing, "Wheels on the Bus" and look for yellow school buses at Negley, which is something they look for every morning. We will also practice symbolic play by using different types of objects as cars,

trains, and airplanes. We will combine the transportation and tool themes during dramatic play so that kiddos can practice using tools to fix their toys and riding cars. We'll continue to work with our shapes and use shapes to build cars and trains. For example, we will make circles into tires, triangles for airplane wings, and rectangles for a bus or car body. The final week in May will be spent learning about dinosaurs! The children already love roaring like dinosaurs and enjoy playing with our large toy dinos while we read How Does a Dinosaur Say I Love You and How Does a Dinosaur Say Goodnight?

Mother's Day is Sunday, May 14th. In honor of Mother's Day we will read Are You My Mother?, Piglet and Mama, and My Mama is a Llama, and we'll discuss all of the wonderful ways our mothers love us. We will be busy working on a special surprise to give to our Moms at the end of the week.

In **June**, we will learn about Ocean/Beach Life, Summer Fun, and Camping. The Ponies will dive into learning all about ocean life and discuss all kinds of fun summer activities. We plan to transform our room into an ocean and the children will learn words that pertain to ocean life in both English and Spanish, like fish-peiz, sand-arena, water-agua, and hot-calor. We will make an ocean in a bottle that the kiddos can take home. We'll also talk about family vacations and discover why some families travel to the beach, or go camping, or why other families travel to visit friends and family in far off places. Father's Day is Sunday, June 18th and we plan to discuss all of the great things our dad's do for us and how much they love us. We know our little Ponies will love it! We will work on a special surprise to give to Dad.

During **July**, the Ponies will turn our classroom into a Jungle as we talk about the different types of animals that live there like the tall giraffe and the mighty tiger. We will learn to iden-

tify the animals in Spanish as well. During this month, we'll encourage you to bring your child's favorite animal from home to help us learn each animal's name. We'll also focus on and encourage using "soft hands" with our furry friends. We will even try to walk on four legs, just like our favorite animals! We will "blast off" during the month as we learn about Space. We will explore the moon and even create our own planets.

For the 4th of July, we'll celebrate our country's independence and learn about American history as well. We'll practice saying our colors in Spanish, red-rojo, white – blanco, and blue-azul as we create an American flag.

We will begin the month of **August** by talking about Good Manners. We always promote using good manners in the Pony Room and encourage children to share with friends. During this month, we will focus on saying, "Excuse me" when asking a friend to move over and will continue to practice saying and signing, "Please" and "Thank you" during our mealtimes. During Circle Time, we will read a poem about manners and sing 'Share Your Toys' and 'The Thank You Tune'. The Ponies plan on going on a Safari around Rocking Horse looking for safari animals. We will talk about different types of animals and even get to bring a stuffed safari animal from home. While still talking about animals, we will touch on Pets. We will discuss in Circle Time who has pets at home, what kind, and how to care for them.

As always, please feel free to give us a call during our nap hours (12:30 - 2:00) if you have any concerns or questions. We are looking forward to helping your Pony learn in the summer months! Have a great summer and remember to keep cool!

Thank you,

Pony Room Teachers



## CHARGERS I

Spring is here and summer is around the corner. Here at Rocking Horse Academy daily routines meet individual needs. We offer children the opportunity to make choices to help develop their decision-making skills.

We encourage our children with positive guidance. We also introduce potty training by providing a potty chair in the bathroom with a sturdy stepstool to encourage self-help for potting and independent hand washing. We work with your child's physical and emotional development, and we have an exciting curriculum this spring to enhance their academic progress.

For the month of **May** we will be learning about Transportation: by Air, Land, & Water and with this theme we can take a trips on boats, trains, jets, and air-planes. And in the block center we will repair our transportation with our tools. In the home center we will drive to the store to pick – up items. This month ends by flashing back in time to visit the beach.

Our theme for the month of **June** will be Summer Fun we will be learning about the ocean, camping and different Texas beaches that we can visit while on our summer vacation time. We will also be talking about things that we can found on the beach, such as sand, shells, and small animals.

During the month of **July**, we will celebrate our country's independence and learn the colors in our flag and find out that every star represents a state in our union. In the second half of July we will be learning about jungle animals such as, monkeys, tigers, lions, elephants, and so much more.

