

C O L U M B I A GREENHOUSE NURSERY SCHOOL

THE ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023

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**"We do not learn from experience.
We learn from reflecting on
experience."**

~ John Dewey

At the end of every school year, I find myself reflective and introspective. When I look back on the year(s?) spent at Greenhouse, I am always filled with such awe, inspiration and gratitude at what this small group of people is able to accomplish. Each page of this report is filled with the details of why those feelings live so deeply in me. Reflecting on our shared goals and our shared work—whether it is putting together our first school-wide Children's Art Show or working together to build a home for Stone Bear in the Adventurers class –confirms that our commitment to protecting early childhood, supporting families, creating a connected, caring community continues to be at the heart of our work. While the products of the work are reflected here – we see the evidence of a successful Spring Fair, the newly formed Parents of Children of Color Group or a tower of colorful blocks – it is our shared commitment on which I continue to reflect and what continues to fuel me. As I look ahead, it is with pride and excitement that I look forward to another year inside of Greenhouse's strong, vibrant and committed community!

Warmly,
Renee





Hello Everyone,

As we experience the close of the academic year and enter the wonderful season of summer I'd like to thank all of you for being such amazing, enthusiastic, supportive, and generous members of our community. The "not-so-secret sauce" of our success as a very special learning environment for young children is the purposeful way we continue to come together to support one another. I witnessed this during the Children's Art Show and Fundraiser this past February. Although I am no longer a Greenhouse parent, when I walked through the doors of our event I experienced a warmth and friendliness that was infectious. While most of the faces were not familiar, the room contained the same connection and generosity of spirit that characterized our school during the years my children attended.

Throughout my first year as Board Chair, I have also been inspired by the extraordinary vision and deep knowledge of early childhood that our head of school brings to her work. Renee's tireless efforts soundly shepherded us through a global pandemic, allowing our community to emerge on the other side with a continued sense of purpose and strength. We are also buoyed by the strong expertise, nimbleness, and true love our teachers have for their students and for the learning process in its diverse forms. But we know that the students are the heart of any school, and we thank our parent community for sharing their children with us. The pure excitement of our littles as they create and discover is what gives all of the adults at Greenhouse their energy and passion.

As a board, we remain committed to maintaining the school's mission, safeguarding its future, and sustaining the long-term viability of Greenhouse. I am thankful to be part of its leadership as we continue to uphold our schools core values in the years to come.

Most sincerely,

Mignon R. Moore, Greenhouse Board Chair

Together





NAVIGATORS



3day Explorers



INVESTIGATORS



RESEARCHERS



ADVENTURERS



2day Explorers

MATH IN THE CLASSROOM

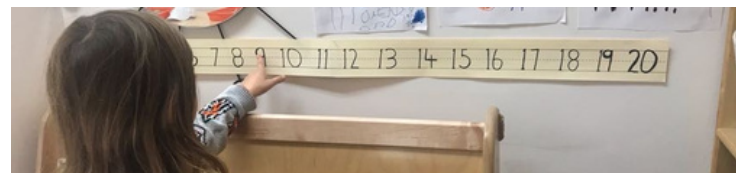
For many the recognition of “Math” skills is a narrow, often limited, idea. Focus and emphasis gets put on isolated skills, leaving behind the intuitive and nuanced sense of Math concepts that allow us to use Math in complex ways. At Greenhouse, we push back against this narrow idea of Math; we know and see that children show us their strong, intuitive understanding of Math concepts every day, all around them. Think about it – even a young toddler clearly understands the meaning of “More!” (which is a complex Math concept as it relates to quantity). We encourage young children to construct their own emerging understanding of the processes and content of Math through direct, active experiences and interactions with materials and people. We recognize that young children will change and grow their ideas about Math concepts over an extended period of time, through varied and integrated exposures and explorations. In short, the more active experiences, the deeper the learning. We provide these integrated and embedded experiences in every day routine times, (think snack time!) and in intentional learning activities (think work time or meeting). Whether the experience is part of a routine or in a more instructional setting, both experiences hold meaningful potential to foster children’s deeper understanding of Math.

