

# CCC Newsletter

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*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*

June, 2018

## CCC Annual Meeting

### Calendar

May 31 Pre-School Field Day

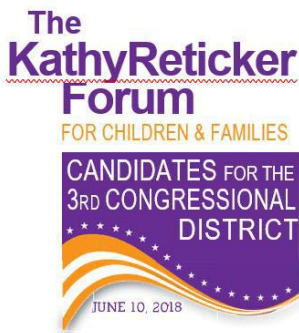
June 10 Early Education Forum

June 13 CCC Annual Meeting @ West Concord

June 21 & 22 CCC Closed Summer Preparation

June 25 First Day of Summer Program

***Everyone is invited to attend and vote on our Board Slate at our Annual Meeting on June 13th at West Concord at 7 PM.***



**2<sup>nd</sup> Forum in Honor of former CCC Executive Director:**  
***Where Do the Candidates Stand on Vital Issues Facing Children and Families?***

The Kathy Reticker Forum for Children and Families, together with partner organizations Strategies for Children, Boston Children's Museum, Jumpstart, Lowell Community Health Center, United Way of Mass Bay and others, will host a forum on **Sunday June 10, 2018 at 2:00 pm at Lowell High School Auditorium** for all candidates for the Massachusetts 3rd Congressional District.

The Candidates Forum will focus on the vital issues facing children and families, including the need for high quality and affordable early childhood education and care for all and the need to close the opportunity and achievement gaps in education. Each candidate will have an opportunity to articulate his or her position on issues that impact the wellbeing of young children, their families, and the communities they live in.

The Kathy Reticker Forum for Children and Families was established in 2016 to increase awareness and advocacy for children and families in honor of Kathy Reticker, former Executive Director of Acre Family Child Care and Concord Children's Center. Kathy was a beloved leader in the field of early childhood

care and education and the non-profit community. Acre Family Child Care in Lowell, Concord Children's Center, The Umbrella Community Arts Center, and The Discovery Museums together with numerous individuals founded the Forum to honor Kathy's legacy by bringing attention to and advocating on the issues that most fundamentally affect children: income inequality, economic justice, educational disparities, and the need for affordable, high quality child care and education for all children and families. The Kathy Reticker Forum recently awarded its first scholarships to students at Middlesex Community College and graduating seniors at Lowell High School pursuing studies in Early Childhood Education. For information about the Candidates Forum please contact Pat Nelson at 978-369-3747.



## July 26, All School Picnic

Whether you are joining us this summer or not, all of our families are invited to come to our Summer

Picnic at the Ripley Playscape on July 26<sup>th</sup> at 6 PM.

Bring a picnic dinner, a blanket and the whole family. We will provide lemonade and our annual visit from **All Hands Drumming**.

## Thank You Communications Working Group!

This Year the CCC board convened a Communications Working Group (CWG). CCC family surveys, while very positive in general, have indicated a need for better communication about what is happening during the day at school, upcoming events, changes in schedules and unexpected school closings.

The Working Group members are: Nate Kemp (Ripley Parent and CCC Board member), Chandni Valiathan (West Concord Parent), Brian Farber (Ripley Parent), Kate Connolly (West Concord Parent), Jennifer Saxe, Development and Alumni Relations Coordinator, Candice Campbell, Administrative Assistant, and Pat Nelson, Executive Director.

To better understand what families wanted to hear about, and how they wanted to receive the information, we conducted a brief survey in the fall. The majority of families expressed a desire to receive photos of classroom activities, and descriptions of daily activities along with the learning goals associated with the activity. Families overwhelmingly expressed a desire to receive information through email or another type of electronic communication.

Over the course of this school year with input from the CWG, CCC has been implementing Kaymbu to share photos and descriptions of the activities children participate in during the day. Teachers include descriptions of the skills children are working on and the intention behind the activity.

With the help of the CWG members we are exploring the use of Kaymbu to broadcast unexpected school closings and schedule changes via text as well as the addition of an interactive calendar to the school website.