Wrapping up July, we will plan our games, enjoy mini-vacations, and make homemade lemonade. Gentle reminders: bring sun screen (lotion or cream-no sprays), and always remember to label all personal belongings. And change those extra clothes to fit the season. Last, but not least, bring a camera and we'll take some fun pictures with classmates.

**August** themes: will be Manners such as Please, Thank you, and Your welcome. We will be closing out August with Safari animals and what kind of Pets each one have at home.

Our Back to School unit will start in September with getting to know or renewing friendships, and we can't forget some discussions about our class rules to ensure safety for all students. Of course, we want all children to love coming to school, so during our week on School and Me, we can talk about going to school while parents go to work, and we will read stories like *Don't Forget to Come Back*. In a special art project, supplies will be passed out for our parents-child project to make a family tree to show anybody and everybody in our beautiful family. Don't forget pets, grandparents, uncles and aunts, cousins, godparents, or best friends.

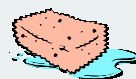
Mrs. Laurie, Ms. Theresa,

### Zippy Sponge Painting

What could be better than a contained painting project that will keep your toddler's hands clean! You'll need some Gallon size Ziploc bags, a sponge, paper, and kids paint. Put the paper in the bag. Then take a moist sponge and cut it into smaller pieces. Press each piece of sponge into a different color paint and then put them all inside the bag and close it. Then put the bag on the table and let your toddler squish down on the sponges and see how they put the paint on the paper. Let him shake the bag to move the sponges around and squeeze down on them again. Then when he's done take out the paper and let it dry! No mess!!!!

#### Supplies Needed-

- dishwashing sponge
- paintbrush
- kids washable paints
- paper



## CHARGERS II

We will chug along to **May** and discuss different forms of Transportation. Chargers 2 will have the opportunity to see and learn about airplanes, trains, subways, cars and buses! During recess, we will keep a lookout for all kinds of transportation and see them in motion. We will do a paper airplane activity to see whose plane can fly the furthest, and we will also get to have small car races. The Chargers 2 will then get to become little handy men and women and work with different types of Tools. We will be identifying several household tools and their purposes. Hands will be kept busy hammering and twisting away with our “kid friendly tools”.

We will also continue to work on our “Learning Garden”, which is located next to our playground and plan on sharing as well as tasting our yummy fruits and veggies.

Summer time will be smooth sailing when we learn about Ocean Life in **June**. The Chargers 2 will dive into the depths of the sea and explore different sea creatures and life under the ocean. Our class will become mini marine biologist and scuba divers when we learn how ocean animals are able to breathe underwater and what diets different species have. As well as identifying ocean animals, we will be discussing the beach and sand,

which brings us swimming to our next topic, Summer Fun! What fun activities are tied with summer? Swimming, BBQ’S and family vacation trips! The Chargers will kick off their shoes and enjoy some fun in the sun with their classmates. We will have a picnic outside, make our own lemonade and chomp on some juicy watermelon from our garden we hope.

Summer is going to be hot but the Chargers 2 will stay cool with plenty of fun activities and projects. After all the summer fun activities, we will march into **July** and celebrate Independence Day! Chargers 2 will have fun with red white and blue and learning about the American flag. We will also learn about Space and make an Astronaut’s mask and go on an imaginary “trip to space”. We will also take a trip in to the “Jungle” and make animal mask and go on an imagination safari.

In **August** we will work on our manners and practice them in class with our friends, along with a “manners party” to celebrate and practice what we learned. We will also learn Safari animal sounds and what their habitats are and what they eat. Then we will have fun with Pets and learn about how to care for them. We will also have the opportunity to bring in pictures if our pets from home.

Summer’s heat is sneaking around the corner so don’t forget to bring a water bottle filled with fresh water for your child every day. Make sure that your child has a change of weather appropriate clothes in his/her cubby. Please read your child’s daily sheets; we do mark on them if we need any supplies or attach important information for parents to read. Friday we do send home blankets and sheets to get laundered. Please make sure you are signing your child in and out every day!

Don’t forget to apply sunscreen in the mornings before coming to school. If you supply us with a tube/bottle and complete the permission form, we will reapply the lotion after nap before going outside. (No sprays, please).

