

## HARTLAND COOPERATIVE NURSERY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

April 2019

*"The moments of happiness we enjoy take us by surprise. It is not that we seize them, but that they seize us."*

-Ashley Montagu in ExchangeEveryDay 4/15/19

### THANK YOU

**Heather White** and **Katelyn Holloway** - for preparing and providing food for the literacy program participants, and also for organizing the 2019 Fun Run

**Nikki Raney** - for handling the T shirt orders for the Fun Run

### HIRING NEW STAFF

We are excited to announce that we have hired Lori Harris as our new director and lead teacher, replacing Mrs. Harriet as she retires after the end of this school year. Lori has been working with children for more than 30 years, infants - college age. She has been a center director in Massachusetts and New Hampshire and worked as an early education consultant in Boston. She has taught college Early Childhood classes and workshops for the 20 years she has lived in the Upper Valley. Lori started working part time in our program this week, and reports that she is enjoying meeting all of the children.

Lori lives in Plainfield, NH in a house built in 1790 as a one room schoolhouse. It was used that way until the 1940's. She has a son who works at KUA and two weimaraners, Emma and Lace.

The hiring committee is currently reviewing applicants for the teacher assistant positions, and hopes to conduct interviews soon.

### BOARD MEMBERS NEEDED

Some new members are needed for the 2019 – 2020 school year. If your child will be starting at or returning to HCNS we'd love to have you consider serving on the board. Board members usually attend our monthly meetings, have some other duties depending on the position and are exempt from classroom cleaning. Please let a current board member or your child's teacher know if you are interested or if you'd like more information. We encourage you to attend the May 8 board meeting when board member elections will be on the agenda.

### SUNSCREEN

Now that spring has arrived, we'd like to remind you that, if at all possible, you should apply sunscreen to your child before dropping him/ her off on school days. If this is not possible, please talk to your child's teachers to arrange for an alternate plan.

## LICENSING VISIT

Just before spring break we had a “soft” three hour visit from two licensors from the Vermont Child Development Division. This was our first visit since the “new” Vermont regulations went into effect in September 2017. Although it was not required of them, the licensors complimented our program on the quality of the relationships with children and families that they observed. We had no violations of regulations that had not changed. There were a few relatively minor “talking points” related to regulatory changes. They have either already been addressed or will be addressed as soon as possible. One change that we’ve made is that we will now require signed permission slips for each field trip that involves transportation off site, beginning with the May 1 VINS trip.

## UPCOMING DATES TO REMEMBER

**May 1** - VINS Field Trip - Bus leaves HCNS at 8:30 and returns at 1:30

**May 9** - No School for children - Family conferences on this day and at other times during this week

**May 17** - School at Paradise Park (drop off and pick up there) **Rain date: May 24**

**May 18** - Fun Run 11:00 - 1:00 on Recreation Center grounds

**May 21** - School at Mrs. Bonnie’s house for Mrs. Harriet’s class and Ms Shawna’s afternoon class (Drop off and pick up at Mrs. Bonnie’s house, directions will be provided)

**May 21** - Spring Concert for Ms Shawna’s morning class

**May 22** - Spring Concert for Mrs. Harriet’s class

**May 22** - Ms Shawna’s Morning class final goat farm visit (dependent upon whether a goat who is due that day is kidding; this will be rescheduled for May 29th if it can’t happen as scheduled on this day)

**May 23** - Spring Concert for Ms Shawna’s afternoon class

**May 28** - Mrs. Harriet’s class and Ms Shawna’s Afternoon class final goat farm visits

**May 29** - Mrs. Harriet’s class and Ms Shawna’s Afternoon class walking field trips to the HES Outdoor classroom

**June 4** - Last day of school - field day activities

## NEWS FROM THE CLASSROOMS

Both classrooms recently completed a fairy tales unit. The children looked forward to hearing different versions of several fairy tales, and along with various projects related to the tales, had a chance to compare the stories, noting what was the same and what was different. All classes are now doing weekly journal entries, with varied prompts. We have flowers for Mother’s Day planted and growing in the classrooms - we had poor luck with germinating seeds this year so the plants will be smaller than usual at Mother’s Day! Ms Shawna’s classes have been learning how to “take care” of a pet, with a multiple day pet rock activity. Mrs. Harriet’s class has been observing the germination and growth of bean seeds they planted in plastic bag greenhouses. They have also worked on a class photo album. The children in all classes have enjoyed riding the trikes and balance bikes since we returned from spring break. The Outside Friday (or Thursday) visits to the various areas of our surroundings - Crabapple Woods, Messy Woods, Forest Woods and Community Garden have led to discovery of lots of signs of spring -