As in all content areas, it is our job to assess each individual child’s understanding and then help them grow/change/construct their knowledge at their own rate. This understanding respects that children will be thinking and learning about different ideas and skills at different times. There isn’t a scope and sequence to the way children think; young children think about their experiences in a concrete, integrated way. We provide space for children to explore, respond and try out different Math idea. We actively resist the urge to communicate to children that there is one right answer, one right way, or one specific response. We also do not rush to provide the answer or correct every misconception or “wrong” answer. We provide just the right level of support to help children think through their Math questions and we leave space for a child to actively constructing their own knowledge or solve their own problems. When the adult jumps in and gives the right answer before the child has been able to deeply think it through—the learning belongs less to the child and more to the adult! Instead, we invite the tension of not knowing the answer because that is where the power of true learning lies!



WHAT SPECIFIC MATH CONTENT LEARNING LOOKS LIKE AT GREENHOUSE

Counting and Operations: There are many different Math principals at play when young children are exploring with counting. While it may seem straightforward to us, counting requires many distinct areas of understanding that young children are just acquiring, including number names, sequence of numbers, tracking what's been counted, and understanding of quantity – to simply name a few! We see even our youngest kids recite number names; they string number words together, sometimes in a correct sequence, sometimes not. “1-2-3-6-8-10” – they are showing us they know the names of numbers. To move from reciting number names to actually counting, a child needs to link the number name to one object at a time and understand that it holds a value or quantity. When a child is able to assign a number name to one object and move up the number line as they move through a select group of objects they are demonstrating their understanding of one-to-one correspondence. As kids learn to keep track of what they count, they learn that the last number they said holds meaning and represents the quantity of items in their set. All of this is to say – “How many Cheerios do you have?” is a very loaded question for a three year old! Instead of limiting our thinking about numbers to counting for counting's sake, we provide many opportunities for children to visualize numbers and build their number sense in a variety of ways. We want them to use their number sense to make meaning – Can you make two equal groups? Do you have less triangles or squares? If you have two tomatoes and I give you one more, how many will you have? Being able to connect number names with their written number symbol is another entirely separate skill from counting or number sense. We provide kids lots of experience to match and identify written numerals. As their ability to use graphic materials grows, we encourage them to reproduce numerals as well. Greenhouse kids are just at the beginning of the development of their understanding of counting and operation. They will continue to build and deepen their number sense over a long period of time and in many applications.



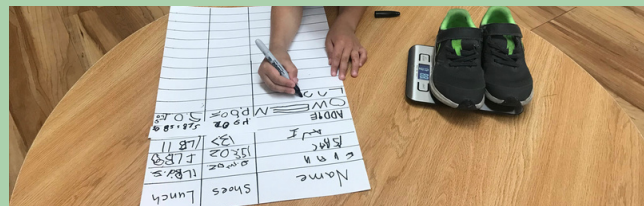


Patterns: Math is really the science and language of patterns! Children see, explore, create and extend patterns – sometimes as early as age 2. They find patterns in the world around them and in their daily routines; children can find patterns in the use of colors, shapes, sounds and movement. We use the language of ‘reading’ a pattern and intentionally provide interesting materials for children to explore and create patterns. Seeing how the world is organized and being able to practice organizing materials is important work for young children as they move to more formal math learning.

Spatial Relations/Geometry: Young children’s understanding of spatial relationship requires much more than a simple parroting of shape identification. Yes, identifying shapes is foundational but there is so much more. Young children are just beginning to understand themselves in relationship to their environment. Being able to move yourself fluidly through space, being able to move objects around in space, being able to use language that represent that movement in space – it’s all Math learning! The simple truth is, when constructing and deconstructing shapes, when using ideas of symmetry, composition and balance or when filling space with complex shapes or structures –young children are experiencing a concrete active, whole-body experience that fully develops their ability to orient objects and themselves in space in an integrated and authentic way that cannot be matched! Some people call it “playing in the block corner”; at Greenhouse, we call it vital Math learning! When children use blocks they are practicing the language of position, including words and concepts like over and under. “I put the triangles over the cylinders” or “Put this one next to that one. Put this inside the building.” They are seeing and using objects in relationships to space and each other. Every block placed is a thought, with intention — deep, thoughtful, important, cognitive work!

Another activity that helps young children develop spatial relationships is observational drawing. Looking closely at an object – a pumpkin, a bear, or a building – and being able to use materials (most often graphic materials – but not always) to represent what you see shows us a child’s visual perception ability—or their ability to perceive, analyze and think in visual images and then their ability to act on them in reality. This is a vital cognitive function that shows us how young children process information.