I would like to say that all of our potty trainees are doing fantastic! It really helps when parents keep a consistent potty schedule at home as well. Chargers 2 are using the potty like “old pros” that they are doing their best and setting the example for those few kids who are so close, that it will be any day now.

We are so proud of their successes and we will continue to work on this huge developmental milestone.

Whoever touches the life of the child touches the most sensitive point of a whole which has roots in the most distant past and climbs toward the infinite future.

*Maria Montessori*



## PINTOS

Over the last couple of months in the Pinto room we have been very busy! Our main focus other than academics has been how to work our problems out with words. The room has more children, so everyone needs to work together more often to accomplish his/her goals. This has given the teachers a good opportunity to help teach basic problem-solving, social manners and cooperation with peers and adults. All the children in the Pinto class are getting very good at using his/her words and asking for help. They have also started to help each other out as well!

**May** holds lots of new and fun ideas. All children love the different forms of transportation. I like to offer interesting information on hot air balloons and how they work. We will learn through books, pictures, the internet and through science experiments. That is just one of the forms of transportation that we will learn about. There are so many options to pick from and the children will help pick out which ones to learn about next. We will make our own vehicles and have lots of creative fun with this unit. The Pintos will also learn about maps, building, inventions and technology. All of those fun topics are interrelated and have endless possibilities.

During **June** the Pintos will talk about swimming and how to stay safe in the water. Froggy Learns to Swim by Jonathan London will be read often during this time. Since the weather will be warm, we will also talk about water and its different forms. This will be a great opportunity for us to do some science experiments in and out of the classroom. We will also spend a couple of weeks playing board games together in small groups. We will work on turn-taking, counting, following consistent rules, and cooperative play. What is Summer without taking trips to the beach or going camping? This month will be pack full of fun

summer lessons.

Having Independence Day during this month gives us some great opportunities to explore some American history so that they have a basic understanding of why we are celebrating. I will be introducing our national anthem and the pledge to the flag. Looking to the stars to watch fireworks is a good seg-way into learning about stars and space. Exploring outer space allows me to incorporate several different science concepts, math concepts and of course tons of new vocabulary.

**August** we will move onto "manners"; we will encourage the children to use their manners during meal times, when. We will learn how important it is to be respectful so that others will also be respectful to you. Some fun books will help along the way in learning that using our manners is very beneficiary to all, like Be Polite and Kind, Share and Take Turns and one of our favorite character books How Dinosaurs Eat Their Dinner. One of the other themes for this month is pets. What a fun way for the children to share part of their home life with their friends by bringing in pictures of their pets. The children will be finding out the similarities in the basic needs of animals and people. Another topic will be about safari animals. I will use Teeth, Tails, and Tentacles (a counting book by Christopher Wormell) to help introduce different animals. This will also help with counting up to 20.

As three year-olds, the children are learning that they now have an effect on other people around them. As this happens, they start to test each other's boundaries both physically, by pushing or sitting too closely by each other or verbally, by using silly names and arguing about different topics that come up. I have already started seeing this take place in the classroom. This gives me the opportunity to help the children socialize with each other in a

more positive manner. You will hear me use the phrases, "You can call her/him by his/her name." "If you need to call names, do it in the mirror." Giving children an outlet for certain unwanted behavior makes the behavior not as desirable to the child. The bigger the reaction we or other children give them, the more fun it is to do. So if they start to invade each other's personal space, I just explain that they can move somewhere that has more room. Three is also the time when children need to move their bodies and become more physical with each other. Again, I will give them positive and safe ways to meet that need. We will do a lot of gross motor games that require cooperation and large muscle movements. Outside we will do a lot of running, jumping and climbing.

With all our themes and activities we will work on pre-math and pre-reading skills with the children on a daily basis. By incorporating these desired skills in the everyday routines and fun activities, the children retain the information faster and in a more concrete way. Like with everyone, if you make the activity fun then learning the information will be fun!

As the weather gets warmer water will become even more important for the children. Please remember to send fresh cold water for your child to drink in their personal water bottle every day. We will take these bottles to the playground each day. Also please label all personal items and clothes. A quick reminder about shoes, Rocking Horse Academy has a policy that states the children should not come to school in open-toed shoes such as sandals and flip flops. Please send your child to school in tennis shoes or closed toed sandals.