emerging leaves, worms, bird sightings, flowering plants and fiddleheads, to name a few). All of the classes really enjoyed their April visits to the goat farm where they helped with various farm chores and enjoyed some baby goats and their parents. During the last few weeks of school we'll be busy preparing for our spring concerts, going on some offsite trips and enjoying lots of outside time.

## **HARTLAND COOPERATIVE NURSERY SCHOOL BOARD MEETING NOTES**

**April 10, 2019 5:30 p.m.**

**Present:** Shawna Pinsonault, Val Raney, Harriet Dumas, Katelyn Holloway, Nikki Raney, Heather White, Bethany LaHaye, Greta Marchesi

### **1. Caregiver Feedback**

- A parent and board member asked whether we have an official protocol in place for dealing with behavioral issues. We agreed that we want to be proactive rather than reactive and also consistent. The point was made that we're not just a daycare/drop-off. We want to support the whole child (at home and at school) while also supporting the well-being of all kids in the classroom. Our behavioral plans should include families as well as kids. This fall we used a protocol borrowed from a local elementary school to come up with several behavioral plans. Something like that could be useful going forward. We agreed that that is an important conversation to have with the new director and teachers as well as with parents and the board.
- A parent asked whether we could consider splitting three and four-year olds into different classes in the future. Someone pointed out that age isn't always the best determinant of development- different three-year olds could be more or less advanced than four-year olds in the program depending on their particular skills and temperament. Could we help teachers differentiate more in the classroom to meet all students' needs? Possibly we could do a screening before the school year starts to make sure kids are with their appropriate developmental group (which is not necessarily their chronological group). We agreed that this was an important discussion that should be its own agenda item at a future meeting. We also agreed that it would be good to get input from a larger group of caregivers than just those present.

### **2. Approve March Minutes**

- Approved

### **3. Treasurer's Report**

- Our current balances are as follows:
  - Checking: \$28,864.80
  - Savings: \$14,129.42
  - Investment: \$51,513.70

- We've been alerted by the state that beginning with last academic year year we aren't allowed to charge registration fees according to Act 166 guidelines. Since we've already collected registration fees, we'll ask folks if they want a refund or if they want to make a donation to the school. The mandate goes back two years, so we need to check with parents from last year also.
- The first draft of the 2019-2020 budget is ready. The board reviewed the draft budget and agreed it looked appropriate. We'll vote on a final version next month.

#### **4. Admissions Report**

- We have 43 students enrolled so far for the fall. We need to let the public know that we're full but accepting a waist list.
- Our current class numbers are 16 in Harriet/Bonnie's morning class, 13 in Shawna/Kara's morning class, and 10 in Shawna/Bonnie's afternoon class.

#### **5. Director's Report**

- Our RISEVT grant proposal for \$1304 was approved for one class set (including teachers) of snowshoe equipment. We've got approval to store them in the Rec Center. The grant program is to improve community fitness, so part of our agreement in accepting the grant will be to make the equipment available for school families on the weekends. There was some concern that they would be checked out before the students had had a chance to learn to use them properly. We agreed that we would make sure kids knew about proper use and that families had to sign them out so we could track who had what materials. We'll come up with a more complete protocol for this in the fall.
- Our family survey is live. We've had 23 responses so far.
- A parent sent on thanks to the board via the director for changing staff in the middle of the year.
- The Director asked for board approval to confirm our enrollment in the VINS program for the 2019-2020 school year. We get successive benefits (discounted admission, activity kits to check out, etc) for each additional year that we enroll. This year, the morning classes get a half hour program each and the afternoon class gets a full hour. The teachers agree that new schedule works out well because 1) an hour is too long for the two classes to be successfully combined; and 2) at least one of the morning classes isn't able to sit still for a full hour. The board voted to approve our enrollment.
- The report from the CLASS observer arrived. We received a good deal of commendation for what we are already doing and some suggestions to enhance what we are already doing and opportunities for improvement. The staff has been working on formulating a formal improvement plan based on the observer's feedback in order to

