



Nightingale Notes

January 2026

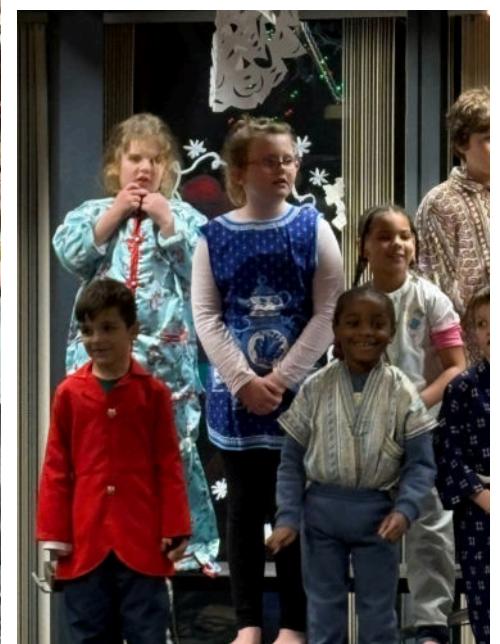
Upcoming in February

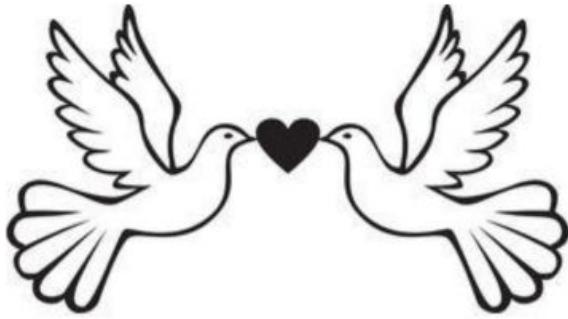
- 1 CCP Application window opens
- 5 Ski Club scheduled
- 12 Ski Club scheduled
- 13 Bookmobile**
- 16 President's Day--No School**
- 19 Ski Club scheduled
- 27 End Q3 Bookmobile**

Penny, Annabelle, Aurelius, Cambria, Rowan, Gigi, Eva ready for Peace Night



Chicks and Eagles perform at Peace Night on Dec. 18





March for Peace Lyrics by Frank Leto

**Step by step let's march for peace.
Come and join us won't you please.
Peace can be a dream come true.
Here are things we all can do:**

Be kind to other people.
Help someone in need.
Uplift the world with love
By doing good deeds and maybe one day?

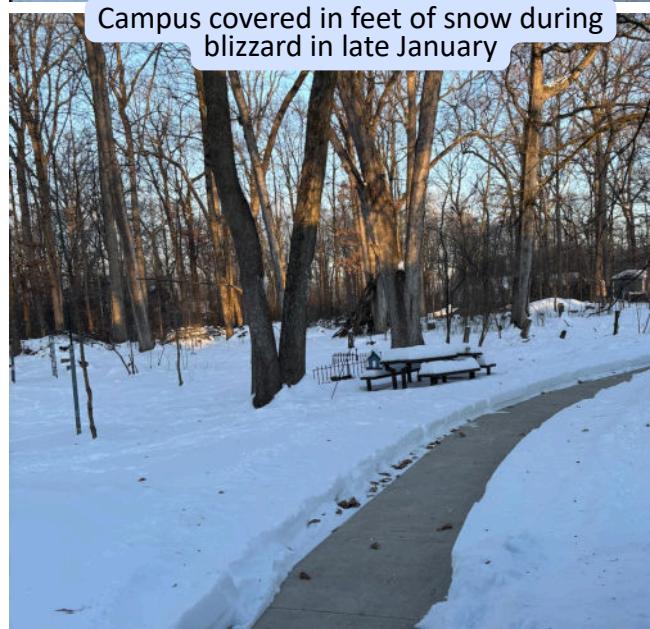
Random acts of kindness.
Say no to violence.
Show someone compassion,
Make a difference and maybe one day?

**Step by step let's march for peace.
Come and join us won't you please.
Peace can be a dream come true.
Here are things we all can do.**

Honor Mother earth.
Respect all living things.
Take a walk in nature,
Feel the joy it brings and maybe one day?

