



FAMILY & COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

Dear Jowonio Families,

Participating in last week's Family Fun Night was a wonderful reminder of the beautiful diversity of our Jowonio community, and the strengths of the relationships we build. It was wonderful to have many families bring their alumni siblings as well as their currently enrolled child(ren), and to see the ways children quickly picked up old friendships as though they had never left.

Wrapping up a school year is always a bittersweet time for us, as we both celebrate the amazing ways that children have blossomed and grown, and the friendships and relationships that have been built, and anticipate the goodbyes that the transition will bring for some children and families. We hope the relationships built here, and the confidence, and growth your children have made while with us will carry them far, even as some of your children move on to kindergarten and others join new classroom communities at Jowonio. We know that each of us has been forever changed by the gifts you and your child(ren) have shared with us - you will always be in our hearts.

This time of year brings many opportunities to reflect on the year and celebrate the community we have built. We thank those who joined us for Family Fun Night, and hope all of you will also join us for classroom events, including perhaps for a spring field trip, and definitely for the classroom celebrations that will be held in June. These rituals are a wonderful way to nurture connections and honor the gifts that each child and family have brought to the community, as well as wish each child and family well on the next step of your journey.

If your child will be joining us for the summer session, we are truly looking forward to that. If not, we wish you a delightful summer and transition to whatever your next step is. And we hope that you will stay in touch with us and let us know how you are doing, and stop back for a visit from time to time!

-Lori



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| 6/25 | Last day of school
11:15 am dismissal |
| 7/13 | First day of summer session |
| 8/21 | Last day of summer session |
| 9/14 | First day of school! |

What do we do on Wednesday?

Jowonio is a special place! A couple of the things that make it so special, is our amazing community of staff AND our many inviting outdoor spaces. Jowonio kids get outside almost every day! Outdoors they have the opportunity to climb, run, dig, pretend, spin, look for snails, slide, ride, build and play. On May 20, Jowonio staff engaged in care and cleanup of our shared outdoor spaces, as well as the gym indoors. In addition to the physical work completed, they developed wish lists, suggestions for classroom go bags and shared supervision plans.



With help from our Fund Development Director & Family Support staff, Star & Ocean teams tackled Sarah's Path, while Earth, Bumblebee & Secret Garden staff got to work on Trike Town



Rainforest & Sea Turtle raked, pruned and washed Hill & Dome

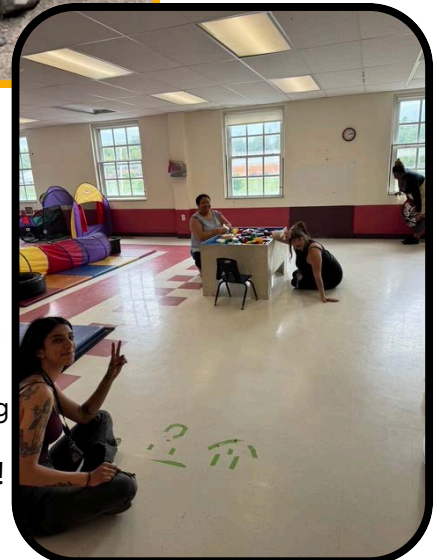


Sunflowers worked up on the play perch, while Butterflies (unpictured!) cleaned up our front lawn.



Kangaroos & Bunnies w/ help of SLP, Laurie, raked and talked playground improvement,

and Waterfalls stayed inside, organizing the gym closet and making our indoor motor space spick and span!



Jowonio staff and families
LEAVE THEIR MARK
at Jowonio



We are so excited to share that Sarah's Path has a mud kitchen, courtesy of Jason, a Star Room parent who just happens to be an architect and offered to build one for us. With generous donations of wood and other supplies from Star Room families, a small crew of volunteers came together on a Saturday morning to bring it to life. Jason returned the next day to put in more work and ensure it would be functional for the children by Monday morning. While there are a few finishing touches still to add, the result is something we are so proud to have available for our kids.

Mud kitchens are a fantastic addition to outdoor play for preschoolers – they encourage creativity, imaginative play, and hands-on exploration while building fine motor skills through all that scooping, pouring, and mixing. For our neurodivergent learners, sensory-rich mud play can be especially beneficial, offering the kind of tactile input that supports focus, calm, and self-expression. Every child who plays on Sarah's Path can find their own way to enjoy and explore this space, at their own pace. A huge thank you to everyone who donated, volunteered, and made this dream a reality – this mud kitchen is a beautiful reflection of the caring, generous community we are so lucky to be a part of!

-Anita, Star Room Teacher



Want to leave a mark, too?

