



Hillcrest Children's Center
INVOLVEMENT • ACCEPTANCE • QUALITY • DIVERSITY • FAMILY ENVIRONMENT

Calendar

January 19

Parents and Pastries

January 19

**State of Hillcrest
Board Meeting**

February 2, 5:30

Play Yard Work Group

February 3-4

Closed for In-Service

February 10

Parent Dinner

February 11

Preschool Parent Night

February 12

Parent Night Out

February 16

Parents and Pastries

February 16

Board Meeting

February 21

Closed Holiday

February 23

Infant Family Night

March 16

Parents and Pastries

March 16

Board Meeting

March 23

Parent Dinner

March 28

In-Service Closure

The Board would like to thank all those who took the time to come to the State of Hillcrest meeting and/or submit comments regarding the issues facing the Board. The Board has come to some decisions after listening to what the families had to say. There was a lot of consistency in the feedback, providing clear guidance to the Board.

As described in the last newsletter the Board is adapting the PIB plan to guide our financial future. To ensure Hillcrest's financial stability our financial decisions will be guided by our PIB Plan.

First we want to make sure that we are poised to meet the increased costs of operation. As every family knows costs of utilities, food, and insurance continues to rise every year. As a business, we pay these costs directly - through our food program, utility and insurance bills, and indirectly through staff wages. In the past, Hillcrest has not been proactive in meeting these rising costs and this will be a goal in the future.

PIB Plan

Prepare for increased costs

Increase cash reserves

Build a capital fund for facility upgrades

Second, Hillcrest will continue to implement good business practices by building up a cash reserve. It is the Board's goal to build up a one month operating costs reserve in the next five years. While we hope to see that accomplished sooner, we realistically know that the facility upgrades and increased operating costs will play into the timeline.

While this is last on the list it is actually first on our priorities, as the Boiler is an urgent need. Liza Sanden has been working with the Board members on bringing our facility into the 21st century by "greening" the center. By compiling the upgrades that have already been done and creating a working list of necessary future upgrades our focus on capital improvements will be those that offer sustainable benefits to Hillcrest. First on that list is replacement of the Boiler with one that is more reliable and energy efficient. We will be pursuing fundraising more aggressively in the next few years until the necessary upgrades are made.

April 9
Parent Night Out
April 13
Parent Dinner
April 20
Parents and Pastries
April 20
Board Meeting
April 30-May 1
Clean-Up Weekend
Stage 1 Play Yard
May 6
3:30 Mothers Day Tea
Graze to Raise Walk
May 12
Parent Dinner
May 18
Parent and Pastries
May 18
Board Meeting
May 27
In-Service
Early Release 1pm
May 30
Closed Holiday
June 2
Parent Dinner
June 11
Parent Night Out
June 15
Parents and Pastries
June 15
Board Meeting
June 17
Annual Picnic
July 4
Closed Holiday
July 15
Lindsey Farewell Party

Option 1— Tuition Increase

In looking at the Tuition schedule we first calculated the true cost of care per child at Hillcrest. This was done by calculating the past 12 months costs of the Building, Food Program, Operational and Program Supplies, Staffing and Business Expenses. As you see below the cost per child monthly is \$993, well above current tuition rates. Currently, the difference between tuition and cost is made up by donations, grants, fees and fundraising.

Actual Cost Per Child		
	Annually	Monthly
Building	\$1513	\$126
Food	\$700	\$58
Operational and Program Supplies	\$900	\$75
Staffing	\$8333	\$694
Business	\$483	\$40
Total	\$11,929	\$993

We will be implementing the following rates, roughly based on a 5% increase, effective May 1st, 2011.

NEW RATES EFFECTIVE MAY 1st 2011			
Full-Time			
	Current	New	Difference
Infant	\$895	\$940	\$45
Toddler	\$860	\$903	\$43
Preschool	\$835	\$877	\$42
Part-Time			
	Current	New	Difference
Infant	\$600	\$630	\$30
Toddler	\$575	\$604	\$29
Preschool	\$560	\$588	\$28

The rate increase will raise over \$25,000 annually which will allow us to follow our PIB plan.

Based on the input from families and the reality of constant increases in costs the Board wants families to be aware that tuition will be increased on an annual basis starting Fall 2012. The Board anticipates that future increases in tuition will track changes in the consumer price index for Anchorage.

