



Celebrating 50 years of Care, Curiosity and Community!

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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

News & Updates from CCC

Deep Roots, Lasting Blooms — Honoring Joanne and Penni

Dear CCC Community,

When my son Alex began in the Triangle Room in 2007, I was in the “blur” of young motherhood – some days I didn’t know whether I was coming or going! I depended on the CCC leadership at that time: West Concord Program Director **Anne Doherty**, Administrative Director **Joanne Saideh**, and Executive Director **Pat Nelson**, to reassure me that I was doing okay and my kids were thriving. I didn’t know then Ripley Program Director **Penni Hensley Wagner** until I joined the CCC Board; it was through my Board service that I discovered the depth of the wisdom and the breadth of the influence of CCC.



Fast forward to 2025, and I am once again learning every day from the CCC teachers and leaders, most especially from Joanne and Penni. They have been my right and left hands these past months. For our newer families who may not have gotten to know them well—especially since their current roles are not directly family-facing—it’s important to know that their influence touches every part of your child’s experience at CCC. Between the two of them, they have **83 years** of CCC wisdom embedded in their brains. **Imagine the number of children, families, and educators they have cared for, taught, influenced, guided, mentored, and reassured over those years.** I’m trying to gather every bit of knowledge from them before they retire this summer! And though we will go on without them, their strong roots will always be a part of the magic that is CCC.

You should have recently received an email about how CCC is honoring Joanne and Penni at this special time, and we also provide details following this letter. Check your inbox, save the date for the party, and click the links to share and/or donate. Choose one or all three options to salute their great careers at CCC!

Our April 2 panel with the Transcendentalism Council of First Parish, [Harvesting the Spirit of Transcendentalism in Education Today](#), was a huge success. We had a full house in the Goodwin Forum at the Concord Free Public Library. CCC alumni parents **Jenny Rankin**, **Tracie Dunn**, **Elise Mott**, and **Betsy Siebert** spoke so eloquently about the ways that the values of Thoreau, Emerson, Peabody, and Fuller influenced their teaching. We all felt the passion for teaching and learning that they expressed! It was an enlightening evening. Photos from the event are provided below, and we will share the link to the YouTube video with the CCC community when it is available.

Enjoy the emerging spring!

Celebrating Joanne and Penni

After a combined **83 years** at CCC, long-time staff members **Joanne Saideh** and **Penni Hensley Wagner** will be retiring this summer. Be a part of honoring them this spring!

RSVP to join us for a community farewell celebration,

including live music, food, and more!

Sunday, May 18, 4-6pm

Playscape at Ripley, 120 Meriam Road

Share a memory, story, or expression of gratitude for inclusion in a special book that we will be giving to each of them. Submissions should please be received by April 30.

Make a donation in their honor to our professional development program, an aspect of CCC that is meaningful to both of them.

Advancement & Community Updates



Celebrating 50 Years of Concord Children's Center

CCC to Receive State Citation

At the **April 16 Board meeting**, CCC Executive Director **Suzie Kornblum** and Board Chair **Christina Anderson** will be receiving a citation honoring CCC on its 50th anniversary from **State Rep. Carmen Gentile** and **State Rep. Simon Cataldo**. Reps. Gentile and Cataldo will be presenting the certificate at the start of the meeting at 7pm. All community members are invited to attend this special presentation and stay for the Board meeting if they wish.

Harvesting the Spirit of Transcendentalism in Education Today

Last Wednesday night, over 50 people attended *Harvesting the Spirit of Transcendentalism in Education Today*, a panel presentation and discussion on how Concord's Transcendentalist roots have informed best practices in education up to the present day. Moderator **Jenny Rankin** gave an overview of Transcendentalism and its beliefs around education, while educators **Betsy Siebert**, **Elise Mott** and **Tracie Dunn** discussed how Transcendentalism is reflected in their teaching practice and gave examples of "passion projects" that are grounded in Transcendentalist beliefs. (All four panelists are also past CCC parents!)