Measurement: In early childhood, comparisons are the core activities and concepts that we are exploring while we are measuring. This is longer; this is shorter. This is heavier; this is lighter. We provide materials and opportunity for children to identify and compare attributes including area, length, volume. We may use non-standard units to measure objects. It's not important to know that 2 cups equal a pint (I actually had to look that up!) It is important to know that you can pour the small container four times into the big container. It is nearly impossible to have an experience in a sensory table and NOT use the talk of measurement! Our regular cooking activities are one more way you will see us measuring. How many cups of milk? How much salt? And our Math talk won't stop there -- How many muffins did it make? We need six at the rectangle table and two at the circle table. So, don't be fooled by the tasty treats - they are also filled with concrete, contextual math thinking! In the early childhood years, the content area of measurement is about explorations and experiences that will help young children make sense of the world (and enable them to ask for the biggest piece of pizza at dinner!)



Data and Statistics: Sorting information is one of those intuitive mathematic skills that even the youngest of children use to make sense of their world. Children are sorting information all the time! Our job is to give them interesting materials with interesting attributes and support them as they do what they do! As they get older, we help them organize the information in their lives: we collect, represent, analyze and visualize the information to help them use it to answer an important question that we formed. Yes, this is what statistics looks like at in the early childhood years!

Book Helper Observer: EMILY Day: EMILY'S

Who Has Had Snack Today?	Yes	No	Ask Again Later
Addie	✓		✓
Ananke		✗	
Avi		✗	
Avinoam	✓		
Emmy	✓		✓
Emrys	✓		
Evan	✓		
Isaac	✓		
Kavita		✗	
Kwan		✗	

Question of the Day!!!
We are having **BLUEBERRIES** for snack today.
Do you like **BLUEBERRIES**?

YES! 😊	NO 😞	NEVER TRIED... 🤔
E	0	1
U	2	
A	1	
A		
A		
A		
V	9	3
		1



So do not be fooled by this term “play-based” learning. At Greenhouse, we know that play is the vehicle through which young children construct their own emerging understanding of Math (and so much more!). Our intentional planning of materials, environment and schedule, coupled with our understanding of each individual child’s development allows us to facilitate direct, active experiences and interactions that enable all children to see themselves as mathematicians (and active life-long learners!).



Greenhouse People

By Flori Pressman (Parent of Isaac, Adventurer and Marcus, Alumni)



When my oldest child started in the 2Day 2s (now Explorers) in the fall of 2016, I could never have imagined the impact this amazing community would have on our lives. As my youngest has just graduated from the Investigators, I find myself reflecting on what makes Greenhouse such a special place. While I love the neighborhood and the classrooms (and my kids loved the yards), it really all comes down to something I've said to Renee on many occasions: Greenhouse people are the best people! After all, the people are what make the community, and the community is what makes Greenhouse.

This is perhaps most obvious when you look at our teachers. Many have been at Greenhouse for decades, and all bring unbridled warmth, enthusiasm, and care to their work with our kids each day. The school's focus on professional development is evident in every interaction, the response to every question, the quiet cooling of every dispute between friends. Along with our teachers, our administration is at the heart of the school. Mei works tirelessly to make sure everything runs smoothly, and Renee's influence is in every facet of the school. When I've had questions, school-related and not, Renee always took the time to send back a thoughtful, child-centered response. She takes the time to get to know each child for who they are, and to help families make the best decisions for their individual circumstances.

"We chose Greenhouse because we know early education isn't about the facilities or the "stuff" but about the values, the social emotional development of our little people as they're learning how to be themselves in school and in the world."

If the teachers and administration are the most obvious, most visible are the Greenhouse families. The families that choose Greenhouse are different in all the ways families are, but they tend to be the same where it counts: warm, inclusive, caring, interested and interesting. We chose Greenhouse because we know early education isn't about the facilities or the "stuff" but about the values, the social emotional development of our little people as they're learning how to be themselves in school and in the world. We're also supportive of each other in all the little and big ways that matter, whether it be taking another child after-school when someone is running late or has a conflict, or helping out when someone has a more serious need. Our WhatsApp chats feature an array of memes and inside jokes mixed in with the logistics of get togethers and school reminders, and I feel so lucky to have made genuine Greenhouse friends alongside my children.



I would be remiss if I didn't mention how wonderful the children at Greenhouse are. This is not because I'm writing this to an audience of their parents (*although aren't our kids the best?*). It's because Greenhouse kids have the benefit of learning from our teachers, administrators, and parents every day. They feel comfort and pride in Greenhouse as "their place" and confident in themselves as they move forward to elementary school and beyond. On the first day of kindergarten for my older son, I loved seeing the photos of the prior year's Investigator's WhatsApp chain, with each kid smiling confidently and proudly. To me, that's the true value of a Greenhouse education.



