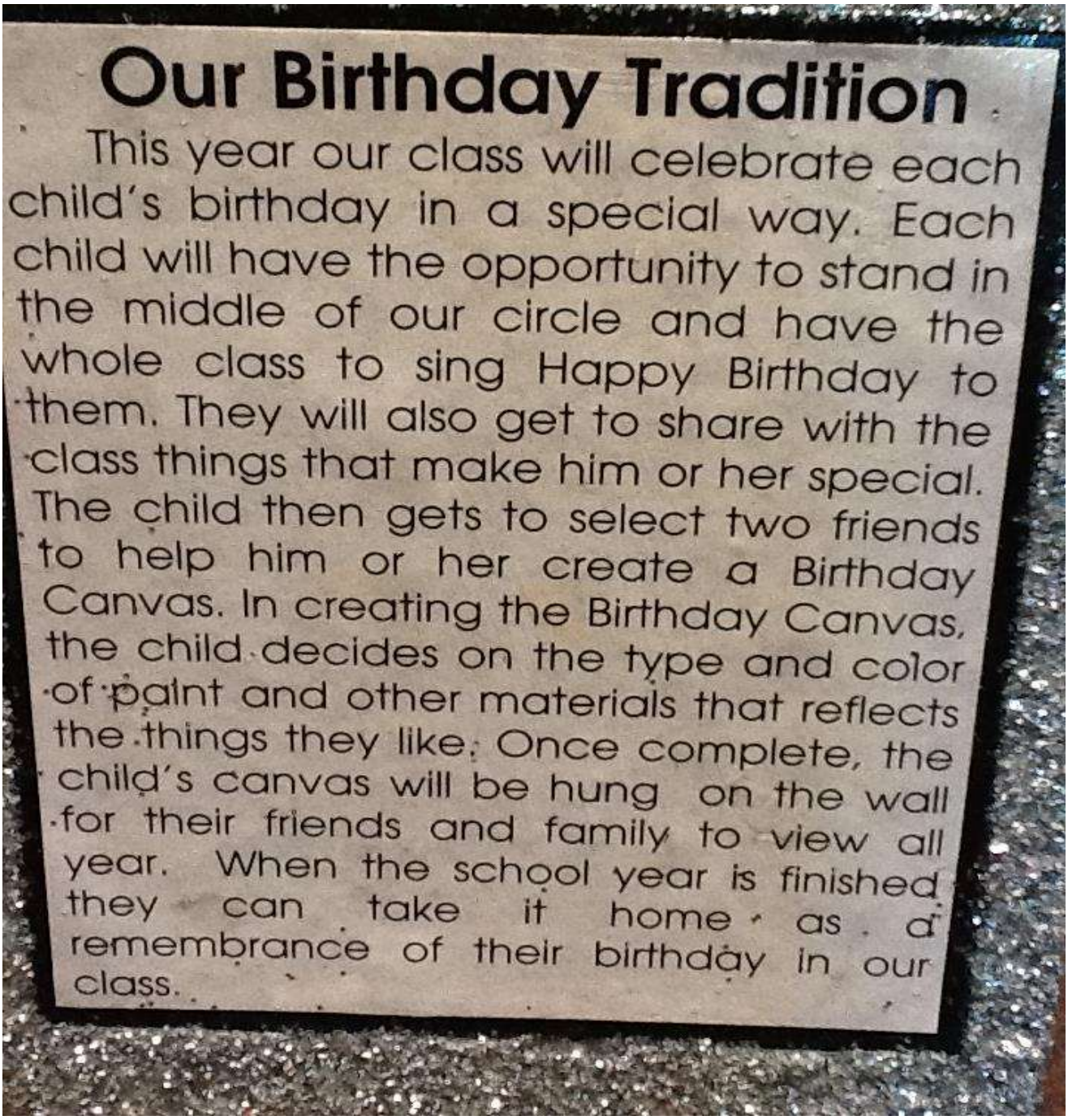
BIRTHDAY TRADITIONS:

Honoring Children in the Classroom:



Our Birthday Tradition

This year our class will celebrate each child's birthday in a special way. Each child will have the opportunity to stand in the middle of our circle and have the whole class to sing Happy Birthday to them. They will also get to share with the class things that make him or her special. The child then gets to select two friends to help him or her create a Birthday Canvas. In creating the Birthday Canvas, the child decides on the type and color of paint and other materials that reflects the things they like. Once complete, the child's canvas will be hung on the wall for their friends and family to view all year. When the school year is finished they can take it home as a remembrance of their birthday in our class.