Thank you to the Transcendentalism Council of First Parish in Concord for co-sponsoring the evening and to the **Concord Free Public Library** for hosting the event.



CCC Executive Director Suzie Kornblum welcoming everyone to the evening.



Moderator Jenny Rankin providing an overview of Transcendentalism and its beliefs around education.



Educator Betsy Siebert sharing her "passion project."



Jenny Rankin and Betsy Siebert discussing Betsy's project.



Educator Elise Mott discussing her "passion project."



Responding to audience questions and reflections.



Responding to audience questions and reflections.



Transcendentalism Council member and co-host Shelley Hawkes closing the evening.



Event committee (l-r): Shelley Hawkes, Transcendentalism Council; educator Betsy Siebert; CCHS educator Tracie Dunn; Rev. Jenny Rankin; Fenn educator Elise Mott; CCC Executive Director Suzie Kornblum; CCC Development Coordinator Jennifer Saxe.



Fund for CCC Update

To date, the Fund for CCC has received **over \$100,000** in commitments from current and past families and staff, grandparents and special friends, and corporations. Fund for CCC donations benefit areas across the school, including **professional development, tuition assistance, outdoor play spaces, special programs, and competitive salaries for our educators.** [Make your donation today!](#)



NAEYC Accreditation Update

We are eagerly awaiting the final step in our **NAEYC reaccreditation**: classroom observations by the NAEYC accreditor during visits to both our sites. These visits will take place this spring. If you have questions about the site visits or the reaccreditation process in general, contact CCC NAEYC Coordinator [Jordan Zirkel](#).



For Your Calendar

Upcoming Dates

- Wednesday, April 16, 7pm: Board Meeting, with presentation of 50th anniversary citation from State Rep. Carmen Gentile
- Monday, April 21: Patriots Day - CCC closed.
- Tuesday, April 22-Friday, April 25: optional days.
- May 5-9: Teacher appreciation week
- Friday, May 9: Special Friends Day
- Thursday, May 15, 7pm: Volunteer appreciation event
- Sunday, May 18, 4-6pm, Playscape at Ripley: retirement celebration for Joanne Saideh and Penni Hensley Wagner
- Thursday, May 22: West Concord end of year picnic
- Thursday, May 29: East Concord end of year picnic

Subscribe to the CCC Calendar

Stay current on events at CCC by subscribing to the [on-line calendar](#). Select which events you want to be kept informed about and stay up to date!

CCC Board Updates

Join the Board!

As a non-profit, CCC is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors that is primarily responsible for the Center's financial and organizational oversight. Board meetings are held every other month and are open to all families.

We are always seeking Board and Board committee members. In particular, we are seeking community members with accounting/financial management skills to join the Board Finance Committee. Please contact [CCC Executive Director Suzie Kornblum](#) if you are interested in getting involved with the work of the Board or its committees (Advancement, Finance, Long-Range Planning, Nominating, and Personnel).

2024-25 Board Members

Christina Anderson, Chair

Grace Giles, Vice-Chair

Jackie Fishbein, Secretary

Stephan Bader, Treasurer

Elie Adam

Phil Barr

Amantha Butler

Sean Hetherman

Susan Kelly

Isabelle Lechauve (CCC staff rep)

Katherine Manning

Sarah Sample

Shannon Sweeney

Jordan Zirkel (CCC staff rep)

Community News & Events

Concord250: Celebrating 250 Years of American Spirit by Honoring Concord's Leading Role in the Birth of our Country

The 250th anniversary of the battles of Lexington and Concord on **April 19** is fast approaching! There are events for everyone in the family taking place around town to celebrate this milestone. Visit the [Concord250 website](#) for complete information, including a [complete list of events](#) and [information on how to navigate and enjoy the holiday weekend](#).



****A reminder that roads in Concord Center will close at 6pm on Friday, April 18, for the Concord250 celebrations. Please be aware of possible traffic delays as you plan to pick up your child(ren) that Friday afternoon.****

Concord Children's Center | concordchildrenscenter.org





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