Thank you,  
Amber McCathern

## WRANGLERS

The year us really flying by! Soon the majority of Wranglers will be graduating to the Pre-K!

The month of **May** will be filled with celebrations and fun. During the first week, we will have lots of colorful art projects, such as tissue paper flowers to celebrate Cinco de Mayo. This same week will be Teacher Appreciation Week and the following week will be Mother's Day. We will celebrate teachers all over the school. Teachers are special because parents allow us to partner with them in the growth and development of their little ones.

We will then celebrate mothers, who are special in more ways than we can list. At the end of the month, we will learn about opposites and rhyming words. Games like Simon Says and Rhyme That Rhyme will help us have fun and learn at the same time.

The first week in **June**, we will have some friends transitioning into the Trotters/Broncos. A second group will join their friends in August. WE are excited to have the Pintos join us this summer! We have truly enjoyed

teaching and making memories with our Wranglers and we are confident that they will transition well into the next class. We would also like to take this time to thank each and every parent for your encouraging words and tremendous support in the classroom. Wrangler parents are the best! As the Wranglers continue in June, we will begin by celebrating summer fun followed by ocean, beach and camping.

In **July**, we will be learning about American History, space and jungle animals. The Wranglers will be working together to learn about the planets and their qualities. They will learn about the jungle and what kind of animals live there. Also, we will talk about their differences, such as zoo animals are cared for by people and jungle animals care for each other.

As we head into August, we will work on manners, pets and safari animals. I will be asking for friends to bring in a picture of their family pet to share with the class. I will let you know the date as it comes closer. If you have any comments, questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to let one of your Wrangler teachers know!

Reminders:

-Please remember to sign your child in and out with initials

-Please provide a fresh water bottle daily and apply sunscreen in the morning. We will apply it in the afternoon if you would like to bring some.

-Please check your child's change of clothes as the weather is getting warmer

-Please check your child's folder for important information or art work  
Wrangler Teachers

Ms Kristina

Ms Aubrey

Ms Jasmine



The ancient saying, "There is nothing in the intellect which was not first in some way in the senses", and senses being explorers of the world, opens the way to knowledge, says Maria Montessori.

# MUSTANGS

I'd first like to thank all the parents who participated in our Week of the Young Child activities. It was another successful celebration and the Mustangs enjoyed the different snacks, crafts and activities throughout the week.

The spring months have flown by! The warm weather is now here to stay. The kids also had a great time riding and raising money at our first St. Jude Trike-a-thon.

The month of **May** will be off to a busy start as we celebrate Teacher Appreciation Week. I am humbled by the overwhelming generosity of our parents as they often demonstrate their appreciation throughout the year. It is an honor to be entrusted with these children, they are a joy to teach!

For many in our class it will be their last full month as Mustangs. The start of June means that the current Broncos and Trotters will graduate and prepare to enter Kindergarten! Our current mighty Mustangs will then become the new leaders of RHA.

As we prepare to send them on their next journey in the Pre-K rooms, we will first tackle the topics of transportation, building, inventions and technology.

We will discuss the various methods of everyday transportation and practice math skills like sorting by finding ways vehicles are the same (ex: grouping together all land vehicles) and different (two wheels vs four wheels, etc.). In learning about building we will use creative thinking to build with different materials like playdough and sticks, recycled tubes and boxes and, of course, traditional Legos and oversized blocks. We will

talk about famous buildings around the world and try to replicate them with our materials. We will learn about famous inventions and inventors and how they have shaped our world, everything from the wheel to modern technology like the computer.

In **June**, the summer fun kicks off first by teaching our Mustangs how to stay safe in the Texas heat. We will learn about hydration, sun protection and water safety. We will practice both math and science skills by recording and discussing daily temperatures. We will expand our vocabulary with words such as evaporation and perspiration and practice writing these and other letters and words in our journals.

Please don't forget as the weather changes to provide sunscreen and a seasonally appropriate change of clothes for your child. Potty accidents do still sometimes happen, as well as just messy clothes from our classroom fun. We have some clothing available, but kids are always most comfortable in their own clothes.

After sun safety, we will move on to even more summer fun with themes on camping, the beach and ocean life. We can't wait to pitch our classroom tent, make sidewalk s'mores and tell stories around our makeshift campfire! We'll use our sensory table to explore items, such as shells and small toys, hidden in sand and we will transform our room into an underwater habitat with various ocean animal and plant crafts. Jellyfish, octopus and whales, oh my!

