

St. Mary's Community Preschool 2017 Annual Report

Under the leadership of the Reverend Dr. Ed Cromey, St. Mary's Preschool was originally founded in 1982. Even after 35 years, SMCP continues to provide twenty-first century education for our preschoolers, extended care hours to accommodate working families, and a renovated facility. St. Mary's Community Preschool welcomes families and friends of all faiths and nationalities.

Today, we are proud to be in full operation for seven years since reopened in 2011 under the leadership of Ida Payne, Head of Preschool. SMCP has an experienced staff dedicated to the academic success of their students. Ms. Payne along with Cynthia Dinan, Assistant Teacher, enjoy the challenge of working with the Pre-K students in our five-day program to prepare them for Kindergarten. Amanda Rabolli, Head Teacher, with Michelle Kayser, Assistant Teacher, together for the sixth year teaching the students in the three-day program. In September 2017, Carole Cleary became the Assistant Teacher in the three-day program.

We are very proud of our two-day program under the guidance of Sharlene Pizza, Head Teacher, and Carole Cleary, Assistant Teacher. Sharlene remained at St. Mary's until June of 2017. She decided not to return for the following school year for medical reasons. In September 2017, Michelle Kayser joined the two-day program to replace Sharlene. We will all miss her and wish her all the best in the years to come. We are pleased at the excitement this program has generated. Now, in its fifth year, it continues to provide the two year old children with the proper educational setting for future academic success.

St. Mary's Community Preschool is where the excitement for learning begins. The children thrive in a safe, nurturing environment with the curriculum and tools needed to meet our high standards of education. Our early childhood program understands the importance for young children to be children. We provide an atmosphere where they are free to play, explore, and imagine. It is designed to lead them from wonder to discovery and from investigation to affirmation. It is our primary goal to provide the opportunity for all children to associate learning with pleasure and to develop a positive sense of self. Our program is offered to children from the ages of two years old to four years old. Our two-day program is held on Tuesday and Thursday from 9:00am – 11:45am. Our three-day program is held on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 9:00am - 11:45am. Our five-day program is held Monday through Friday from 9:00am-11:45am. All classes are open to the community and surrounding areas and are committed to giving every child the opportunity to participate in our programs. Therefore, tuition scholarships were made available to those who qualified. For the 2016 - 2017 school year, approximately \$12,000 in need based scholarships were awarded thanks to St. Mary's Episcopal Church and the Outreach Community.

We ended the 2016 - 2017 school year accomplishing all the academic and social goals we set out to meet for the children.

Our playful approach is at the heart of our success. Young children learn best when they move, manipulate objects, build, sing and draw! Our preschool students are grouped according to age. By doing this, we are able to teach the students age appropriate lessons while developing social and emotional skills. The two year old class has been practicing learning their letters and colors and starting to count. The three year olds are focusing on pre-writing skills and recognizing numbers and shapes using the Get Set For School curriculum.

Our Pre-K students are hard at work developing their writing skills using the award-winning Handwriting Without Tears program; building their vocabulary with our Word Time program alongside Squawker, our class puppet; and using our Sound Around Box, A-B-C Touch and Flip Cards, Tag Bags, 4 Squares More Squares, and various Get Set For School music CDs to enhance their literacy and math skills.

The PATHS (Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies) program was added to our curriculum in 2015. This nationwide program has been shown to significantly improve children's social and emotional skills. The PATHS program provides teachers with a systematic developmental approach for enhancing social and emotional understanding and academic competence in children.

Our children enjoy many fun-filled activities such as pumpkin picking at the Wright Farm in Warwick, our Thanksgiving "Grand Event" with our grandparents, making gingerbread houses, and celebrating the Christmas season with a holiday party and Secret Santa gift giving. We are proud to be partnered with St. Mary's Episcopal Church for the annual Food Drive for those in need; reaching out to our seniors by trick or treating and Christmas caroling at The Promenade, our senior assisted living center in Tuxedo; Pajama Drive for children in need; and preparing shoeboxes with necessary school supplies and gifts for Operation Christmas Child which is sent to children overseas.

Supply goals include the purchase a new CD player, office chair, update computer software and student therapeutic tools providing children with a structured yet relaxed environment.

Outreach goals include establishing a **scholarship endowment** fund of approximately **\$20,000** annually.

As we look back, we have been blessed with an exceptional staff, loving and caring families and friends, and great support from the surrounding communities. We've accomplished a lot which energizes our vision for the future.