August 13
Parent Day Out
August 17
Parent and Pastries
Board Meeting
September 2
In-Service
Early Release 1pm
September 5
Closed Holiday
September 21
Parent and Pastries
September 21
Board Meeting
October 5
Parent Dinner
October 10
In-Service Closure
October 19
Parent and Pastries
October 19
Board Meeting
November 11
In-Service Closure
November 16
Parents and Pastries
November 16
Board
November 24 and 25
Closed Holiday
December 3
Parent Day Out
December 9
Holiday Party
Kim Farewell Party
December 26
Closed Holiday

Option 2 – Decrease or Eliminate Fee Modifications

The Board will not be making any changes to the fee modification program for Hillcrest employees. However, there will be a revision to the program for non-employees. Specifically, moving from a grant program to a loan/credit program. While we want to stay loyal to our families, and believe it is a worthy goal to assist families temporarily in times of need, we can not justify the cost. We will look into providing interest-free credit for a temporary duration, with the stipulation that the outstanding tuition be paid back over a certain period of time (12 – 24 months, for example), increased support of volunteer hours and fundraising commitments. This will be finalized before May.

Option 3 – Decrease or Eliminate the Food Program

We had an almost unanimous response to not change the food program (except to provide more organic, healthy variety). While eliminating the food program might have saved Hillcrest money, it would only have shifted the costs to families to pay directly rather than via tuition. Economies of scale would also have been lost, with each family paying more for food and time spent in preparation

Option 4 – Staffing Reduction

Again, families did not support any reduction in staff. Ms. Christina will work to minimize staff costs, such as overtime and turnover. The Board will be working on improving staff compensation as financing allows.

Other Ideas

Below is a summary of ideas submitted to the Board that we will be working on.

“We were really surprised to hear that Parent's Night Out is a money loser for Hillcrest. Given the current financial situation, I think that Hillcrest needs to take a very close look at all events and programs that lose money and look for ways for them to be self-supporting or even profitable. There are many ways to do this. Events that have previously been free to attendees could be accompanied with a marketing effort to solicit donations. Events such as Parent's Night Out that are marketed and presented as services to the families could be marketed as fundraisers. I'll bet more people would participate in Parent's Night Out if it were set up as a fundraiser. I know at least we would be more inclined to participate more frequently if that were the case.”

We also appreciate all the research done on grant funding and those who have volunteered to help write the grants. Ms. Christina will be in contact with you in the next few months as we outline which grants look to be a good match.

The Board will be more assertive in seeking out donations of both goods and services, and in pursuing additional fundraising opportunities.

Thank You!

Matt Helsel– fixing front door, toilets and other little things
Liza Sanden and Lea Filippi– submitting Commercial Energy Audit grant; Lea for fixing doorbell and padding outlets
Katriina Timm– for research on grant funding in Alaska
All families who have expressed well-wishes for Ms. Renae. We will be sending her a Get Well box every other week and more information will be coming out for families who would like to contribute a financial donation.

Severe Weather and Emergency Closures Policy
 In the event of severe weather or other emergency, **Hillcrest will follow the Municipality of Anchorage’s lead.** If Hillcrest closes as a consequence of severe weather or other emergency, the center will be closed for the entire day. Every effort will be made to have notice of closures of the center available on the voicemail and on our Facebook page.
 Please, be aware **Hillcrest does not follow the Anchorage School District closings for weather.** In the event of severe weather and closures of ASD which may cause inadequate staffing, Hillcrest will accept children on a first come, first served basis as ratio allows. If you have a flexible work schedule we ask that you minimize use of care to accommodate those families who cannot.

2011 In-Service Days

Thursday and Friday, February 3 and 4: All Day
Monday, March 28 Seward’s Day: last Monday in March All Day
Friday, May 27 Friday of Memorial Weekend: Open 7-1; Closed 1-6:30
Friday, Sept 2 Friday of Labor Day Weekend: Open 7-1; Closed 1-6:30
Monday, October 10 Columbus Day: All Day
Friday, November 11 Veterans Day: All Day

We will be trying out having two half-days instead of one full day this year. On the half-days Hillcrest will be open to provide care from 7am to 1pm. Children will need to be picked up and out of the building by 1pm. Staff will be in training from 1pm to 6pm. Late fees will be charged for all children in the building at 1pm.

In-service days provide time for staff to receive training together. Quality care for children is directly related to the training level of the staff. These days also allow for the classrooms to receive a deep cleaning and organizing. The staff are very appreciative of families support for the work they do.

Hillcrest Board

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Member At Large
 Could this be you?

Mission

Hillcrest Children’s Center provides quality care for every child in an environment that focus on developing a foundation for a lifelong love of learning and respect for self and others. Hillcrest is a non-profit, parent-cooperative that believes quality care comes from a partnership between the home and school.

Philosophy

Children are cared for in a loving, safe environment surrounded by positive interactions where they develop feelings of self-esteem based on individual strengths and accomplishments. Learning is best achieved through play and activities that are designed to offer experiences in a variety of situations geared to the developmental needs of the child.