

Concord Children's Center



The mission of Concord Children's Center is to cultivate an intimate, welcoming community where children develop respectful relationships and inquisitive minds, build confidence in their individual gifts, and are engaged, prepared and inspired to learn.

Annual Report 2018-2019





***Concord Children's Center
Board of Directors
Annual Report 2018-2019***

- Mission Statement
- Board of Directors List
- Staff List
- Report of the Board Chair
- Proposed Board Slate 2019-2020
- Nominating Committee
- Finance Committee
- Personnel Committee
- Long Range Planning Committee
- Development/Fundraising Committee
- Technology Working Group
- Report from The Executive Director



2018-2019 Board of Directors

Chair *Betsy Keller*

**Vice Chair
*Jay Abelowitz***

**Treasurer
*Stephan Bader***

**Secretary
*Campbell Rowe***

Marcela Bean
Eric Boisvert
JC Conti
Mark Daniel
Tom Doherty
Nate Kemp
Karen Lennon
Becky McCullough
Kathy Manero
Kerry Norton
Jonathan Rankin
Jeanne Triant



Concord Children's Center Staff 2018-2019

Pat Nelson, Executive Director

Joanne Saideh, Administrative Director

Melissa Perdue Gallo, Business Manager

Jennifer Saxe, Development, Alumni Relations & Outreach Coordinator

Candice Campbell, Enrollment and Administrative Coordinator

| <i>Emerson</i> | <i>Ripley</i> | <i>West Concord</i> |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <i>Jennine Lesser, Director</i> | <i>Penni Hensley Wagner, Director</i> | <i>Anne Doherty, Director</i> |
| Aicha Bounar | Lillian Albenese | Marcela Bean |
| Kerrie Briguglio | Susan Barker | Ghada Bitar |
| Laura Carpenter | Caitlin Bottego | Kayla Blake |
| Mary-Lou Fidrych | Patricia Collins | Michelle Blood |
| Erika Gutermuth | Brinna Conley | Tiffany Clark |
| Mary Heinsohn-Roe | Marie DiPace | JC Conti |
| Jennine Lesser | Melissa Gorgenyi | Anne Doherty |
| Alexandra Logins | Penni Hensley Wagner | Elizabeth Dolham |
| Sashi Qualitz | Kerin Horrigan | Susan Hegarty |
| Jennifer Reid | Wipa Khampook | Diane Krug |
| Lynn St. Germain | Annie Kolff | Autumn Lucas |
| Nassima Tizi-Ougdal | Jackie Lalli | Jessica Mancini |
| Jordan Zirkel | Jackie Moss | Kathy Manero |
| | Emily Ostrow | Julia Mell |
| | Nichole Piro | Ashley Raboin |
| | Carmen Potter Warren | Isabelle Raddassi |
| | Dorothy Whittier | Julie Recco |
| | | Theresa Ruf |
| | | Alicia Surkis |
| | | Holly Swanson |
| | | Jennifer Turini |
| | | Denise Welch |



Concord Children's Center

Report from the Board Chair June 12, 2019

The 2018-2019 school year marked my second year as Board Chair and it has been a very exciting one! I have really enjoyed working with the other Board members including parents and alumni, as well as CCC staff and administrators. This year has brought unique challenges but having the opportunity to be the Board Chair has been both personally rewarding and a lot of fun. I am continuously impressed with the dedication the Board has towards furthering the mission of CCC, and I'm looking forward to seeing what the future will bring with some exciting potential changes.

Additionally, I'm consistently amazed with the wonderful work the staff and administration do to make a school environment that is welcoming to all the families and is full of new and exciting experiences for our children. They continue to make CCC not just a place for learning, but a place where children feel nurtured and loved which is the foundation for a lifetime love of learning.

We started the year with higher than expected revenues from the summer session and the strong enrollment continued into the regular school year. This once again resulted in higher than expected overall revenues that allowed the Board to reward the staff a higher retirement contribution in addition to a small onetime bonus, all while still adding approximately \$100,000 back into the cash reserves. Next year is looking strong as well and we expect that we will have sufficient funds to continue to address our capital investment strategy and strengthen our cash reserves.