Recently, I was walking with my younger child when we passed an ice cream store. There was a family on the bench outside enjoying their ice cream, and one of the kids was wearing a Greenhouse shirt. I immediately began chatting with the parent, talking about Greenhouse, where their kids went now, etc. When my child asked me why I was talking to strangers, the response came unbidden: **they are not strangers, they are Greenhouse people!** After all, Greenhouse people are the best people.

-Flori Pressman



SUMMER READING

Alice: "The Future is Folded: How Origami is Reshaping Our World." by Maya Wei-Haas. National Geographic, Feb. 2023.

Angela: *The Cabinet* by Un-Su Kim (translatd by Sean Lin Halbert)

David: *The Secret Life of Kitty Granger* by G. D. Falksen

Erica: *Girl on the Train* by Paula Hawkins

Heather: *Boundaries* by Dr. Henry Cloud

Karen: *Out of My Mind* by Sharon M. Draper

Lisa: *Nothing Stays the Same, But That's Ok* by Sara Olsher

Mei: *A Long Walk to Water* by Linda Sue Park

Nexhi: *Why Am I Like This? The Science Behind Your Weirdest Thoughts and Habits* by Dr. Jean Martin

Paula: *Demon Copperhead* by Barbara Kingsolver

Rachel: *The Two Spoons Cookbook: A French Inspired Vegan Cookbook*

Renee: *Tomorrow, and Tomorrow, and Tomorrow* by Gabrielle Zevin

Sarah: "Baby Faces and Myths of the Child Mind" by Adam Gopnik. NYTimes

Faculty List 2022-2023

2day
3day
Explorers

Rachel Roth, Head Teacher
Sarah Uhrman, Assistant Teacher
Sofia Coulibaly, Student Aide

Navigators

Angela Coulibaly, Head Teacher
Nexhi Avoricani, Assistant Teacher
Amy Ravelo, Student Aide

Adventurers

Alice Chen, Head Teacher
Erica Cintron, Assistant Teacher

Researchers

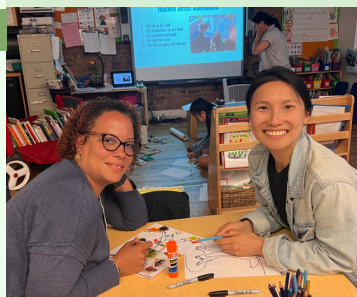
Paula Doerfel, Head Teacher
Tolisa Orr- Chambliss, Assist. Teacher

Investigators

David Vining, Head Teacher
Heather Guerrier, Assistant Teacher
Karen Chisolm-Wint, Assistant Teacher

Administrative Staff

Renee Mease, Director
Kalemah Henderson, Administrator
Mei Au Yeong, Admin Assistant



Saying Goodbye to Paula

Paula Doerfel, a beloved Greenhouse teacher, announced her retirement this year. For over 30 years, Paula has shared her gifts, humor and love with the children, parents and staff at Greenhouse. She is a master teacher that brought curriculum to life for her students. She filled each day with creativity, song, laughter and wonder. She has had a profound impact on individual children, parents, Greenhouse and the world -- Paula's legacy will live on forever both inside of those lives she's touched and inside the walls and halls of Greenhouse!



Tribute from Erica Cintron, Assistant Teacher

Paula is an exceptional teacher whose impact extends beyond the education of children at Greenhouse. Her dedication and influence have touched the lives of many teachers and parents in the Greenhouse community. I had the privilege of working alongside Paula for 11 years, during which I gained invaluable knowledge and skills in early childhood education. She taught me not just the "what" and "how" of teaching children, but also the importance of an intentional and engaging curriculum, empathy, and even a dash of humor.

Paula's influence on me goes beyond the professional realm; she has been an essential part of my personal life as well. Throughout my journey at Greenhouse, she provided unwavering support and inspired me to believe in myself and embrace my potential. Her encouraging words like "I knew you could do it" and "I'm so proud of you" boosted my confidence and empowered me to step out of my comfort zone, taking risks -- always with the knowledge that she had my back. From consoling me when my mother passed away to being there to help choose my wedding dress, Paula has been a steadfast presence, offering advice and support even during my moments of self-doubt as a parent. I could always rely on her.

