

Minnow Pond 2013

A popular hymn for children that has been sung through the ages begins with “Jesus wants me for a sunbeam to shine for Him each day”. We can proudly say that indeed He continues to cast a sunbeam upon all the children and staff who are a part of Minnow Pond, this outstanding pre-school and day care center.

The daily activities there reinforce His love and protection. One need only watch the children’s interaction with staff and one another, and hear them sing and pray before each snack and meal to know what an excellent program our Director, Debbie Heinbach, and the loyal staff provides for each and every child who attends this school.

Last year, Debbie wrote a manual describing all the tasks of the director. When the school first opened with only three children, our director both taught and did the necessary administrative work. Now, eight years later, there are three classrooms comprised of between 11 and 16 children in each class. The demands of Debbie’s job from enrollment to marketing, accounting, management, hiring staff, and program development necessitated the need for this manual to be in place both for current and future use and to be updates when needed. So too, we saw the need for a treasurer’s manual since the membership of the board changes every three years and protocol and knowledge of a treasurer’s job is essential. Therefore, the treasurer will be writing a manual this year.

At the close of the school year, our head teacher resigned in order to take a job more advantageous for her family. Andrea Hayes, a church member and a teacher with the Pond for the past two years, is now the head teacher. The transition has been seamless, due to her qualifications, having been a Kindergarten teacher, and her knowledge of the workings of Minnow Pond. A teacher’s aide has returned after a hiatus of five years and she too has been able to pick up as if she had never left the school, only having to learn new names and become familiar with some of the program changes.

After Spring semester ended in June, summer camp was attended by 30 children (an all time high) including four children from the community.

The demographics of the children have changed considerably over the years and the incoming class of 2013 represents a high percentage of Indian children, with 51% of all children enrolled being non-Christian. The parents are made aware from their first inquiry that we are a Christian school but still choose to send their son or daughter to Minnow Pond. How enriching it is to know that all these little ones are being taught in an atmosphere of loving one another, whatever the spiritual beliefs of the parents may be.

To quote one parent, with permission, who wrote to a teacher, Ms. Ivana, the words speak volumes:

"I just want to thank you for all the work you do with "A". We are so pleased with the progress she is making, her confidence, and over all attitude towards school. She comes home singing songs, so proud of herself, and always telling us about the wonderful things she's learning. I can't tell you how happy it makes me to hear her recite her Bible lessons and spell her own name! It's also obvious how well loved she feels by you all, so again, thank you for the wonderful and important work you do, and thank you especially for making us feel comfortable that our precious baby is so well cared for."

Another parent sent thanks saying that their daughter LOVES going to school, loves her teachers and it brings a sense of joy and great comfort to them.

These accolades from parents are a true testimony to the fact that Minnow Pond staff and children truly shine for Him each day.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Otte, President of the Board of Directors