The Board Priorities centered around four key focus areas:

FY 2018-2019 Priorities:

Financial and Facility Planning and Sustainability

- CCC has had a real focus on planning for both the near and long-term future. Given the uncertainty around the sites of both Ripley (no lease extension expected past 6/2021) and Emerson, the Long Range planning committee has been very committed all year to determining a site strategy
- Through several meetings, working sessions and scenario planning, the Long Range Planning committee put forth a strategy to move to a 2 sites by combining Ripley and Emerson into one site potentially located in East Concord
- Several sites have been viewed and toured over the year and at the end of the year the Executive Committee agreed to hire a brokerage firm, Omni Properties, to represent the Children's center in securing new space.
- We are certain to hit our goal of replenishing our cash reserves by 150% of non-cash depreciation once we complete our audit. The Board has recognized that this goal needs to be redefined since it was implemented back in the late 2000's when we had dipped below our recommended cash



reserve levels. Next year the Board will research establishing new capital reserve goals that better meet the needs of CCC.

- With the expected additional costs associated with moving and getting a new site up and running, the Development committee has worked hard to determine new ways to increase and improve the Fund for CCC (formerly the Annual Appeal). To date, the Fund has raised \$12,794 more than FY 2018 for a total of \$30,129.
- The Development Committee also created the Friendship Circle, our leadership giving level for individuals who donate at least \$1,000. These donors will be recognized in the FY 2019 Report of Giving as well as at a special event this fall. This strategy has helped to support the growth of the Fund for CCC.

Community

- CCC has continued to foster a sense of community among our families. We held several family events throughout the year that were attended by a large portion of our families.
- CCC will continue to evaluate additional types of gatherings to further the sense of community in the upcoming school year.

Communication

- CCC reviewed current internal/external communications and began to develop a messaging calendar to use across a variety of media throughout the school year to raise CCC's visibility in the Concord community and maintain strong enrollment.
- The Communications Committee created a Crisis Communications Plan which is now part of our Crisis Plan.
- CCC continued its use and expansion of a new software called Kaymbu which is a tablet style solution that can be used in the classroom to take pictures as well as write story boards about what is happening in the classroom. The teachers have embraced this technology and from all accounts parents are happy with the improved communication. In the 18-19 school year we also used Kaymbu for 1 of the 2 major solicitations for the annual appeal which resulted in 8 donations on the same day of the send.

Staff Support

- The Board supported invaluable professional training for all the staff that included two professional learning communities, with a focus on curriculum development using a "loose parts" approach, and a training the trainers series designed to leverage our staff's potential to share their experience and skill with others. In August, our teachers spent the day at Boston University/Wheelock College, attending the Reggio Emilia conference, The Wonder of Learning, and in November, CCC hosted a training for teachers on diversity and inclusion.
- The Board is also very excited about the changes to the technology strategy that included the use of tablets for assisting teachers collect information and prepare the necessary reports. We understand this was a big change for CCC and are thrilled at how the teachers and staff have embraced it.

Technology



- CCC developed an on-line application so that parents would not have to fill out multiple forms. The applications were prefilled with some information, making it easier and quicker for parents while maintaining high accuracy of information.
- CCC added the ability to text parents for school closures which has really helped get this information to parents in a timely manner.

I have really enjoyed my second year as Board Chair, and I am looking forward to what the next year brings. One final thank you to the teachers and the administration for all that you do – have a wonderful summer!

With respect and gratitude,
Betsy Keller
Board Chair FY 2018-2019



Proposed Board Slate 2019-2020

Chair

Jason Abelowitz

Vice Chair

Betsy Keller

Treasurer

Stephan Bader

Secretary

Campbell Rowe

Marcela Bean

Eric Boisvert

JC Conti, Alternate

Mark Daniel

Thomas Doherty

Karen Lennon

Kathy Manero

Becky McCullough

Kerry Norton

Jonathan Rankin

Stephanie Rivera

Yumi Suarez



Nominating Committee Report **2018-2019**

The overall goal of the Nominating Committee is to identify and recruit candidates for the Board of Directors. The total Board can be comprised of 15 voting members, 2 alternates with a maximum of 4 alternates (non-voting), the Executive Director (non-voting), Directors (non-voting), and Ex-Officio members (non-voting). For the 2018-2019 year we had a full Board slate of 15 voting members, the Executive Director (non-voting), Directors (non-voting). This year the Board voted in Thomas Doherty, Marcela Bean, JC Conti (alternate) as new members.

