This semester, students in grades 1 - 5 are gazing into the skies, working to be observant, imaginative, and curious. Walking outside the classroom, the children observed the clouds directly above our campus, noting their sizes, shapes, and “smooth or fluffy” textures. Watching one cloud for a longer period of time, the children observed their movement, some were fast and some moving slowly enough that was difficult to detect change.

Using plexi-glass boards the children could illustrate what they observed by tracing the shapes in the sky. The children then adjusted their drawn cloud to their imagination. Students understood that people see differing “objects/pictures” in the clouds because everyone has a different and unique imagination and perspective.

The Children Imagined:

- A Bird in Flight or on a Fluffy Nest
- A Smiling Elephant
Additionally, the children observed photographs of clouds, drawing on them with black and white charcoal to enhance what they saw imaginatively.

They used the charcoal to strategically blend or “erase,” effectively adjusting the shape of a cloud. For example, the white charcoal could be used to extend a cloud or the black charcoal could be used to gently blend away parts of the image.

Students discussed the images with peers before drawing. They were tasked to talk with others, asking “what do you see in this cloud?” This practice emphasized the understanding that each person has a unique imagination and perspective. At the close of the conversations, the children were asked to illustrate their vision independently.

The students were encouraged to use as much detail as possible. Defining that detail is “the adding of little things to make the picture more interesting,” some children requested to use an iPad to reference images that were in their imagination. Students agreed that quality detail could be working to show texture, i.e., does an animal have feathers, scales, spines, fur, or wrinkly skin?