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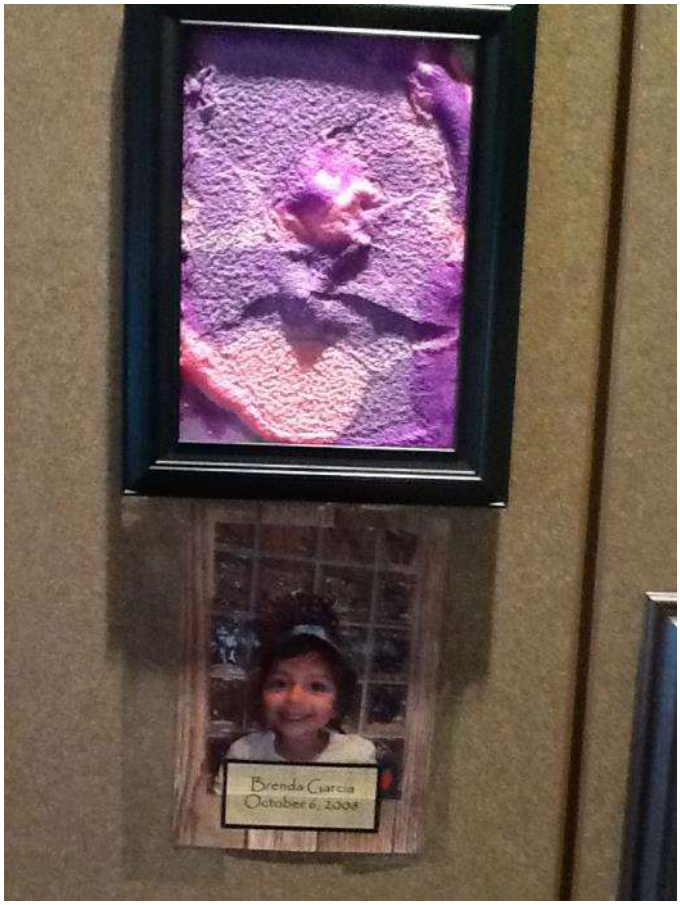
Pictures taken in Union Pre-K and ECEC classrooms

The child's name, birthdate and photo hang near their birthday collage.



This classroom celebrates by having the birthday child choose two friends to decorate the birthday project as a surprise. The friends present it to the birthday child as a gift during the next group time following completion while everyone sings, "Happy Birthday."

The birthday child decorates a birthday crown and his/her picture is taken with the crown and hung by the gifted item.

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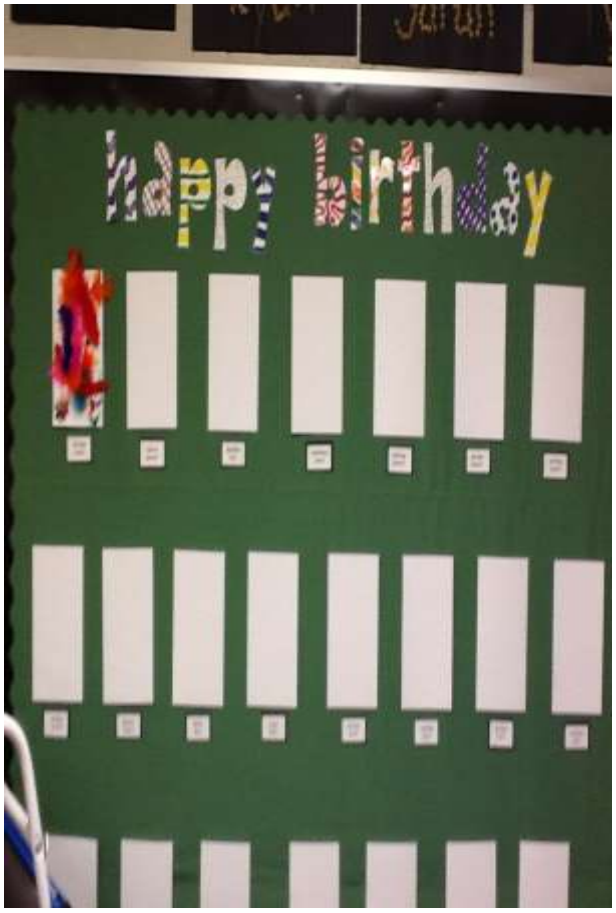