The Nominating Committee will be focused on full participation in 2019/2020, aiming to fill all openings with new members recruited from the CCC community with strong representation from all sites.

This year we say thank you to Nate Kemp (2), Jeanne Triant (2) Best of luck to all the departing Board Members.

General Goals

Identify prospective candidates for open positions on the Board of Directors by seeking input from other Board members, the Executive Director and Program Directors

Post open positions on the Board of Directors to the membership as the needs arise

Recruit Board members by personal contact from a member of the Board or Board Chair

Present the Board slate at the May Board meeting

Present the final slate of candidates at the Annual Meeting to be approved by the Corporation

Seek a balance of representation from all CCC sites

Maintain two slots for CCC staff

Seek board members with professional expertise and interests that will benefit the work of the board

Submitted by Jason Abelowitz, Chair





Finance Committee **2018-2019**

The focus of the Finance Committee has been to continue monitoring our actual results against the established budget, with replenishing our reserves a priority. This focus was adopted after a past business cycle, during which a substantial decrease in reserves occurred due to declines in enrollment, increased financial assistance to families, additional competition in the local market, and steps taken to change the classroom configurations at Ripley and West Concord. While historical uncertainties surrounding the Emerson site were resolved with a 5 year lease renewal in 2016, the end of that lease is now approaching in the near term. More importantly, there are likely to be significant demands on cash reserves associated with the replacement of our current Ripley location. Prudently, for the current and last fiscal years, the Board endorsed the primary goal of rebuilding our cash reserves so that CCC will be positioned to respond to any unanticipated opportunities that may arise as well as to meet any potential upcoming fiscal challenges.

We expect the full 2018-2019 fiscal-year results to make a strong contribution to retained earnings; one greater than anticipated by the budget approved last spring. We expect that capital expenditures will be less than originally anticipated, such that the ending cash reserve balances will again comfortably exceed our benchmark target of one quarter's expenses. The investment policy adopted in 2016 and implemented in 2017 has produced favorable results to date, and recent market volatility has demonstrated the advantages of a diversified portfolio. Finally, we have adopted a budget plan for fiscal 2020 that is expected to generate positive cash flow and continue rebuilding our reserves.

Thank you to Melissa Gallo, our business manager, who has provided accurate financial information to the committee and now has three successful audits under her belt. She is an essential CCC team member, helping new families understand our always flexible – yet sometimes confusing – tuition calculations. And thank you to all committee members for your questions, insights and contributions to the budget process and its components.

Finance Committee Goals **2019-2020**

The overall goal of the Finance Committee is to ensure the fiscal health of Concord Children's Center. The Finance Committee is composed of the Board Treasurer, the Executive Director, the Business Manager, and up to three other members of the Board or a financial professional from the community.

- **1 Year Goals**
- Monitor monthly financial performance and provide Board with quarterly updates. Monitor investment portfolio performance to ensure we are obtaining returns consistent with moderate to minimal risk tolerance.
- Develop annual budget: Establish tuition increases which are aligned with budgetary needs and maintain CCC's competitive position in the local market place. Ensure that operating budget generates sufficient cash flow, at least equal to 50% of gross depreciation charges.

- **3 Year Goals**
- Build financial models to assess the costs, timing and capital campaign needs related to capital improvements and proposed changes in connection with Long Range Planning initiatives approved by the board.
- Identify financial threats and opportunities. Collaborate with other board committees to project financial impacts and simulate policy recommendations.



- Review investment portfolio and investment advisor performance; develop recommendations for appropriate changes, consistent with organization's cash flow needs and risk tolerance.