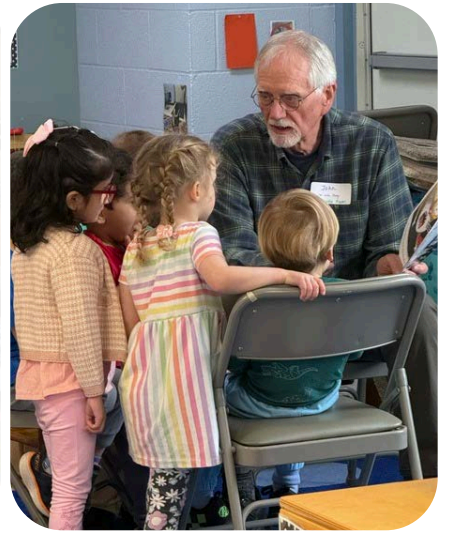
Are you interested in helping to leave your mark on Jowonio? There are so many ways to stay involved. We're always looking for parent volunteers to help, like Jason with classroom projects or like Chris and Taylor with a music performance at our upcoming fundraiser at Harvey's Garden!

We'd also love to hear what your child or family has been up to after graduation. Lastly, if you feel inclined, we are always accepting donations of money or materials to help support our community and programs.



WE ARE family

Jowonio is a special place for kids because of our commitment to families and their commitment to us! In March we held "Special Someone's Day," when friends, grandparents and other family members go to go into classrooms to play, read and eat with their special Jowonio kid.



Family Fun Night was so much fun!



"Jowonio is a wonderful educational program in our town. It's great how knowledgeable, supporting, and loving the teachers are - that really stood out to me." - Special Someone Day Attendee



Thanks to all of the parents, grandparents and community friends who helped to make Staff Appreciation Week so wonderful by volunteering, providing food, sending lovely messages, and donating over \$2,200!



Staff Appreciation



Student Spotlight

IZZY!

Watching Izzy grow since coming to Jowonio has been nothing short of incredible. If mommy had it her way, she would never have to leave!

The way this little girl has blossomed in every area has truly been mind-blowing. Seeing her shine alongside her peers has been such a gift, and as a parent of a child with special needs, it has shown me just how life changing the right environment can be for our children.

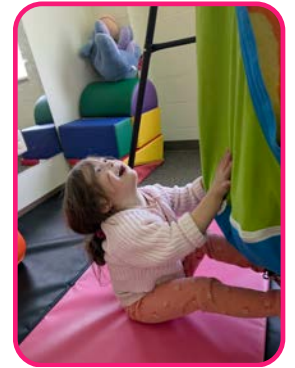
Places like Jowonio are so much more than a school or therapy setting. They are places where children are seen for their abilities instead of their limitations. Places where inclusion is natural, where patience and encouragement are built into every day, and where kids are given the support and confidence they need to truly thrive.

For children with special needs, the right environment matters more than words can explain. The right teachers, therapists, peers, and support system can completely change the trajectory of a child's growth... not just academically, but socially, emotionally, and independently. We have watched Izzy's speech and language grow, her fine motor skills improve, and her independence soar to levels we once only hoped for. But even more importantly, we have watched her confidence shine brighter every single day.

Jowonio has reminded us that when children are given acceptance, opportunity, inclusion, and the right support, they do amazing things. Watching Izzy thrive here has been one of the greatest gifts for our family.

To the teachers, staff, therapists, and everyone who has poured love into our girl we thank you from the bottom of our hearts. You have made an impact on Izzy and our family that we will carry forever.

I'm not crying... you're crying. ❤️
-Jennifer, Izzy's Mom



We are truly enjoying having Isabella in the Ocean Room this year!

We start with the highest expectations of each student, from there we adapt the environment, curriculum and materials to meet each child where they are. Izzy enthusiastically keeps us on our toes, always advocating for her own wants and needs. We are constantly changing our adaptations to keep up with her as she grows physically, mentally, socially, and in her independence!

Her bright personality and love for music and dancing have become a very important part of our classroom. Izzy reminds us how important and motivating music and rhythm is in the classroom. The daily communication with her family really helps us in creating the best possible program for Izzy.

We wish her the best as she moves on to her next schooling experience, where we are sure she will continue to thrive and grow.

We will miss you, "Busy Izzy!"
- Sheila, Dezzi, Kia, Miranda, Birdie & Destany



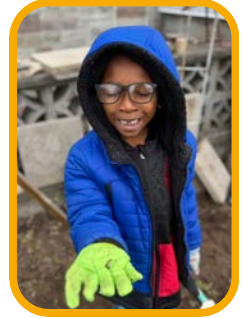
"Play is the answer to how anything new comes about."

-Jeane Piaget

This spring Jowonio kids learned about plants, gardens and how everything grows.