Many thanks to the volunteers who are bringing their expertise to this working group. Anyone interested in working with this group next school year can contact Candice or Jennifer at 978-369-6790.



### Chippy the Chipmunk



Early this morning, some friends helped to fill up the bird feeder. This captured the interest of Chippy our Chipmunk! Once inside, some friends noticed that Chippy was eating the bird seeds!! We watched Chippy fill her cheeks full of seed before disappearing into a hole. "I think Chippy has babies!" We watched as Chippy ran back and forth with food in her cheeks back to the hole. We love watching nature through our big classroom windows!!



Areas of learning taking place:

NAEYC:  
3.A Enriched Learning Environments,  
3.F Making Learning Meaningful,  
2.D Language,  
3.E Children's Interest & Needs,  
2.B Social-Emotional,  
1.D Harmonious Classroom,  
2.C Physical, 3.B Caring Communities,  
3.G Deepen Understanding,  
9.D Environmental Health,

*An excerpt from a Ripley Three Fours Storyboard created with Kaymbu*



## The Science and Importance of Play

In the Bernard van Leer Foundation's Working Paper, **Children's Right to Play**, Wendy Russell and Stuart Lester of the UK's University of Gloucestershire discuss why play is fundamental to the health and well-being of children. This paper written in 2011 is as relevant now as it was seven years ago. In the words of Gordon Burghardt, quoted in the working paper, "The problem of defining play and its role is one of the greatest challenges facing neuroscience, behavioural biology, psychology, education and the social sciences generally... only when we understand the nature of play will we be able to understand how to better shape the destinies of human societies in a mutually dependent world, the future of our species, and perhaps even the fate of the biosphere itself."

The Working Paper describes some of the effects play has on the developing child. At CCC we believe strongly in supporting the play of children and the role of teachers in these experiences. Below are excerpts from the working paper.



*"The importance of play lies with developing physical and emotional flexibility, by rehearsing the actions and emotional aspects of being surprised, temporarily disoriented, or unbalanced." CCC teachers see this happen daily in the classroom and on the*

playground. More recent research on the development of resiliency supports the importance of developing flexibility.

*"Children modulate novel behavior patterns and emotions by the frame in which play occurs and by the lack of serious consequences from losing control. .... Play operates as a calibrating or mediating mechanism for emotions, motor systems, stress response, and attachment systems." Teachers play an important role in being available to support children's experimentation with expressing and modulating their emotions. Careful observation of children's play and intentional facilitation allow teachers to help children build on and learn from their play experiences.*

*"The features that distinguish play from other*

*behaviors may exist to keep the brain labile; that is, to maintain its potential for plasticity and openness...The ability to create a virtual reality offers the chance for excitement and enjoyment through temporary suspension of the limits of the real world. This in itself becomes a self-reinforcing process, one in which motivation and reward work in a continuous cycle to support emotional and bodily engagement with the social and physical environment."*

## CCC Participates in Two Research Studies

This year researchers from the Saul Zaentz Early Education Initiative at the Harvard Graduate School of Education and the Boston College Language Learning Lab visited CCC. Both institutions are studying the impact of quality early education on children's learning.



The Harvard study *"is a unique opportunity to update the information available to policymakers and families across the state about how young*

*children learn and develop as well as the links between their development and their early learning experiences. Thanks to the important participation of thousands of families and early education and care providers across the state, this study will allow us to say something new about high-quality early learning settings and what models work, for whom, and under what conditions."*

The Boston College Language Learning Lab is interested in gathering data on how best to assure all children reach their learning potential *"Children know thousands of words by the time they enter kindergarten. This vocabulary provides a foundation for learning and development in elementary school and beyond. Despite the extensive research on vocabulary development conducted so far, we still know very little about vocabulary development after 30 months. The more we know about how, when, and why children learn words, the better we can help children reach their full potential."*

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*Many Thanks to the Triant-Estes family for hosting our Annual Teacher Appreciation Dinner. Each year a board member opens their home to the CCC Staff and Board to celebrate the school year and thank the dedicated teachers of CCC.*

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## ***CCC Executive Director Annual Report***

It is hard to believe I am writing my 2017-2018 Annual Report. Today is warm and definitely suggesting summer is around the corner, yet it seems like only yesterday we were experiencing snow days and still anticipating the Auction.