Respectfully submitted by *Stephan Bader*, Treasurer



Natasha at Ripley in 2003



Personnel Committee Report **2018-2019**

Committee Members: Karen Lennon (Chair), Stephan Bader, Anne Doherty (CCC Staff), Becky McCullough, Jonathan Rankin, Joanne Saideh (CCC Staff)

The Personnel Committee's main contributions to CCC this year included:

1. Teacher salary & benefits analysis
2. Teacher Satisfaction Survey
3. Staff appreciation event

Teacher Salary & Benefits Analysis

As in prior years, the Committee evaluated CCC teacher pay and a range of benefits – such as medical/dental, retirement, childcare subsidy, and vacation days – against a comparative set of nine area peer schools that are fellow members of the Boston Association for the Education of Young Children (BAEYC). While CCC continues to be competitive in its salary and benefit offerings, the Committee made recommendations to the board that included:

1. Study of impact of new Mass. FMLA on CCC budget, salaries, personnel policies, and practices
2. Study of impact of minimum wage increases on starting FT salaries and summer hiring
3. Discussion and goal-setting for retirement contribution relative to overall Center budget and long-term planning effort

Teacher Satisfaction Study

Last year, the Committee revamped and re-launched a Teacher Satisfaction Survey, which focused on the role that CCC plays in teachers' professional development, autonomy, and collaboration with their peers. This year, the leadership team hired early education consultant Wendy Valentine to assess further the school climate across all three sites. Throughout fall/winter 2018-19, Wendy ran a follow-up survey (with almost 100% participation), conducted focus groups, and convened a community meeting. The core themes were as follows:

- Overall teacher satisfaction is high, with most teachers experiencing high levels of trust, value, and respect among peers. There is also a sub-group of educators who do not feel as engaged or supported. There is a strong desire for more opportunities to build community among staff within and across program sites.
- Most teachers perceive the administrative leadership team as respectful, supportive, and providing exceptional levels of confidentiality.
- Teachers perceive a high level of confidence and respect from their Program Directors related to their professional performance. Many teachers, however, expressed a strong desire for additional support for their professional growth through more active and visible supervision supported by data, individual and group recognition of growth and success, more targeted professional development opportunities, and opportunities to participate in mentorship relationships.
- Communication emerged as an overarching issue, impacting teachers in multiple areas across and within sites. There is an especially high sensitivity among staff to a perceived lack of consistency around implementation of school policies within and between sites.

The leadership team is reviewing the recommendations proposed by Wendy and the broader teacher community with a plan to implement certain initiatives for the 2019-20 school year.



Staff Appreciation Event

The annual Staff Appreciation Dinner will be held on Wednesday, June 19th at Trail's End Café in Concord. This will be the 30th anniversary of the Board-hosted event and will feature celebrations of staff anniversaries and presentation of teacher appreciation notes from parents.

Once again, we asked for notes via Room Parents and introduced an automated form this year to streamline coordination of notes.

2019-2020 Proposed Goals

1. Assess impact of new initiatives arising from teacher satisfaction study
2. Establish ongoing feedback mechanism/cadence re: measuring teacher satisfaction
3. Continue to study FMLA and minimum wage law changes and align with budget and personnel practices
4. Consider long-term goals regarding teacher retirement and incentive contribution as a percentage of overall budget (and align against the LRP effort)

Respectfully Submitted by: *Karen Lennon, Chair*





Long Range Planning Committee **2018-2019**

The Long Range Planning (LRP) activities were accelerated during the school year as the LRP Committee was required to act on the very real possibility that we might have to vacate the Ripley space in 2021 and to deal with the continued uncertainty of Emerson. To better meet the needs of the planning work the LRP Committee was expanded to include Dawn Guarriello, Tom Doherty, Marcela Bean, JC Conti, Stephan Bader, Betsy Keller. The new LRP members join the existing members including Campbell Rowe (Chair), Jay Abelowitz, Joanne Saideh, Mark Daniel, Jennifer Saxe, the three CCC Program Directors, Jennine Lesser, Anne Doherty, penni Hensley Wagner and Pat Nelson.