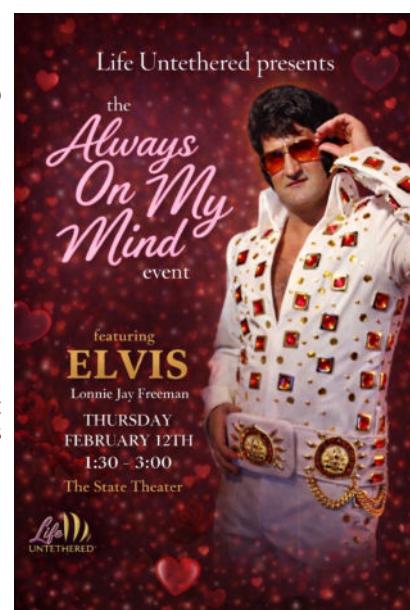
Care for our planet.
We can't let down our guard.
Gaze up at the night sky
And count your lucky stars and maybe one day?

**Step by step let's march for peace
Dr. Montessori would be pleased
Peace can be our dream come true
And it all can start with you
maybe one day, Yes maybe one day we'll have peace**



Nightingale Community Service

Nightingale is so happy to partner with Ryan Ray who is organizing community service events that improve the quality of life for many senior citizens in Springfield. He is hosting a Valentine's Day event and our students are collaborating to create Valentine's Day boxes, greeting cards, and sweet treats. This opportunity is giving our students practice with respectful communication, conscious kindness, and building stronger connections between the generations in our town.



2025 Year in Review

The year in review breaks our initiatives down by the calendar. Nightingale's Ecology Education Program, Erdkinder, partnered with Our Earth Nursery in these outreach programs. This work is ongoing and many of these projects are years in the making. Keep an eye out for the planned agenda for 2026 as we take these projects into the future with the goal of leveraging our impact and sharing the joy of this good work.

January: Tapping Sugar Maples

Local expert, Marc Strandler, taught a Maple Sugaring Class to our Nightingale Erdkinder Team, preparing us for this new project. The Chickadees, led by Eve Strom, tapped, gathered and boiled down 11 gallons of sap to create one quart of maple syrup. The syrup was shared with the pre-K students and we hope to build on this success by tapping many more trees this year. Marc has also shared his expertise about Pawpaws and hand pollinated our most mature Pawpaw tree resulting in our first Pawpaw harvest.

February: Vernal Pool Restoration

Wing Ecology students, led by Jack Westfall, worked to restore our woodland vernal pool. This project included removing many wheelbarrows of soil from around the existing low spot. Students cut a quarter acre of invasive species and native species like Buckeye and Iris were added. This work resulted in the success of attracting a pair of Mallards as well as adding nearly a month of water retention to the pool.

March: Our Earth Nursery - Spring Open

Our Earth Nursery opened 2025 with 66 species of herbaceous perennials, woody shrubs and evergreen and deciduous trees. Our mission is to grow and share native and edible plants to create a more beautiful, diverse and sustainable community and future. We use the practice of propagation and growing plants as a tool for connecting and protecting communities through perennial food systems that coexist within natural ecosystems. Students k-12 work to reclaim traditional skills, study interconnectedness and experience the joy of stewardship. The nursery provides donations to groups in the Springfield area and students are able to give through their work.

April: Earth Day

Earth Day has become a tradition for our Nightingale students. This year the secondary students ran stations that included a woodland hike, compost activity as well as games and snacks that highlighted environmental issues. We added to our Earth Day traditions by setting up our plant booth at Cedar Bog. Many of the plants we had for sale could also be seen blooming along the boardwalk during their free hike day.

May: Urbana Farm Market

Local farmer markets have connected the nursery and students with other growers, producers, consumers, and educators. The Urbana Farm Market is about 15 minutes north of the school and is the hometown of a number of our student body and staff. Our Earth Nursery set up selling plants there in April and October for the past few years, extending our ability to share plants an additional two months beyond the Springfield Farm Market. Next year we are also going to focus on more on-site sales to engage more of our student population.

June: Outdoor school @ NM

June is an exciting time at Nightingale, the summer program is beginning and the growing season is in full swing. The June Program is a summer extension of the school year. Students engage in project and theme based learning strengthening reading and math skills. The plant nursery requires watering at least three days per week and provides students a rich environment to delve into their arts, literature and arithmetic projects. French language classes from Saona Jean polished students' language understanding through bilingual connections.