### **Program Quality**

Program Quality can be measured in a variety of ways. Family and staff surveys provide quantitative data; NAEYC Accreditation provides a review by an outside organization.

Family and staff surveys have been consistently positive. For both families and staff, communication was noted as an area for improvement. This year we formed a Communications Working Group and initiated the use of email communication with families through Kaymbu. Kaymbu is also being used as a tool for teacher planning and the documentation of curriculum. Kaymbu has proven to be useful for not only communicating curriculum to families; it has had benefits for curriculum sharing between classrooms and as a tool for coaching from Program Directors. We have instituted the use of Learning Communities consisting of smaller groups of teachers to facilitate the development of community and assist with communication.

In October we received our Accreditation report from NAEYC and were awarded the maximum points (100% or greater) possible in eight of the ten standards including: Relationships, Teaching, Assessment of Child Progress, Health, Teachers, Families, Community Relationships, and Leadership and Management. Curriculum scored at 87% and Physical Environment at 96%. Both of these areas will be on our goals for improvement next year.

### **Financial Health**

CCC Revenues are 95% dependent upon tuition income. Enrollment was again very strong this year resulting in projected retained earnings for this school year in excess of the board's target. This year's strong financial position has allowed us to increase our contribution to our teacher's retirement plan, provide a bonus to each teacher, and to contribute to our reserves. As we prepare for the future facility needs of CCC we are keenly aware of the importance of our reserves.

### **Our role in the community**

CCC has continued to collaborate with the Concord Family Network to provide community programs, participate in the Regional Early Childhood Council, and Concord Area Pre-School Association. We have received grants from the Concord Carlisle Community Chest and the Trinitarian Congregational Church for our tuition assistance program. Nearly 11% of our families received tuition assistance through our in-house tuition and the state voucher program. CCC has been very involved in two regional organizations, The Kathy Reticker Forum, named for our long time

Executive Director Kathy Reticker, and CHNA 15. In June 2018 we are co-sponsoring a Congressional candidates forum on issues vital to children and families.

### **Board of Directors**

CCC is guided by a seasoned administrative team consisting of three Program Directors with decades of experience at CCC, an Administrative Director with a tenure of over 25 years, a Business Manager, a part time Alumni Relations and Development Coordinator, an Administrative Assistant, and myself. We in turn are guided by the Board of Directors. It is critical to the organization that our Board is engaged and informed. I want to thank the 2017-18 Board for all the work they have done and the thoughtfulness that is applied to every decision.

### **And the Children**

I am very grateful to all of our families for sharing their children with CCC. Each day I have the privilege of seeing our teachers in action, making the days at CCC special for each and every child. Each year at this time I celebrate CCC's emphasis on secure and nurturing relationships, recognizing each child as an individual, and crafting curriculum responsive to children's interests. The results are visible daily. A parent comment from the 2018 Parent Survey expressed the success of our program: *"My son's teachers are amazing. They understand him and always share stories at pick up time that show their caring professionalism and their attention to the details of my son's day. They provide a variety of educational experiences that keep my son talking all the way home and make him look forward to going to school."*



**Willard Carnival**  
**Sunday - June 3<sup>rd</sup> 12 - 4 pm.**  
**Rain or Shine**

**Location:**  
**Willard School grounds**  
**185 Powder Mill Road, Concord, MA**

### **FUN FOR EVERYONE!**

<b>CARNIVAL GAMES</b>	<b>CAKE WALK</b>
<b>FACE PAINTING</b>	<b>FANTASTIC RAFFLE ITEMS</b>
<b>DELICIOUS FOOD</b>	<b>BALLOON ANIMALS</b>
<b>MUSIC</b>	

**Benefiting**  
Willard Parent Teacher Group (PTG)  
Working to sponsor specific programs  
and activities that benefit the Willard  
School children and community

### **Sponsors**