At the beginning of the school year there was continued uncertainty regarding lease renewals for both the Emerson and Ripley spaces but optimism remained that we would somehow find a way to renew the Ripley space beyond the lease end dates of 2020 and 2021 for both pods. As a result of the continued uncertainty and shortening time horizon, the LRP Committee proposed to the CCC Board at the November Board meeting a plan to consolidate Emerson and Ripley sites into a new site that we would build and own outright. The CCC Board approved the proposal and commissioned the LRP Committee to develop a plan that would get us to two fully controlled sites and away from town and Emerson hospital leases.

Work started in earnest to identify opportunities to purchase/lease land from the town. Pat Nelson initiated outreach to the town, the Board of Selectman and the Concord School committee to inquire about a lease extension at Ripley (to allow for purchase and development of a new site) and to identify possible town land options on which CCC would look to build a new CCC center. Pat Nelson subsequently had face-to-face meetings with the Lori Hunter to explore the availability of some of the Burke land and was told that the School district was not inclined to release any land due to the pending need to build a new middle school and other unresolved school needs. In a written response by the town and following a face-to-face meeting with Chris Whelan and Kate Hodges, the LRP was informed that the town was not in a position to extend the Ripley lease beyond 2021 until after the town completes its own facilities planning assessment that was likely to go into the Summer 2019. And from what was shared at the meeting with Mr. Whelan and Ms. Hodges, the town indicated they were looking to see if the Ripley space would be suitable for other town functions. As a result, the LRP Committee said that the Ripley site was as serious risk of not being available after 2021.

The LRP Committee, with the new information shared by the town and the School Board, agreed to put a proposal forward to the CCC Board and the June Board meeting to initiate a plan that would potentially have the Ripley and Emerson sites consolidated into a new facility as early as 2020 but with the ability to leverage the existing sites through the end of 2021. The 2021 date for Ripley was made possible after we received confirmation that the two pods at Ripley were co-terminate in 2021. The LRP Committee also approved Pat Nelson to enter into an agreement with Omni properties to identify a suitable space to consolidate Emerson and Ripley and to investigate ways to get is to our goal of site ownership in as short a time span as possible. Furthermore, Pat was advised to stop directly searching for town land as the LRP Committee was confident that Omni Properties was in a better position to execute the long term strategy of identifying a property that best meets the needs of CCC that we can own.



Into the Summer and certainly next year the LRP Committee will to continue advance the work with Omni Properties to identify a new space, and when identified, to execute the site consolidation strategy.

Respectfully Submitted by Campbell Rowe and Pat Nelson, Co-Chairs





Development Committee **2018-2019**

Committee: Becky McCullough (Chair), Marcela Bean, Tom Doherty, Kathy Manero, Kerry Norton, Jennifer Saxe

FY19 Goals:

1. Grow family participation in and contributions to the Fund for CCC in preparation for an upcoming capital fundraising effort, including trying new methods of soliciting current families.

This year has been an extremely successful one for the Fund for CCC. Our statistics as of June 6 are as follows (with last year's end-of-year figures for comparison):

- Total raised: \$30,128.90 (FY18: \$17,835.66)
- Number of donors: 153 (FY18: 124)
- Current families: 93 (54%) (FY18: 83 (46%))
- Alumni donors: 43 (FY18: 31)
- Corporate matching gifts: 35 (FY18: 31)

This success is grounded largely in the introduction this year of the Friendship Circle, a leadership giving level for donors who contribute \$1,000 or more to the Fund. The Friendship Circle was first introduced to the Board in December and then rolled out to all CCC families in the spring. To date, the Friendship Circle comprises nine families – eight current families (six of whom are Board members) and one alumni family.

Current family participation has increased this year to 54% from 46% last year. The Giving Challenge continues to be a successful solicitation approach, and we introduced a follow-up fall Kayambu focused e-solicitation which was well received. We also introduced a Special Friends solicitation as detailed below as well as published our first Report of Giving, which will be an annual publication.

2. Prep work for the upcoming capital fundraising effort, including communications and Board training.

In December, the Board received an overview of their role in a capital campaign and sample gift pyramids for a \$500K, \$750K and \$1M capital campaign. We have also started identifying donor prospects. Our work in this area this year was more limited than we had anticipated due to continuing uncertainty around how our second site will look and whether we will be leasing space or buying land and building.