July: Visit Scioto Gardens

Our visit to Mike and Linda Johnson, founders of Scioto Gardens, reconnected us to one of the families that inspires all the work we do. A kind donation of house plants has facilitated middle school students study into various exotic species; Orbea variegata from southern and eastern Africa, Voodoo Lily from the Lai Chau region of North Vietnam, Aloe Vera is native to the south-east Arabian Peninsula, particularly in the Hajar Mountains. Our class is using exotic plants as a way to study ecosystems and human culture from around the world. The new location of Scioto Gardens Nursery was a beautiful destination. We purchased plants for a rain garden restoration at the south east corner of the Nightingale campus. We also visited the Midwest Native Plant Conference. A wonderful event that we hope to participate in this year.

August: Springfield Farm Market

The Springfield Farm Market has been a close partner with our permaculture and restorative endeavors. Our culinary staff have set up student chefs and taste tests, we have a presence there every spring and fall for 8 years continuously and many years on and off before that. Participating in the local economy, supporting holistic farms and kitchens, and connecting students to sustainable food systems has been invaluable.

September: OPAI

In September we purchased 45 fruit trees to use in community projects and fill in gaps in the Chickadee food forest. Eve added blueberry bushes and fruit trees. We worked at the Ohio Performing Arts Institute, OPAI, doing landscape cleaning-up and added a holistic orchard in the back. This work strengthens our ties and helps to create a reciprocal partnership. Sarah Bullwinkel connected Nightingale with OPAI who provides programming and a space for dozens of our students to participate in the arts. We planted 10 fruit trees, cleared invasive species and did general landscape maintenance such as trimming hedges, edging sidewalks and weed trimming. We are grateful that our students are exposed to various art forms and nonprofits are stronger together.

October: Gammon House

We began planting an edible landscape at Gammon House working with their volunteers and Gail Grant who approved the initial planting. Our objective is to support their goals for education about the daily lives of Springfield citizens conducting the Underground Railroad. We hope to share period appropriate plants and gardens that will connect visitors to the place and time when that extraordinary work was taking place.

November: Cedar Bog Restoration

Students have taken trips to Cedar Bog to remove invasives with Preserve Manager Madison Brown and Preserve Assistant Diana Boggs. These trips allow us to preserve one of Ohio's most plant diverse areas. Students enjoy learning in the visitors center, the peace of walking the over one mile of boardwalk as well as the satisfaction of using maximum effort to cut and stack invasive species. Allowing natural regeneration through the existing seed bank. The dormant seeds become activated from soil disruptions or increased sunlight through the canopy. Cedar Bog is recognized as the highest diversity of plants in the state of Ohio.

December: Buck Creek State Park

We worked to maintain model garden beds that we built by students and Buck Creek staff in the previous year. These raised beds on Coyote Run Trail are being used to show the beauty of native wildflowers as well as propagation for restoration in the surrounding areas. We had donated the plants and students are maintaining them. We also worked to remove invasive honeysuckle and buckthorn, improving views of the lake as well as making room for native tree species to regenerate and native pollinator species to return.

Winter Restoration

After winter break, we return gently.

These early weeks are not a time to rush forward, but a time to restore rhythm, to reconnect with the prepared environment, and to find comfort in familiar work and routines.

Toddlers thrive when they feel safe, secure and capable. Through purposeful work the children experience the joy of being helpful. They discover that they are valued members of their community while simultaneously giving them a sense of belonging.

"Joy, feeling one's own value, being appreciated and loved by others, feeling useful and capable of production are all factors of enormous value for the human soul."

-Maria Montessori

The Hummingbird team thoughtfully supports the emotional needs of each child, allowing them to reconnect with their environment and with one another at their own pace. As we nest back into our days together, we look forward to a peaceful season of growth!



Winter Wonders in The Wild

Upon returning from our winter break the children were curious to learn about winter animals! Did you know that polar bears have paws the size of a large dinner plate? Or that an Arctic fox has thick fur around its feet like built in snow boots?

We talked about animals that curl up to hibernate and others that migrate or bravely adapt to their environment to stay active during the colder months.

The students are also learning to identify and distinguish between animals that live in icy polar regions and other familiar animals that we might spot here in Ohio.