As I reflect on our time together, a flood of memories overwhelms me, making me realize that I could write a book about how Paula has helped shape my life. While I will miss having her as a colleague, I am grateful to know that I will continue to have her friendship. Paula, I love you, and I wish you a happy retirement!



Erica

Reflections on Paula

Paula's impact on generations of children and families is undeniable. She received many well-wishes and memories from parents and students; here are just a few that highlight Paula's impact through the years.

Dear Paula, Sending warm greetings and lots of love to you all the way from Singapore! As you embark on this new chapter of your life called retirement, we wanted to take a moment to express our deepest gratitude for the incredible impact you've had on our lives. Your unwavering dedication and boundless kindness have made a world of difference to Naya. We will forever cherish the memories of your guidance, patience, and the extra mile you went to ensure Naya's well-being and happiness. Your compassionate spirit and genuine care have left an indelible mark on our hearts. As you transition into this new phase of your journey, we want you to know that we are here to celebrate your accomplishments and rejoice in the wonderful memories we've shared. May retirement bring you an abundance of joy, relaxation, and the opportunity to pursue your passions and dreams.

*With heartfelt appreciation and warm wishes,
Naya, Rahul, and Aura*

Dear Paula: When I visited Columbia Greenhouse for the first time, you were the person who greeted me & made me feel like this was the best place for Jerry. I also remember thinking that I definitely wanted Jerry to have you as a teacher. It didn't happen, but each & every one of Jerry's teachers were awesome at Greenhouse---just like you! Thank you for the amazing first impression of Greenhouse & for being the dedicated, passionate, wonderful & warm educator you have always been. Think about all the young minds you have helped to launch throughout your years at Greenhouse as you enjoy your retirement! We have loved & appreciated your (+) energy! We hope to see you at future Greenhouse auctions.

*Sending Much Love to You Paula! From the Lewart family!
XOXO Jerry, Janice & Bradley too.*

Dear Paula, Words cannot express how grateful we are that both Ben and Jake had you as their teacher at such a formative age. From apartment buildings, to the subway, to a beehive and finally the George Washington Bridge, you beautifully and masterfully taught our children, and us, what it meant to really learn. Thank you for guiding us through the formative years and for being the greatest teacher either boy has ever had. Paula - you have been a gift to Greenhouse and certainly to our family. I know you won't ever stop learning and creating (and teaching) but enjoy what I hope is peace and time to explore other interests.

Love, The Samuels Family -- Jenny, John, Ben and Jake

Dear Paula, Congratulations on your retirement. I am confident that you will be missed! Thank you for always engaging, caring for and loving our children - Thelonious, Lennon, and Marley. We wish you and your family good health and lots of laughter.

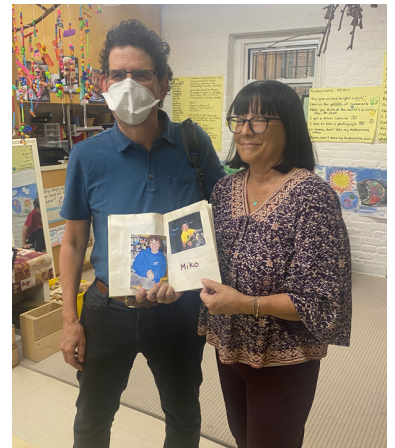
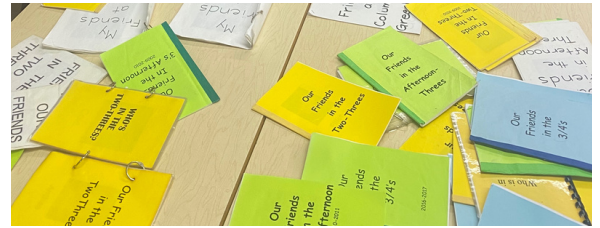
Peace and Love, Kara, Robert, Maru

Hi Paula, Congratulations on this well-earned retirement! As Seth used to say, our favorite school, of all the schools our children attended, was Columbia Greenhouse - and you were a big part of why we loved it so much.

All the best, Orren

Thank you for sowing the seeds of curiosity and creativity in Ishaan and Sophia. Wishing you all the best for the next phase of your life.

Best wishes. Govind and Evi



Looking back

By Paula Doerfel

In 1989, as my daughter was turning 3 years old, I knew it was time to look for a school for her. Being in early childhood education for 15 years prior, I knew the importance of, and the qualities of a good program. Also, being an Upper Westsider, I knew I wanted school to be close to home. My list very quickly was narrowed down to one place, Columbia Greenhouse Nursery School.