Star & Sunflower kids have been hard at work in their community gardens out front!



Celita led Earth Room kids through a plant life cycle yoga sequence!



A Bumblebee friend loves searching for slugs and snails on our outdoor spaces.



Rainforest kids painted a rainbow & then painted with berries!



Spring Field Trips!

Sunflowers friends picked out seeds & flowers at Hafner's Garden Center

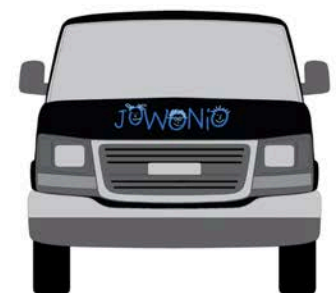


At Jowonio we know that field trips can bridge the gap between what kids learn at school and how that fits connects to the real world and their community. This spring classroom learning concepts focused on plants and habitats. Trips to garden centers, parks and ponds helped bridge these connections!

Waterfalls learned more about fish and pond habitats at Carpenter's Brook Fish Hatchery



Ocean kids enjoyed all that Kirschenheiter Park had to offer, climbing, playing, sliding, picking flowers, and basking in that springtime sunshine!



READY TO LEARN



In April, Graduate students from SU School of Education provided a free workshop on Literacy and Play!



Jowonio Board Corner



This Year as it Wraps Up – A Message from the Jowonio Board

As June arrives and the school year comes to a close, we find ourselves filled with gratitude and joy for everything this community has accomplished together.

To our graduating students heading to kindergarten and elementary school – this is your moment to shine! Watching you grow and discover this year has been wonderful. You leave Jowonio carrying with you the confidence, curiosity, and kindness that will carry you ahead. We are so proud of your children as well as each of our parents, staff and members of this community!

To our returning students and families – we are so glad you'll be back with us. Each year brings new growth, friendships, and possibilities, and we cannot wait to continue this journey alongside you whether that is summer or fall.

To our broader Jowonio community – our donors, volunteers, advocates, and neighbors – thank you. Your belief in this school and its mission makes everything we do possible.

As a board, we remain inspired by what this school represents – a place where every child belongs, diversity is genuinely celebrated, and all are free to learn and grow. Our commitment to building on that foundation and expanding our support for this community has never been stronger.

Welcome, new Jowonio Board Members:

Will Staton, Robin Peterson, and Gretchen Dillon!

Friends of Jowonio Board of Directors

Liz Dwyer, President
Jim D'Aloisio, Treasurer
Jason Benedict
Jaime Riley
Nicole Schuster
Craig Holava, Facilities Director
Jen Petrie, Assistant Director
Lori Saile, Director

Jowonio Executive Board of Directors

President – Liz Dwyer
Vice President – Jakia Durham Kelly
Treasurer – Michelle Hammerle
Adrian Bayardi
Gretchen Dillon
Sarah Longley
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Bob Pandori, Finance Director
Jen Petrie, Assistant Director
Lori Saile, Director
Kate Smith, Assistant Director

contact the board: board.member@jowonio.org
to reach Liz Dwyer: board.president@jowonio.org



(B) Broadview
Federal Credit Union

Literacy Coalition
OF ONONDAGA COUNTY

Jowonio School was awarded several grants this Spring! Funds will go towards upgrading the school's security system; new AAC boards for Jowonio playgrounds and Onondaga Lake Park's boundless playground; bilingual books in Arabic, Chinese, and Urdu; and succession planning for our Finance team.

The Gifford Foundation
Fostering growth. Encouraging change.

thank you

Celebrate Jowonio

On April 17th over 250 friends, families, donors, and staff came out to raise funds for and celebrate our amazing Jowonio community. We raised nearly \$25,000 - thank you to all who participated!



JOIN US



Join us in building a brighter future

Is your child graduating and you're looking for a way to stay connected? Consider a gift to Jowonio!

Monthly or annual donations provide a sustainable way to support our mission and grow the educational experience.

Donations can be made in various ways:

- Online: Visit our website at www.jowonio.org and click on the "Give" page to make a secure online contribution or set up automatic donations.
- Check: checks can be made payable to "Jowonio School"

Employer Matching Programs: Many employers offer matching gift programs to support employees' philanthropic efforts. Matching donations double the impact of your contribution. To participate:

- Contact HR: Reach out to your Human Resources department about your company's matching gift program and fill out the necessary forms.



Birthday Fundraisers: Families and students have created beautiful birthday traditions where friends and family are asked to provide donations to Jowonio School in honor of a birthday. For every donation made in honor of your birthday or your child's birthday, we send a thank you note to those who donate, designed with love.



*Thank you for a
wonderful year
& have a great
summer!*