The Hummingbirds were excited to mimic animal tracks in the snow as we waited patiently for another snowfall. When the snow arrived the students eagerly bundled up and stepped into the quiet outdoors in search of real animal tracks. They were thrilled to discover raccoon paw prints, tiny bird tracks and numerous trails made by animal friends that had been there before us.



Gintey offers to help Nora with her zipper.

Six Skills to Thrive

Children need these six skills to thrive not just in school, but in life. They are the foundation for lifelong learning and well-being. This is where Montessori meets modern neuroscience, psychology, and real-life parenting, and also why this approach feels more relevant than ever.

1. Independence and self-trust

The ability for a child to think for themselves, make choices, try, fail, and try again without constantly looking to an adult for approval or direction.

2. Emotional regulation and resilience

Learning how to move through frustration, disappointment, and big feelings without shutting down, exploding, or being left alone with emotions they don't yet know how to handle.

3. Focus and deep concentration in a distracted world

The capacity to stay with a task, idea, or experience long enough to learn from it despite screens, noise, interruptions, and the constant pull for attention.

4. Curiosity, adaptability, and confidence

A genuine interest in exploring the world, combined with the flexibility to adjust when things change and the confidence to engage with new situations without fear.

5. Strong executive function and problem-solving skills

Skills like planning, remembering steps, managing impulses, and figuring out what to do next. Those are the abilities that quietly shape how children function at school, at home, and in relationships.

6. Meaningful Engagement Without Screens

Children don't need constant entertainment to stay engaged. What they need is the right kind of engagement and simple, purposeful activities that support focus, independence, and inner motivation.



Valentine's Day



Chickadees

Valentine's Day is coming soon! While we will be celebrating love and friendship with the Chicks, we want to stay away from the consumer aspect of this holiday. If your child would like to pass out Valentines, we ask that they are handmade and that there are enough for all the children. We currently have 23 Chicks. Please do not have your child write the name of the person they are for; instead, they can write their own name so that each recipient will know who it is from. This eases the process of passing them out. Some children like to bring a treat to share. If you would like to do so please refer to the Smart Snack suggestions found in the Chickadee handbook. They will enable us to serve healthy alternatives to the sugary fare typically associated with the holiday in the past. Send an email to Krista if you are planning a treat so that we can be prepared.

klambdin@nightingaleschool.org thank you!

SLEDDING!



Chicks take advantage of a snowy day to enjoy the hill at the Country Club.



Annie, Alivia, Tyson, Gigi working with Ashleigh



Rowan, Vivian, Aubrey, Tyson, Annie working with Sheila



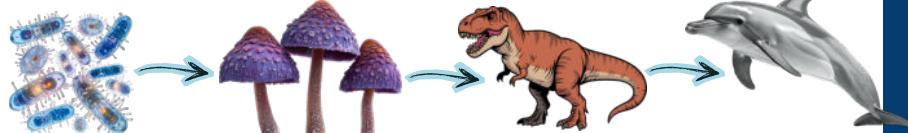
Eagle students begin their preliminary facts research for the Wax Museum

Wax Museum

The Eagle class is revving up for their annual Wax Museum. This presentation bears many facets. The Eagles will be researching and depicting the **Timeline of Life**, studying organisms from bacteria through humans. We are currently entering the research phase and the children are looking forward to making some decisions about "what they would like to be." This phase will last several weeks.

It may be helpful to start having conversations with your child about preliminary facts about their Life choice and discussing how they envision their costumes to be designed.

Soon we will be sending information about which species they have chosen. We are excited to see what comes of this fun but hard work!



January 2026 Eagle News

Eagle students and staff would like to welcome **Ashleigh** to the classroom. We are excited to see how she will use her many talents to enhance the Eagle classroom and environment. Ashleigh loves geography and planting. She reports she spent many summers planting with grandparents. Ashleigh is looking forward to getting the opportunity to offer more learning in the outdoor environment. **Wax Museum** planning and preparation has begun. The children are so excited to participate in this time-honored tradition here at Nightingale. More details and information to follow.

We would like to send out our gratitude to every one who assisted in making **Peace Night** such a beautiful success: the Owl students that helped with the stick dance; the droves of parents that took time out of their busy schedule to spend the evening here supporting the Eagle, Chickadee and Owl students; and staff that worked hard to make the event possible. The children will never forget the excitement and butterflies of performing. They will always remember the authentic cultural dress they got to wear, the solos they sang, the sticks they jumped gracefully through or watching the big kids in amazement. Thank you again and always staff, students and extended Nightingale family for being a part of something we all hold dear here.