Upon entering 404, I immediately knew that all I saw and witnessed felt aligned with my professional experience and knowledge of young kids. Children were engaged. Teachers were responsive and nurturing. The environment was designed for children's exploration and curiosity. As a relatively new mother, I felt even more an immediate connection to the people I met; they too had a strong commitment to early childhood, children and families. I knew right away that Columbia Greenhouse would be an exciting, safe, and inviting place for me, and my family.

A few years passed when my second daughter was then ready to enter Columbia Greenhouse. It was at this time that I was offered a job at Greenhouse. At first I was a bit hesitant, it had been some time since I was in a classroom, but that initial feeling and connection eventually made me accept the job and join this unique community of educators. My new journey at Greenhouse had begun!

Now, after 30+ years as part of the faculty, it is time for me to say goodbye. Although it is cliché, it seems like only yesterday when I first entered Greenhouse; I was embraced by all and I knew that I belonged. That feeling of "this is a special place" has never once left me. Each day, throughout the years, I felt energized, purposeful, excited and full of wonder. Walking to school each day, my mind would race, anticipating and thinking about the joy and the challenges that might be ahead of me. What was a child going to say that would bring a smile to my face? What insightful question would a child ask that would force me to search deeper for knowledge and meaning? What important family event would a grown-up share with me about their life? What insights or new ideas would a colleague offer me today? I am filled with gratitude and love for all of these small moments that have added up to my thirty years at Greenhouse.

So how does one say goodbye? My experiences at Greenhouse have shaped me to be the educator and person I am today; I will always carry those experiences, and rely on them, wherever life takes me. It is not goodbye, it is a carrying on, an extension and going forward with the love and strength of my Greenhouse family behind me. I'm looking forward to this new chapter, what the possibilities might be for me and where my journey may take me.

Of course I can't say goodbye without many heartfelt thank yous. First to my predecessors at Greenhouse who welcomed me into an already fierce and dedicated community as the "newbie". I learned so much from them and deeply inhaled their gifts and wisdom, understanding the essence of Greenhouse and finding my place. To my present colleagues who always filled me with inspiration, introspection, friendship and became a second family. I witness them in action everyday, see their dedication and passion and I know they will carry on the Greenhouse legacy. To all my many classroom collaborators who always made me a better professional -- a special shout out to Lisa, my soul sister, who has been by my side these past 10+ years. She kept me balanced and always saw the whole picture. To my past directors who believed in me, but especially to Renee, who brings her all to Greenhouse each and every day. Renee has brought Greenhouse way into the 21st century and made us a more vibrant and stronger community of educators, encouraging us to grow in our work with children and families. She has challenged, motivated and inspired



me to always think, question, reflect and act with purpose and intention. She has encouraged and supported me, each time allowing me the freedom of my own journey. I know Greenhouse is in good hands and that some of its greater days are yet to come because of her devotion and leadership.

My final thanks go to the children and families that I have had the pleasure and privilege of working alongside the last 30+ years. They have taught me more than I can either express or know. They have filled my days with wonder and joy! Each one of them has touched me in so many different ways. I am eternally grateful and will always carry those gifts in my heart and mind.

Now I am ready to go forward. Ready to take my gifts of Greenhouse and continue to explore and grow. There are many adventures ahead of me and new possibilities that I am ready to embrace. None of this would have been possible if I did not have the love and support of my immediate family. My husband Jesse, my daughters Molly and Sarah (both graduates of Greenhouse and Sarah now a teacher there), their partners Aric and Joe and my incredible and delicious grandson, Logan. They will be by my side with their continued love and guidance as I enter this new phase; they will continue, as they have always, to bring me joy and wonder daily. I love them very much!

So now it is goodbye! Thanks for the memories, the laughter, the tears, the comradery, and the forever inspirations. I feel like I have been one of the luckiest people in the world, doing something I love, working with an incredible community and coming home to my truly wonderful family. I bid you love and peace.

See you in the neighborhood!! Paula



Parent Association



Dear Greenhouse Parents,
What a special year -- a welcome return to normalcy after the pandemic years. It has been wonderful - and touching - to see our vibrant Greenhouse community return to celebrating our traditions again.

