

The MISSION of The Acorn School for Early Childhood Development is to provide high quality, accessible, early care and education programs, and to advocate for higher standards in the field of early childhood education.

Letter from the Executive Director

Spring is upon us! I am very excited to think about how Acorn can Spring forward into the new year and continue providing "high quality, accessible, early care and education programs."

One of the ways we do this is by inviting all of our parents, staff, community partners and friends to be part of our second Strategic Plan on **April 18th from 4-7 and 19th from 9-3**. We have hired a consultant to help facilitate the Strategic Plan. We will be reviewing our mission and vision, asking for input on where we want to go in the future, how we want to get there, and set goals and objectives along with forming committees that will oversee and implement the Plan. We completed our initial 5-year Strategic Plan in December 2007. Some of the major accomplishments from that plan were:

- *Defining our model of Primary Caregiving
- *Formalizing the Creative Curriculum
- *Establishing a sliding scale for our tuition assistance program
- *The beginning of the playground improvement project and other capital projects including the parking lot, flooring, and fence.

Please mark your calendars to be part of the Strategic Plan. Your input is vital to the success of Acorn. Also, if you know someone that has valuable input or insight into early childhood education, I would love any recommendation you have for invitees. **Again, April 18th and 19th!** Look for more information in the near future.

Sincerely,
Matt Eldred
Executive Director

Let's Cheer on an Acorn Family!

Play Grounds Café in North Boulder was opened two months ago by Kenny Foster and Kari Swensen, parents in the Mixed-Age class. Acorn is having a fundraising event here on April 10th from 5:30-8:00. We would love to see you there!

Play Grounds is a haven for both parents AND children. It is a modern café integrated with a play-space that offers classes and special events. A place to eat,



sip, and relax in adult size chairs. A place where kids can be themselves and explore, construct, imagine, and collaborate safely among the play installations. They recently kicked off a music series with guitarist & children's musician Jeff Kagan, and it was a huge success. On Tuesday, March 4th at 3:30, they will be starting story time, and will be offering additional events in the future. Check out the website for more info.

www.playgroundscfe.com

Free Kids Days

[Denver Art Museum](#) is free the first Saturday of every month.

[Denver Botanic Gardens](#)-
3/17, 4/22 (Earth Day),
7/21, 9/27, 10/18

[Denver Botanic Gardens at Chatfield](#)-

3/7, 4/4, 5/2, 6/6, 8/1, 10/3
[Denver Museum of Nature & Science](#)-
4/20, 5/3, 6/25, 8/13, 9/7,
10/22

[Denver Center for the Performing Arts](#)

- "Gee's Band" • March 13 • 6:30 pm • Space Theatre
- "The Merry Wives of Windsor" • March 20 • 6:30 pm • Stage Theatre
- "Doubt" • April 3 • 6:30 pm • Ricketson Theatre
- "3 Mo'Divas" • May 8 • 6:30 pm • Stage Theatre

March						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	12	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

9	Daylight Savings Time Begins
13	PIP Meeting - Importance of Play/Creative Curriculum
17	St. Patrick's Day
20	First Day of Spring
24-28	SPRING BREAK - No School

April						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

7-8	Picture Day
10	Play Grounds Café - Acorn Fundraiser
18-19	Strategic Planning
19	I Volunteer Day

May						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

1	PIP Meeting
5-9	Teacher Appreciation Week
11	Mother's Day
26	MEMORIAL DAY - No School

Parents in Participation

Parents in Partnership (PIP) is a voluntary organization, open to all Acorn parents who want to be more actively involved with The Acorn School. PIP's primary purpose is to facilitate communication between the parents and the school staff. The Acorn School administration looks to PIP for feedback on any issues or suggestions that may come up within our Acorn community.

Other activities that PIP may participate in are organizing social events for Acorn families, assisting with selected fundraisers, participating in classroom events and arranging for teacher appreciation activities. Members of PIP are welcome to participate in as many or as few events as they choose.

PIP meets on a bimonthly basis. The meetings will occur every other month, on the second Thursday of the month, from 5:30-6:30.

We would love to see you at our next PIP Meeting on Thursday, March 13 in which we will have a teacher-directed training about the Importance of Play and the Creative Curriculum.

New Year Potluck

Thanks to everyone who came to The Acorn School New-Year Potluck. We had a great turnout with over 80 people. Thanks also to the Pearsons (parents in Toddlers Room and Preschool II) for hosting the party for the second year in a row.



The potluck is sponsored by PIP and is a yearly event that allows Acorn families to get together, meet each other and socialize. We believe that family partnerships are a vital part of the mis-



Creative Curriculum

The Creative Curriculum is designed to allow children to use play as a way to learn about everyday routines and experiences while the teacher observes and helps children overcome obstacles. It focuses on child-initiated play rather than teacher-directed and following children's interests rather than adhering to structured lesson plans.

Because children learn from their daily interactions with the environment, a carefully organized classroom and outdoor play space with a variety of interest areas is the foundation for the Creative Curriculum. The message conveyed to the child through the environment is that the school (and particular his/her classroom) is a fun, safe, comfortable place to be – one in which exploring and learning is always taking place. The right environment also fosters trust, a sense of belonging, and independence.

For infants and toddlers, interactions with other people help children learn about themselves, about relating to others, and about the world.

The adoption of the same curriculum in Boulder Valley Schools is yet another indication of its appropriate use with children from infant to kindergarten age.

***Come learn more about the Importance of Play and the Creative Curriculum at the next PIP meeting with a teacher-directed training session.**



Board of Directors

Judy Snyder, Chair • Allison Cook, Secretary/Treasurer • Kitty Mulkey
John Hunter • Diana Royce Smith • Shawn Pater • Linda Miron