

COMMUNICATION

Website: www.csdc.unh.edu

The CSDC website provided a resource of information regarding the history, activities, and policies of the center. We have over 200 individual visitors to the site each month from around the globe! You can check out your classroom's pages and consult the CSDC calendar.

Newsletters

A center-wide Director's newsletter is published at least twice each semester. Each classroom is responsible for writing a newsletter to parents on a minimum of a monthly basis. They are typically distributed on the first of the month. Newsletters include logistical information (remembering outdoor clothing, labeling food containers, etc.), but primarily focus on curriculum information, documentation, and relevant pieces on child development.

Parent Meetings

Each fall CSDC hosts a center-wide evening meeting for parents on a topic of current interest related to our curriculum. Recent meetings have focused on mathematical thinking, diversity across the curriculum, assessment and emergent literacy with a focus on parent-teacher interaction. In the spring we often have an event connected with our literacy week and will have special topic meetings as interest and need are expressed. In addition, each classroom provides a schedule of events intended to encourage family participation in our programs, including potlucks, family quilt evenings, and transition to school meetings.

Conferencing with Parents

Scheduled conferences are held with parents/guardians on two occasions each year (mid-year and end of year) to discuss your child's development and experiences at CSDC. We encourage a reciprocal dialogue in which observations and insights are shared from home and center. CSDC teachers also often informally meet with a parent in-person, by e-mail, or over the telephone, as part of an ongoing commitment to communication and building a collaborative relationship. Conferences may be initiated by a parent also outside of the bi-annual scheduled conferences.

Communicating children's progress

The communication of children's progress is carried out in a number of ways: home-school journals, developmental narratives, portfolios, parent-teacher meetings and/or child-led conferences, and curriculum documentation binders /panels. Please also see the section on *Assessment* in this booklet.

Family Language Goals and Translation Service

Currently about 14 languages other than English are spoken in the homes of CSDC families. The CSDC Diversity Mission guides us to be inclusive and supportive in assisting families to maintain language traditions. We also recognize that language is an integral element of culture and identity. In pursuing this goal we consider (1) the family's goals regarding maintaining the home language and learning English, and (2) best practice for ensuring that all families are able to participate fully in CSDC programs through accessible communication tools.

CSDC teachers are encouraged to dialogue with families regarding their goals and our willingness to support the use of languages other than English. We also want to know whether a parent will need access to a translator for meetings or translation of key CSDC documents. The UNH language departments have assisted in the past by

providing students who can participate in the classroom or provide translation services for our work with families.

CSDC teachers are also encouraged to access materials (books, songs, tapes, etc), learn basic phrases and words, and to outreach to families and the community to include multiple languages in the typical classroom schedule (including ASL) even when all the children speak English.

CSDC Parent Advisory Committee (PAC)

Purpose and Activities:

The purpose of the committee is to promote communication and to advise the Executive Director regarding issues related to the Center and its families. The Executive Director reports on the activities of the center, including annual survey results, outlines proposed initiatives, and seeks input from members regarding center policies. From time to time the PAC may take the lead in fund-raising (e.g. biennial auction, t-shirt sales) and volunteer activities intended to support major projects (e.g. community workdays; playground construction, developing a website). PAC representatives act as a conduit for information and feedback between the CSDC administration and CSDC families. Minutes are recorded and distributed to families. This is not a formal decision-making body and does not have oversight or responsibility for the center budget. Funds raised by the committee are deposited in a CSDC Parent Fund and are distributed as needed by the Director for activities outside of the general budget.

Structure:

The PAC consists of the Executive Director, the Center Manager, and 1-2 parent representatives from each program or classroom. Parents are invited to let their teacher/s or the Director know that they are interested in being a representative. Any parent or teacher may attend and participate. Agenda items are sent to the Director prior to the meetings which are held monthly during the academic year.

Annual Evaluation and Feedback

Each year in May we ask families to complete an annual survey regarding their experience at CSDC. The feedback is summarized and discussed with teachers and the Parent Advisory Committee in the fall. A copy of the summary is emailed to all families. We appreciate and carefully consider all your feedback and ideas. Please do not hesitate to telephone or email any of the administrative team or your classroom teachers with feedback at any time or to request a time to meet.

Accessing Community Resources

CSDC staff members are very familiar with the range of community resources in the Seacoast area and across the state and can help you get any support you may need in raising your family. We maintain an extensive Resource Binder (available in the office) with agency information and Laurie Conrad can assist with connecting you up with UNH and local resources in the area of special needs. Check out the community notice board at the front entrance for posting on cultural events of interest to families.