

MEETING HOUSE COOPERATIVE PRESCHOOL (MHCP) Tania Ryan, Director

The Preschool:

The Meeting House Cooperative provides an exceptional, developmentally appropriate education for preschoolers from the Northern Virginia area. During the 2009-2010 school year, MHCP is serving seventy-three families. Approximately thirty percent of these families are OPMH members. Beginning in September, eighty children attended MHCP. The breakdown of individual classes is as follows: Five children attend the Toddler program one morning a week; seventeen children attend the Two Year Class Program twice a week; ten children attend the Two Day Three's Program twice a week; ten children attend the Three Day Three Program; ten children attend the Five Day Three's and 28 children attend the Four/Five Day Program. The 28 children are divided between two classes. In addition, the preschool offers an Extended Day Program for the ten oldest children, four days a week for an hour and half. The school year begins in September and concludes at the end of May. The hours of the school are from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

The office is currently staffed by the Director, Tania Ryan and an Admissions Coordinator/Office Manager, Tina Gehring. The Director's hours are from 8:30 -1:30 and the Admission Coordinator's hours are from 8:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. The Preschool finance officer is Cathy Leary who works on an as-needed basis. The finance officer works closely with the Admissions Coordinator/Office Manager and handles all accounts payable or receivable. Mrs. Leary provides a monthly statement to the Board of Directors and to the Treasurer of the Board. The Preschool is staffed with five lead teachers and five assistant teachers. The preschool staff is a diversified staff with a range of preschool specialties. During the 2009/2010 school year the preschool also employed a sign language teacher twice a week as well as a Spanish teacher twice a week. Music is taught in individual classrooms on a daily basis.

The Board of Directors approved the 2009/2010 Budget. The tuition for the 2009/2010 school year is as follows:

Class	Yr.	Monthly
Toddler	\$1,206.00	\$ 134.00
2 Day 2's	2,295.00	255.00
2 Day 3's	2,295.00	255.00
3 Day 3's	3,510.00	390.00
5 Day 3's	4050.00	450.00
4/5 Day	4,500.00	500.00
Extended Day	1,800.00	200.00

These fees reflect tuition and materials. A scholarship fund is available for families in need of assistance. Currently, two children are participating in the scholarship program. All new applications and returning students must submit a \$75.00 non-refundable application fee.

Program

MHCP continues to use the emergent learning curriculum model as the basis for the children's education program. This developmentally based curriculum accepts children as active learners who learn through play. The adult guides the children through productive and meaningful play. It is through the adult guidance that the children develop independence and responsibility for their learning.

Parental Involvement

As a parent cooperative preschool, the participation of parents and families is essential to the classroom experience for young children. Parents are given specific guidelines before the school year begins. Every parent is responsible for being an active member on at least one committee.

The staff believes that parents learn from teachers and that teachers learn from parents' interaction with their child. Parents play an active role during their time in the classroom and work with the teacher to accomplish the goals for the day. The governing parent body is called PAC (Parents Action Committee). The PAC meets monthly and oversees special activities for the preschool along with fundraising, parent education, and clean-up days at the preschool.

Parent Education

During the 2009-2010 school year parent education has been a priority at the preschool. The Director, Mrs. Ryan, has taken an active role in helping to educate young parents regarding preschool age children. Through monthly newsletters, guest speakers, individual meetings and small group discussions, the preschool staff has explored with parents many topics such as Kindergarten readiness, language issues in young children, defiant behavior, setting limits with your child, and coping with difficult medical procedures.

The Parent Education Committee of the PAC provided parents with an extensive guide to summer programs in the area; special activities to do with your child in the DC area; and planning and organizing the MHCP Open House, which will be held on February 16, 2010 from 9:15 to 11:30 a.m.

Grants

Each year the Board of Directors and the Director identify special areas where expansion of program or facility is needed and then the Director applies for various grants. Last year, MHCP was fortunate enough to receive a \$50,000 grant for playground renovation, which was completed before our 2009 September opening, and a \$10,000 grant for special assessments services, such as speech and language and vision screening.

Staff Development

On-going staff training and education continues to be a priority at MHCP. The teachers meet twice a month for a full faculty meeting from 12:00-2:00 p.m. At one of the first staff meetings, a guest speaker is hired to address the staff in a formal, educational manner. The second staff meeting of the month is devoted to discussion and sharing classroom projects/lesson plans and discussing future meetings. The goal of each faculty meeting is to become familiar with new and creative ways to teach children. Each faculty member completes between twenty-five and fifty continuing education hours per school year.

Activities/Special Events/Charitable Giving That Make MHCP Unique 2009-2010

Class Dinners – Lunch Bunch – Class Coffees – Individual and Class Photos - Kindergarten Readiness Program for Parents – Book Fair – Holiday Sing-A-Long – Parent Work Days – Individual conferences with teachers – PAC Meetings - Open House - Lunch Bunnies – Extended Day – PJ Day and Breakfast for Dinner – School Picnic – Puppet Shows- Visiting Torpedo Factory Artists- – Language Screening – Vision Screening - Gala/Silent Auction – Sally Foster Wrapping Paper Fundraiser – Coat Drive – Giving Tree - Reptiles Alive – Singing Assemblies – The Great Zucchini Show – Older Classes Field Trips (Pumpkin Patch, etc.) –Guest Chef Special Snack Days - Monthly newsletters from teachers and Director – Family Picnic Cooperative – Parent Education Opportunities – Fire Station Community Outreach – Classroom Music and Movement – CPR and first-aid training for teachers.