3. Develop a Special Friends solicitation for the Fund for CCC, to be mailed in February and then celebrated at Special Friends Day in May.

In February, we sent out a Fund for CCC solicitation to special friends who attended Special Friends Day in 2018. This solicitation letter was signed by two grandparents who had already donated to this year's Fund. This letter brought in six donations. A second letter was sent out in May to 2019 Special Friends Day attendees who were not solicited in February. To date this solicitation has not netted any donations.

4. Add a social event for parents in the winter, perhaps hosted at a local brew pub.

There had been a suggestion of holding an informal drop-in social event for parents at a local brew pub in late January/early February, but this turned out to be more involved than anticipated. We would need to



rent space and pay for staff, which would in turn necessitate selling tickets to cover costs. This is also a difficult time of year to add more to staff workloads with auction planning/preparation and the family ice skating party.

Summary of 2018-2019 Events

Fall Social/Wine & Craft Beer Tasting

Our annual fall parent social was held on September 28 at the McIlwains' house and, as always, was very well attended. The 2019 social is set for Friday, September 27.

Concord Bookshop Fundraiser

The Concord Bookshop Fundraiser was held on October 27, 2018, with the William Wordsworth quote "Let nature be your teacher" serving as the theme. The event was well attended and included a bookmark craft station and story time with various CCC teachers. The day raised \$852.20, down a bit from previous years, even though the morning was very well-attended. The Fundraiser was earlier than usual this year, which may have negatively impacted sales, since people may not be thinking about holiday shopping in October. Nonetheless, this event is a popular friend- and fundraiser, a good community builder, and it provides CCC with valuable publicity as we start our enrollment process.

Winter Fundraiser

This year's winter family event/fundraiser was a family ice skating party at Nashoba Valley Olympia on Sunday, February 10. The theme of the party was "Wonderland on Ice" (in consideration of the auction theme of "Through the Looking Glass") and featured appearances by the White Rabbit, Alice, and the Mad Hatter. This event was well attended and raised \$1,900, a very small increase over last year.

Auction

The 2019 CCC Auction with the theme of "Through the Looking Glass" was held on March 30 at Tri-Con. The evening raised \$28,897, down a bit from last year. Around 131 people attended the event, roughly the same as last year. This year's auction committee was led by senior co-chair Lindsey Dempsey and junior co-chair Katherine Wilson, both of whom will stay on as co-chairs for next year.

Volunteer Thank-You

We introduced a volunteer thank-you event this year, held at Jennifer Saxe's house on Tuesday, June 4. This event was well-attended and well-received.

FY 2020 Goal Suggestions

- Restructure the Development & Events Committee to more effectively reflect and support the development work taking place at CCC.
- Continue to grow the Fund for CCC by building the Friendship Circle
- Continue with planning for a "Concord East" capital fundraising effort, contingent on how plans evolve.

Respectfully Submitted by: *Becky McCullough, Chair*





Technology Working Group **2018-2019**

Committee: Nate Kemp, Jennifer Saxe, Melissa Gallo, Candice Campbell, Kerry Norton, Rob Lacey

FY19 Goals:

1. **Online Applications:** This year we launched online applications for the 2019-20 school year for our continuing families as well as online 2019 summer applications. We used a program called Form Assembly which connects to our Salesforce database and automatically creates applications in Salesforce upon application submission. This allowed us to streamline the application process for families, while also improving the turn around time for parents to complete applications allowing classroom projections to be completed earlier than the previous year. See data below:
 - i. 2018-19 Applications as of 1/8/2018
 1. 33 applications received
 2. 26 new applications
 3. 7 continuing applications (continuing applications distributed 1.4.18)
 - ii. 2019-20 Applications as of 1/8/2019
 1. 120 applications received
 2. 47 new applications
 3. 73 continuing applications (continuing applications distributed 1.3.19)
- b. **Online Payment Method:** We are still in the process of researching a way to accept payments online. We will update the Board when we have more information.
- c. **Online Forms:** Starting in 2018 we began researching a program to streamline the process of collecting child forms that would allow families to fill them out online as well as allow a pre-fill option so year to year they weren't starting over but were able to review information and update when necessary. We did identify a program called School Docs (same parent company as Camp Docs) and we will be rolling out a launch of online forms using School Docs for the 19-20 school year via an email going out mid-July 2019.
- d. **Text Alerts through Kaymbu:** In the 18-19 school year we introduced text alerts for school closings using Kaymbu. Parents now receive an email, as well as a text message, when we are delayed or closed due to weather.