In **July**, as we celebrate our country's independence we will learn about American history and the firsts of our nation such as the first flag, first states and first president. We will practice counting both the stars and stripes and

learning the Pledge of Allegiance. Then we'll blast off and explore Space. We will work together to create a model solar system and we will experiment with gravity by dropping objects of different size and mass.

Soon the dog days of summer and **August** will be upon us and the last of our original Mustangs will move to Broncos and Trotters. Good luck in your new classrooms and don't forget to stop by and say hi every once and awhile!

We will settle right in with our new Mustangs and continue learning with themes on manners, safari animals and pets. We will explore different behaviors, learning the difference between what actions are appropriate and inappropriate and practice manners through role playing scenarios during group time (ex: behavior at a restaurant, at school or the doctor's office). With the last two animal themes back to back we will also discuss the difference between domesticated and wild animals and will sort and graph which animals belong in which category.

As always, we will practice our letter and number recognition with letter and number of the week. We will begin working with our new class on spelling and writing their names, something that we continuously work on throughout the year.

Gentle reminder: Show and share on Fridays is an opportunity to reinforce themes learned that week with visual props. Please try to only bring in small toys or books that either relate to our weekly theme or start with our weekly letter. Please make sure all items are labeled and small enough to fit in the cubby. Thank you!

## TROTTERS

This school year continues to just fly right on by. I cannot begin to express my happiness over the success of our students; they have truly come a long way from the beginning of the year. It has been my pleasure to be able to take part in their preparation for Kindergarten. I also want to take this time to thank all the parents who are not only actively participating with their child in the classroom but outside the classroom as well. It has all made a significant difference. I enjoyed speaking with each parent one-on-one at parent- teacher conferences. Our end of the year assessments will begin April 24th. I look forward to seeing how much our Trotters have learned since the middle of the year assessments.

Towards the end of April, we will be ending our Animal unit and continue our curriculum into the month of May. In May our unit theme is "Moving On." As our school year comes to an end, this theme allows our Trotters to take in every last bit of Pre-K before they move on into kindergarten. This is the last unit in our curriculum since our Pre-K graduation will commence on Friday May 26th at 11a.m. This is a beautiful moment for all of us here at Rocking Horse Academy. Some of the students that will graduate as part of the Class of 2017 have been here since they were infants. Regardless if they were here since infancy or joined our class this past year, it has been an incredible experience to witness how much these children have grown. It is also a rewarding experience to watch each individual get recognized as he/she walks across the stage in his/her cap and gown and receive his/her diploma for all his/her accomplishments, hard work, and participation.

Our Pre-K graduation does indeed help close out the school year, but I

will have one last week with my Trotters before they transition into the summer camp program. This will be the week of May 29th- June 2nd. On Wednesday May 31st the Trotter class will go on a field trip to the San Antonio Zoo as our last hoorah and Friday we will have that day for our last good-byes. For those who signed up to join our summer camp program here at our school, they will begin on Monday June 5th. Not only do I encourage enrolling into our summer camp program so that I am still able to visit with my students but it is a great program. This summer is packed with field trips, fun events, swimming, and other great summer activities. Enrollment is NOT automatic. You must fill out new paperwork if you want to continue bringing your child to RHA this summer. See Ms. Rebecca or Ms. Brooke for those details.

On the other hand, on Monday, **June 5th** I will be welcoming in our new Trotters, the graduating class of 2018. I will take the first week to allow the students and parents to get know me, as I get to know them and getting to know each other. The second week will be more geared towards familiarizing themselves with the rules, routines, and procedures. By the third week we will kick the summer off with a summer fun theme for the remainder of the month. We will discuss and transform our centers into beach fun, ocean life, and the great outdoors. Our home center will incorporate common tools used at the beach such as a shovel, rake, and or a bucket, along with other beach necessities. Our class won't only discuss life on the beach but life in the ocean as well. This unit will entail aquatic animals, beaches, observations of sea shells, discovering the difference between plants under water and above, and the realization that oceans are just in hot, sunny beaches; there is also the Antarctic Ocean which in-

cludes animals that can't be found on the beach.