complete the last component of our Stars certification. We expect to have that submitted by May 1.

- Our proposed dates 8/22 or 8/23 for the August Open House were approved by Rec Center.
- The Vermont Humanities Council literacy training was completed. It went well, though there weren't as many participants as there could have been. Thanks to two board members for providing food.
- The Director shared some important end-of-year dates:
  - May 1**- VINS whole school leave around 8:30 and return 1:30 via bus.
  - May 9**- No school for students- family conferences day. The schedule will be posted on Sign-up Genius for that week.
  - May 10**- Tie dying t-shirt day
  - May 17 (May 24 Rain Date)**- School at Paradise Park- drop off and pick up time
  - May 21**- Concert for Shawna's morning class
  - May 22**- Concert for Harriet's class
  - May 23**- Concert for Shawna's afternoon class
- We've received approval to have a spot again this year in the Hartland community garden. However, there's been a lot of interest from the community in plots, so they'd like us to give up at least one or two of our plots (we have either four or five plots, Harriet will clarify this with them).

## 6. Operations Report

- People have mostly been fulfilling their commitments, with just a couple of families left who haven't been able to fill their commitments. Heather and Shawna are working with families to strategize a plan. The Caregiver survey this year and last shows that people think requirements are reasonable. However, there are lots of empty aiding slots despite the fact that people are meeting their commitments. Should we move back to once a month aiding schedule? We will put the motion on the agenda for next month's board meeting and talk about it then.

## 7. Fundraising Report

- Nikki has designed the Fun Run t-shirt based on last year's design. It will be the same price as last year. The shirts could be here as early as 4/24. It would be great to have them at least by 5/10. We agreed that it would be nice to give families the opportunity to buy additional shirts in larger sized for other members of the family. It would be \$10 if parents wanted to order them for the family. We'll send out an e-mail tonight to get responses by Friday.

- Some proceeds from the Fun Run will go to a little boy at 4C's who is battling cancer. We'll have a poster and his family will come. We haven't finalized the other recipients, but the Old Home Day fund was suggested.
- We will do a Sign-up Genius for food for the fun run. We also still need a volunteer for the grill. Harriet will put out that request in the next newsletter. We will confirm with the Rec Center than we can use their grill again.

## **8. Other Business**

- Transportation- This item was tabled until next month.
- Nomination for 2019-2020 Board Members- We need to recruit board members for the 2019-2020 school year. Bethany, Heather, and Katelyn can all commit to serving for another year.
- Hiring Committee- We had a really great committee- a group of eight including Shawna- that worked well together. They met and put together a template for interview questions for the teacher/director position and put together an advertisement for the teaching assistant positions. They met with a great candidate for the director/teacher position. This person is very highly qualified and is willing to make a commitment of no less than five years. She has over twenty years of experience as an early educator and teacher, consultant, and mentor of early educators. A motion to offer the candidate the teacher/director position passed.

## **9. Policies and Procedure Committee Report**

No representative here to present.

**Upcoming Board Meetings  
(Second Wednesdays at 5:30 p.m.)**

May 8, 2019  
June 12, 2019

**Everyone welcome!**

**SONG**

**Green and Speckled Frogs**

Five green and speckled frogs,

Sat on a speckled log,

Eating the most delicious bugs. Yum! Yum!

One jumped into the pool,

Where it was nice and cool.

That left four green and speckled frogs. Glug! Glug!

*(Repeat for 4, 3, 2 and 1 frog - on the last line sing:*

That left no green and speckled frogs. Glug! Glug!