The fall calendar was busy, full of varied opportunities to gather and connect including our traditional Welcome Picnic, parent coffees and cocktail party in the big yard. (There is something especially magical – and a little cheeky – about socializing under fairy lights, in the same space where our kids play every day.) The newly formed Parents of Children of Color group planned a full calendar of events, including family trips to museums and learning opportunities for parents. In February, we inaugurated the Greenhouse Children’s Art Show and Fundraiser; families, faculty, and alum gathered in a volunteer-created gallery space showcasing our kid’s art. We got to toast the children’s creativity with wine, food, and music. It was a thoroughly merry evening. Thank you to all the families – present and past – who came out to support our community. Spring found families gathering back in Morningside Park; this time for our annual clean-up day. This tradition helps to create broader connections with our community and plants the seeds of a life-long value of service in our children. Finally, after COVID restrictions and then a frightful rainstorm last year, it was a joy to see the return of our Spring Fair in its fully sunny glory this year. It was awesome to welcome our school community and neighborhood families to a day of games, magic shows, bouncy castles, and carousels.

This year our Class Reps organized their own rhythm of smaller events to help build community and connection. Impromptu weekend and school break playdates and after-school playground hangouts are always favorites. Some classes organized after-school soccer classes or regular meet-ups on campus. Others planned opportunities for the entire family to gather like a festive family celebration the evening before Thanksgiving. There were lots of child-centered events, too, including special pizza parties, gatherings in the play room of a family’s building (there was mention of wine for grownups too!), a Halloween celebration, and a class-wide gathering to say a special good-bye to a classmate that was moving away. Class Reps also planned time for the grown-ups too! After the Greenhouse Art Show, some parents gathered at Harlem Tavern to have a few drinks and “swap parenting tales.”

The magic of Greenhouse community is its warmth, inclusivity, and kindness. We, as the leadership of the PA, take on the task of helping to build that community every year. The Class Reps are invaluable in that work; we thank you (and all the parent volunteers) for your energy and time in helping to nurture this truly special community. We are also so lucky to have the extraordinary leadership of Renee in caring for our children – and their families. We are very thankful for her insight, guidance, and endless devotion to this school. We are also grateful for our remarkable faculty, whose dedication, compassion, and wisdom help our kids to thrive and learn in safe, loving classrooms. A special thanks to Mei, who greets our kids every day and supports our families endlessly. Together – we all help to create this amazing community! Greenhouse is a treasure.

Whether you are returning next year or moving on to new school experiences, remember you are always part of the Greenhouse community. Please join us in wishing every Greenhouse family a joyful summer filled with fun, laughter, and adventures!

Warmly, Annie Bystryn and Katie Baker, PA Co-Chairs





We are thrilled to have parents back as active partners in the classroom. While Covid interrupted this practice for a few years, we were all so excited to share classroom time together with parents. Whether it was sharing a family recipe, reading a book or sharing a family tradition or story, having our children's important grown-ups inside the classroom again provides an important opportunity for connection and community.

Building Our Community

Building meaningful opportunities for our community to connect and come together outside of the classroom and school building is a vital part of the full Greenhouse experience. At Greenhouse we are proud of our vibrant and active parent community. This year parents planned numerous opportunities for us to gather and celebrate together.



Cocktail Parties ~ Coffee Hours ~ Community Service ~ Parents of Children of Color Group ~ Parent Support Groups ~ Picnics

OUR DEEPEST APPRECIATION AND GRATITUDE TO THE PARENT ASSOCIATION AND ALL THOSE THAT VOLUNTEERED THROUGHOUT THE YEAR. YOUR WILLINGNESS TO SERVE REFLECTS THE GENEROUS SPIRIT AND COMMITMENT OF THE ENTIRE GREENHOUSE COMMUNITY.



Spring Fair Co-Chairs
Katelyn & Michael Cooper
Meghan & Christian Dunham

Food Committee
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Meg Samuels, Class Rep
Natasha Graham, Class Rep
Sol Masch & Isabel Nam, Class Rep