In the month of **July** our class will try and answer the common question of how or what makes the waves in the ocean. In simplest terms it is the Moon's gravitational pull that effects the waves. This study will help jump us into our outer space theme, beginning with the Moon. While your Trotter is captivated into looking at the night sky, it will lead into a discussion on whether they think the animals in the ocean or the beach see the same Moon as the animals in the jungle. At the end of July, we will venture off into the jungle's habitat.

Before you know it, it will be **August** and the summer will be coming to an end. August 28th will be the first official day of Pre-K. Now, we will begin to introduce students to the curriculum. Our first theme will be Back to School. Each theme will last up to 4 weeks; during this theme students will get acquainted with new students and new routines.

In closing, I'd like to remind parents to be mindful of the Texas heat and dress accordingly. Please allow a little extra time in your morning routine to apply sunscreen to child prior to dropping off and leaving a tube of sunscreen here in the classroom so that we are able to apply it on your child before going outside. It is also important that your child comes to school with a fresh water bottle every day. As a natural reminder, please check your child's folder daily and communication with me or any staff member in the classroom is always welcomed and encouraged.

Thank you,

Ms. Marcey

# BRNCOS

With the end of the school year approaching, I just want to begin by saying that this Bronco class has come long way since their start during the summer. It is truly an honor to watch these amazing children grow in just one year into such inquisitive children and to be able to work in their preparation for Kindergarten. I would like to thank all the parents for all the work they have put into making sure this has been their best year yet. We will be working on End of the Year Assessments at the start of May. I am eager to see how much they have grown. If parents are interested in seeing how their children have progressed since our assessments in January, please contact Mrs. Angie to schedule a time to speak either by phone or in conference.

Our current unit, Awesome Animals will finish with learning how animals grow and change. The final unit, which seems fitting for the end of May, will be "Moving On." This unit will be focusing on new places around us, trying new things, and how much the children have grown. This is a chance for the children to take in all that have learned with us here at Rocking Horse Academy and take it with them as they enter kindergarten. Pre-K graduation will be held on Friday May 26<sup>th</sup> at 11 am, a reception will follow. This is a momentous day for Rocking Horse Academy. I can only imagine how meaningful it has been to have some of these children here since their infancy and now it has come time to wish them luck in a new adventure. To all the children, no matter when they joined us, it has been a remarkable journey full of ac-

complishments and challenges. The week following Pre-k graduation will be the final week for this year's Broncos. In addition to being the last week of their school year, the Broncos and Trotters will be going on a field trip to the San Antonio Zoo (Date to be announced.) Both classes will be sporting their custom designed self-portrait t-shirts on this special day. Friday will be our final day for good-byes as we celebrate with a PJ day. However, for those who have decided to join our school's summer camp program starting on June 5<sup>th</sup>, it is the start of a new and fun summer adventure. I encourage children to join into this outstanding program to get them ready for the new school year as well as making new friends, fieldtrips, swimming, and other events. Don't forget that you must enroll them for that. RHA doesn't automatically move them into that program.

**June:** It is with great sadness as our 2017 Broncos leave us for Kindergarten but know that they will do great. Bronco teachers will be looking forward to welcoming a new group of Broncos, the class of 2018. We are excited to meet and get to know these new students and their families on the first week of school. Once they are settled in and know each other, we will begin working towards understanding classroom rules and routines. Summer will start off in the depths of the ocean to discover all that is under the sea. Children will spend time learning about aquatic animals, plants under water and above ground, beaches around the world and discover that not all oceans are sunny and warm.

**July** will be a mix of both outer space and Jungle animals. We will be learning that there is more than just what is on our planet. Children will learn about our solar system, stars, the moon, and just how big the universe actually is. Through the next half of July, we will explore the rare and beautiful animals in the jungle. Get ready to go on a safari as we read and make our own jungle animals!

Once we roll into August, children will get into gear and begin our journey into the school year. Parents please do not forget, we live in the great state of Texas. The sun will be shining well into the school year and there is no better place to learn and play than outdoors.

Making sure that our children are comfortable in clothes for playing and learning is key. Allow extra time to make sure to pack a water bottle every day and applying sunscreen before leaving home. We do play outside twice a day, so please bring a bottle of sunscreen to keep in the classroom (No sprays allowed). My main form of communication is located in your children's individual classroom folders. I enjoy speaking with parents and families. Please do not be shy if you have question, comments, or concerns.