Respectfully Submitted by: *Candice Campbell, Enrollment and Administrative Coordinator*





From the Executive Director
Pat Nelson M.ED.
June 10, 2019

2018-2019 has been the kind of year that reminds me over and over what a truly special place we have in Concord Children's Center. As Executive Director I am enormously grateful for the community we build every year, a community ready and able to help advance CCC as we grow and change over time. Since our founding in 1975 families and staff have worked together to be the best we can be, responding to the changing realities and needs of children, families, and the world around us.

It seems like almost overnight we have grown from the 7 teachers, administrators and 35 children who came together at Harvey Wheeler in 1975 to be the first full time childcare program in Concord – making this vision happen on a budget of \$40,000. We now share three buildings with 232 children, their families and sixty staff. We have a budget of over three million dollars. Our infrastructure has grown along with the rest of the world's. We now use text, email, our website, and facebook to communicate with our families. Distribution of notices through paper and posters while still present has greatly diminished. The addition of the Kaymbu has allowed us to efficiently document and communicate the learning taking place at CCC. Most recently we have started to replace the color coded paper forms used since the beginning of time, to collect the important information we need to keep children and families informed, safe and well served; with an on-line form filling platform. We introduced the use of an assessment tool in 2010, added a level of security to all of our buildings in 2013, developed a Center Wide Inclusion Policy and determined in 2016 we would continue with NAEYC Accreditation. What has made all of these policy and practice decisions work so well, is the level of involvement in studying problems and coming to solutions by the staff and family community at CCC. We joke that we can barely change a lightbulb without a committee. However, when we do change the light bulb it works quite well.

This year as we look forward to changing the model of our school from a three site to a two site program and finding a home for the combined Emerson and Ripley school, I am immensely grateful for this tradition of involvement by a broad group of interested members of our community. Over the past two years former Board Chair Campbell Rowe has led the Long Range Planning Committee consisting of parents, teachers and administrators; in a planning and decision making process, leading to the recommended two site model. Our treasurer Stephan Bader, alumni parent who's Ripley three year old is now in college, our business manager, Melissa Gallo, also an alumni parent, the program directors and several financially savvy parents have been pouring over the numbers, to create a plan that will have every possibility of success and assure the continuity of CCC. Jennifer Saxe the Development Coordinator has been working with her team of parents and alumni to create the systems we need to build our fundraising over the next few years to help support the building project. With the help of a brand new parent Tom Doherty, who came to us with lots of fundraising experience and a his six month old baby, the Annual Appeal committee, and the generosity of our current families, alumni and community friends we increased this year's annual Appeal by almost 50%. This kind of participation and support combined with energy and tenacity makes for a powerful organization with a wonderful 44 year legacy and a brilliant future.

2018-19 Has been a year filled with joy and unfortunately some sadness. In November we lost Dotty Whittier, a Ripley teacher for over 12 years. Dotty was a beloved teacher, and amazingly positive presence at CCC. On Saturday June 8th CCC remembered Dotty at a gathering of families and friends in the



beautiful playscape at Ripley. Dotty loved our outdoor space and was often seen throughout the winter in a full one piece snowsuit, playing along with the children. In the warmer months one of her favorite activities was building Fairy houses. On Saturday we celebrated Dotty by building our own Fairy Houses which can be seen scattered around the Playscape. Gage Whittier, Dotty's husband presented CCC with a check to begin a fund in Dotty's name. This fund will be used to provide financial scholarships for CCC families. It was a beautiful day and embodied much of what made Dotty so dear to all of us.

Pat Nelson
June 10, 2019





1300 Main Street
978-369-6790

120 Meriam Road
978-369-5983

134 ORNAC
978-369-0492

978-369-3747

www.concordchildrenscenter.org