When birthday panels are hung in order based on the school year (August to August), it provides students an excellent opportunity to be exposed to time concepts which is an extremely challenging idea for young children.

Typically young children "have established object permanence and can recall past events, even though they do not understand the meaning of the words 'yesterday,' 'today,'or 'tomorrow'" (Calendar Time for Young Children: Good Intentions Gone Awry by Beneke et.al).

Thus, young children can talk about things that have happened or will happen, but they cannot yet understand or talk about these events in terms of units of time (days, weeks).

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Since a child's birthday holds great meaning, children will often engage in conversations concerning whose birthday is next, how many birthdays have been celebrated (even in terms of lots, little, not mine yet), whose is close or later, etc.

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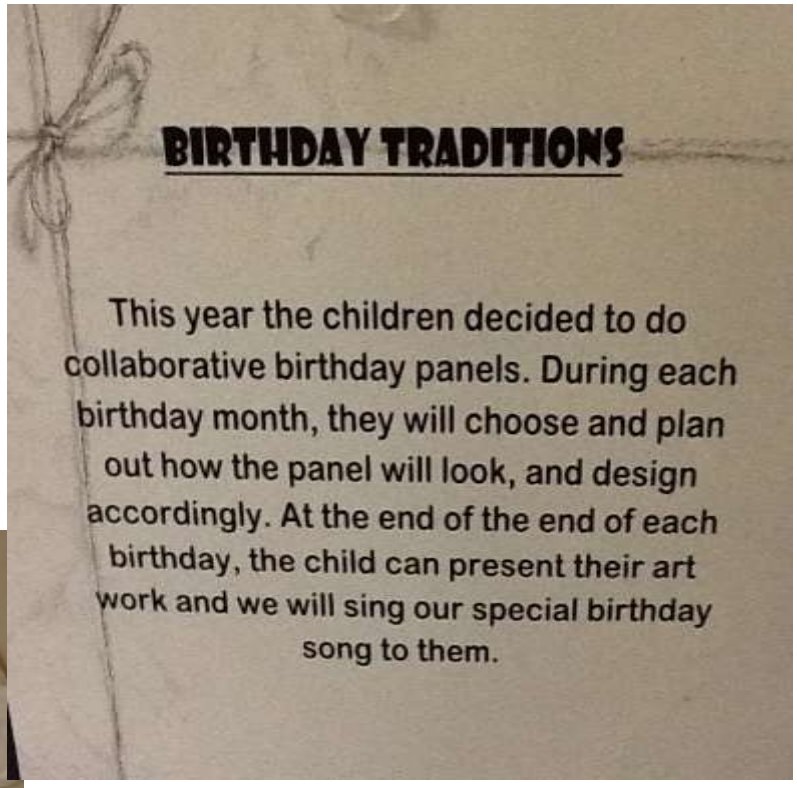
Collaborative Birthday Panels- this idea was conceived of by the children during a discussion on ways to celebrate everyone's birthday:



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This year the children decided to do collaborative birthday panels. During each birthday month, they will choose and plan out how the panel will look, and design accordingly. At the end of the end of each birthday, the child can present their art work and we will sing our special birthday song to them.

Remember to also celebrate the birthdays of the teachers since everyone is a member of the community of learners.

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