I look forward to the upcoming months.

Best wishes,

Bronco Teachers

Mrs. Angie, Mrs. Norma, and Ms. Bri

Knock, knock. Who's there?

Cow says. Cow says who?

No silly, a cow says Moooooo!



## CORRAL KIDS

### Corral Kids Summer Camp

Let the countdown to Summer begin!! This summer Corral Kids will enjoy weekly swim days, field trips, special guest performers, science, arts & crafts and soooo much more!!! To help both our Parents and Campers be prepared for an amazing SUMMER we have highlighted several things below to help things run smoothly! Of course please don't ever hesitate to ask any of the Corral Kids staff questions...we are here to help!

### Pool Days

Our Corral Kid Swim days are Thursday and Friday each week from 1:30pm-3:30pm at the City of Kyle pool. Your child's first visit to the pool will include the City of Kyle lifeguards administering a swim test in order to determine his/her water proficiency. If your child passes, he/she will receive a wristband allowing him/her to participate in the deep-end activities. Each week your child will be required to check in with the lifeguard staff to obtain a new wristband.

**\*Kindergarten Campers\*** – Each child will be required to wear a life vest either brought from home or borrowed from the pool. If you and your child feels comfortable as a swimmer to attempt the required test, we will be sure to have the lifeguards administer the swim test.

Don't Forget Your Pool Essentials...

Life Vest  
TOWEL

Swimsuit

Corral Kids T-shirt

Flip flops

Sunscreen (Rocking Horse Academy is providing SPF 30 sunscreen for all of our students. If you have an alternative preference please bring your bottle labeled—no sprays please)

### Field Trips

All groups will be attending field trips this summer. Corral Kids morning staff will present each parent with a permission slip on Monday mornings. If there a sack lunch or specific clothing will be required, a counselor will inform you. Reminders will be posted on the gym doors and front bulletin boards as well.

### Things to Remember this SUMMER

**Morning Drop Off** - Your child may be dropped off in the morning as early as 6:30a.m. At which time, all students will meet in the computer lab with our opening camp counselors. The children will visit the playground from 7:15 a.m. until 8:00 a.m. weather permitting. Please take the necessary precautions and bring your child with a layer of sun block already applied each morning.

**Lunch & Snacks** – Snacks will be provided to each student every morning and afternoon. A counselor will approach you each morning to ask whether your camper will be bringing a lunch or purchasing an RHA lunch.

**WATER BOTTLES!!!!** - Water bottles must be taken home, washed, and refilled on a daily basis! Water bottles are refilled consistently throughout the day

and will travel with your child to each activity.

Please be sure to label everything your child brings to RHA - Any items not labeled will be labeled by our camp counselors. Please be sure to check the Corral Kid's lost and found box located in the gym for any missing items.

**Appropriate Attire** - Flip flops are not allowed at RHA. We ask for all of the children to come to camp in tennis shoes for comfort and safety. The only time flip flops should be worn is while at the Kyle pool. Children not wearing closed toe shoes will not be allowed to play on the playscape for their own safety. Campers should also wear their blue "Corral Kids" shirt for field trips and swim days.

**Items Brought From Home** - Toys, stuffed animals, electronics, cell phones, etc. are not allowed at RHA. If any of these items are found at Rocking Horse Academy, they will be kept in Ms. Brooke's office until the end of the day. We appreciate your help in reinforcing our policy and ask if you could please check your children's belongings before dropping them off.

The countdown to sun & fun has begun and you won't want to miss anything!!!! Spots are filling up fast, so be sure to get in on the fun. Registration information is available at the front desk or with the Corral Kids Supervisor, Brooke Sandahl. Please don't hesitate to ask any questions you might have about our upcoming SUMMER!

### Healthy Snack Ideas

Ants on a log (celery topped with peanut butter and raisin "ants")

egg boats (hard-boiled egg wedges topped with a cheese sail)

fruit kabobs-or dried fruit

Fruit smoothie

mini-pitas with hummus dip

whole-grain crackers topped with cheese



trail mix

nuts

low-sugar whole-grain cereal

whole-grain pretzels

fresh cut-up vegetables.