STRONGER TOGETHER



Parent Survey Results

CLASSROOM EXPERIENCE:	SCORE
THE TEACHERS COMMUNICATED MY CHILD'S LEARNING AND GROWTH IN A PRODUCTIVE, MEANINGFUL WAY.	4.89
MY CHILD'S TEACHERS CARE DEEPLY FOR MY CHILD.	4.87
MY CHILD'S SENSE OF SELF CONFIDENCE GREW THROUGHOUT THE SCHOOL YEAR.	4.87
THE CURRICULUM IN MY CHILD'S CLASS FOSTERS CREATIVITY, EXPLORATION, PROBLEM SOLVING AND INDEPENDENCE.	4.84
MY CHILD'S EXPERIENCE IN THIS YEAR'S CLASS FIT WITH MY PERCEPTIONS AND EXPECTATIONS OF THE GREENHOUSE PHILOSOPHY AND MISSION.	4.79
MY CHILD EXPERIENCED POSITIVE PEER INTERACTIONS AND A SENSE OF COMMUNITY WITHIN THE GROUP.	4.74
THE TEACHERS ASSESS MY CHILD'S LEARNING IN A SYSTEMATIC AND OBJECTIVE WAY.	4.74
I FELT INVITED AND WELCOMED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CLASSROOM.	4.59
COMMUNICATION	
WRITTEN CONFERENCE NOTES (NOV AND MAY)	4.89
VIRTUAL CHECK-INS WITH TEACHERS (OCTOBER; MARCH)	4.84
INFORMAL COMMUNICATION	4.84
CONFERENCES	4.82
BLOGS	4.71
WELCOME BACK CLASSROOM MEETING WITH TEACHERS (SEPTEMBER)	4.69
VIRTUAL CURRICULUM NIGHT MEETING (NOVEMBER)	4.44
IN-PERSON CURRICULUM NIGHT (MARCH)	4.42
ADMINISTRATION	
THE FACILITY IS CLEAN, WELL-MAINTAINED AND SAFE.	4.89
THE ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF ARE HELPFUL AND KNOWLEDGEABLE.	4.84
COMMUNICATION WITH THE ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF IS TIMELY AND EFFECTIVE.	4.84
THE DIRECTOR IS ACCESSIBLE, KNOWLEDGEABLE AND RESOURCEFUL.	4.84
MY FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS ARE CLEARLY COMMUNICATED.	4.82
THE MISSION, PHILOSOPHY AND PEDAGOGICAL APPROACH OF GREENHOUSE ARE CLEARLY ARTICULATED AND IMPLEMENTED.	4.74
COMMUNITY	
SPRING FAIR (MAY)	4.89
FAMILY PICNICS (SEPTEMBER AND JUNE)	4.72
CLASSWIDE-GATHERINGS/EVENTS PLANNED BY CLASS REPS (ONGOING)	4.69
VARIOUS EVENTS AND GATHERINGS IN THE CLASSROOM (ONGOING)	4.67
PARENT GROUP (8 SESSIONS IN FALL; 8 SESSION IN SPRING)	4.64
ANNUAL BENEFIT (FEBRUARY)	4.63
PARENTS OF CHILDREN OF COLOR GROUP (ONGOING)	4.62
PA LEADERSHIP AND CLASS REP. (ONGOING)	4.58
PARENT COFFEE HOURS (OCTOBER)	4.52
PARENT COCKTAIL PARTY (OCTOBER)	4.52
PARENTING WORKSHOP: MANAGING ANXIETY (JANUARY, AMY VIGLIOTTI)	4.33
COMMUNITY SERVICE: MORNINGSIDE PARK CLEAN-UP (APRIL)	4.27

Thank you for completing our Parent Survey. Your thoughtful responses are important to us and help us to reflect on and improve our practices. These are the aggregated scores for each measure.

Findings:

- The Classroom Experience for children is overwhelmingly positive, with an average score of 4.79.
- The full community would benefit from a written, clearly articulated procedure regarding parent participation in the classroom including the benefit of participating, examples of possible ways to participate and an overview of logistical factors to consider in scheduling.
- Conference reports and conferences continue to be well received and effective ways of communicating; parents also really appreciate the virtual and informal opportunities to communicate with the teachers.
- Explore ways to make Curriculum Nights a more efficient and effective communication tool.
- Continue to find ways to articulate and share the message of Greenhouse's mission, philosophy and approach.
- Families find our menu of community events to be effective in building connections, with individual comments about the scheduling of events, timing of communication about events, and overall number of events.

STRONGLY AGREE	5
AGREE	4
NEUTRAL	3
DISAGREE	2
STRONGLY DISAGREE	1

2022-2023 Annual Fund Contributors

The generosity of Greenhouse parents, alumni families and friends allows us to continue to provide exceptional programs and quality experiences for our children. Their contributions to Greenhouse serve as the catalyst for change and growth. Contributions to our Annual Fund are a vital cornerstone of giving at Greenhouse; the Fund supports important operational expenses of the school including professional development and financial aid. Columbia Greenhouse Nursery School thanks and acknowledges the generous contributions of the following individuals and companies:

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