A Note about Valentine's Day

Valentine's Day is coming soon! While we will be celebrating love and friendship with the Eagles, we want to stay away from the consumer aspect of this holiday. If your child would like to pass out Valentines, we ask that they are handmade and that there are enough for all the children. We currently have 35 Eagles. Please do not have your child write the name of the person they are for; instead, they can write their own name so that each recipient will know who it is from. This eases the process of passing them out.

Some children like to bring a treat to share. If you would like to do so, please refer to the Smart Snack suggestions found in the Eagle handbook. That will enable us to serve healthy alternatives to the sugary fare typically associated with the holiday in the past. Send an email to Aimee if you are planning a treat so that we can be prepared. a.hamilton@nightingaleschool.org Thank you!

Eagles

January Owl News

Owls have started prepping decorations for the Owl project: The Festival for Lost Celebrations. They've been crafting paper beads and floating lanterns for the Festival of the Great Bath, as well as Ancient Tiano shakers for Areito and Egyptian medallions for Wepet Rempet. Students also illustrated a poster for the Moon Festival and will begin their lanterns and kites soon.

In Bucket Band, Todd has started to introduce even more instruments for our students to enjoy and explore. In Book Club students have started reading their books for the new quarter. Some are reading *Frindle*, some *Wrinkle in Time*, and the rest *Things Not Seen*. Outdoor Work has shifted into caring for the wintering environment as weather changes and gets colder, but everyone is already excited to start planning for the spring season. We have students who love working to remove stumps using their gross motor skills to hack away and clear the Owl yard!

Even with a sudden drop in temperature, students haven't let it ruin their free time. They've made the most of it by heading outside for short bursts of fresh air, then warming up indoors with board games and hands-on crafts like crocheting and hand sewing.



Owl students explore a xylophone with Todd



Owl students enjoying the snow



Lantern making for Festival for Lost Celebrations



Elijah builds a car with legos



Autumn practices sewing



Bella prepares food for the holiday meal



Piper, Za'Mara, and Leilani make paper lanterns



Jovie observes the bunnies

Falcon January Update



Shannin, Jace, Jude, River, and Ja'miyah sledding



Shannin, Jace, Jude, River, and Ja'miyah sledding

As we return from Winter Break, we have been thoughtfully supporting students as they settle back into familiar routines and rhythms. This transition has been enriched by time outdoors, including sledding in the woods, where children were able to move their bodies, engage their senses, and experience winter as an active and joyful season. In the Montessori approach, these opportunities to connect with nature, build independence, and learn through movement are essential to the development of the whole child.

In December we celebrated individual growth and confidence as River shared her accomplishments in *The Nutcracker*, performing as a Party Ballet dancer, Mouse Lieutenant, Mother Ginger with her Polichinelles, and as one of the Flowers in the Waltz of the Flowers. To close out the season, students enjoyed a cozy holiday celebration in the Falcon room, preparing hot chocolate and popcorn together and participating in a collaborative scavenger hunt strengthening community, practical life skills and joy in shared experiences.



Falcons

Wing News

In the third quarter of each year, the Wing class has several electives introduced that are more intensive for one quarter. This year, these include physical education and art. For physical education, we are combining outdoor hikes as weather permits, with the use of a warm gymnasium at nearby Central Christian Church. So far, we have practiced skills in basketball, volleyball, and kickball as well as some group games like Human Hungry Hungry Hippos. Our trips to the gymnasium in small groups are a welcome change of pace, and students are already showing improvements in their skills. The goal of the class is to increase confidence and enjoyment and build community around physical activity. Our physical education program in high school includes this structured elective as well as many other events throughout each year such as hiking, our bicycling program, and other class trips like kayaking. Students are also able to include guided extracurricular activities like sports league participation and dance and martial arts classes towards their Ohio high school hours requirement for physical education.



Views from Wing PE hikes



Wing students playing basketball and Hungry Hungry Hippos at Central Christian Church gym



Jazlyn and Madison confer at the end of the school day



Wing students enjoying photography



Kailee, Aurelia, and Vivian at the reservoir

Wing