

Hilltop Children's Center



2012-2013

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From Dinosaurs & Princesses to Friends & Houses: the Year in Review

The school year 2012-2013 was one of exciting learning, transition, and growth as an organization. Children engaged in **emergent curriculum**: deep explorations of friendships and community, complex inquiry into ideas and theories about the world, and development of ways to express, represent, and demonstrate their thinking, emotions, and conclusions. Families gathered together, discussed their children's growth and work, and collaborated with educators to build the curriculum that inspired their children.

Faculty dove into **learning in relationship**, engaging in further development of our anti-bias work in the classroom, exploring communities of practice, deepening our emotional intelligence skills, and advocating to our local, state, and federal government for the importance of high quality early childhood education. Under the leadership of Carmen D'Arcangelo, our Interim Executive Director, the administration restructured systems, increased the use of technology, and created a set of values with which to guide our work.

Hilltop continued its **leadership in community** by sharing our exceptional model of early childhood education with other professionals in the field.

We gave presentations all over the country, connected with educators in different corners of the world, and received professional visitors from as far away as Australia!

Building on over forty years of growth, Hilltop continued to develop and solidify its **organizational integrity**. We launched a new approach to fundraising that aligns with our



values and is steeped in community connection. This undertaking raised an unprecedented \$80,000 to support children's work in the classroom, educator wages, and the Siri Mayo Scholarship Fund.

In February, Carmen's role shifted to Executive Mentor, as Liddy Wendell stepped into the Executive Director in Residence role, a temporary leadership position. In July, the Board of Directors made the decision to offer Liddy the role of Executive Director, as of September 2013. Liddy brings to the position four years' experience as a Hilltop educator and

administrator, as well as deep passion for and commitment to the education of young children. During the transition, Liddy exhibited very convincing skills in the areas of personnel, organization, leadership, visioning, public relations, and fiscal planning all while building a strong relationship with the families and educators. We are confident that Liddy will guide Hilltop in a manner consistent with, and furthering of, the philosophy of the institution.

Lead by an energetic Board of Directors, Hilltop is well-poised to move forward in this next year: to continue our strong pedagogical work with children and families, to further advance and grow as a faculty, to offer more robust professional development to the early childhood education community, and to maintain a vigorous commitment to the long-term sustainability of the organization.

I am grateful to be a part of such an inspiring community!

**Greg Bjarko, Chair
Board of Directors**



Emergent Curriculum

We evoke new perspective by noticing, inquiring about, and reflecting on moments of curiosity or passion and make that discovery visible through documentation and expressive media.

We believe learning is constructed through experiences, inquiry, and reflection.

In Depth Project Work by Classroom

Every year, each classroom spends a number of months exploring a single curricular topic, developed through careful observation and analysis of the children's individual interests.

Raindrop

Expression Work Team



River

Building Group

Friends & Houses Group

Telling Stories Group



Rainbow

Baby Group

Jumping Group

Music Group



Beach

Planters and Growers Group

Sound Exploration Group

Dinosaurs & Princesses Group



Big Kids

Egg Drop Work Team

Game Development Group



Mountain

Dramatic Play Group

Friendship Group

Story Group



Big Kids Summer

Leadership and Mentoring

Movement Exploration



Sunlight

Flower Studio Art Study Group

Kids Movement Group

Recycled Object Group



Español

Luz y oscuridad

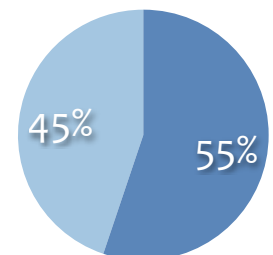
Color y collage

Los sentidos



Kindergarten	# of children
ASB Catholic	1
Bertschi	3
Daniel Bagley	1
Evergreen	1
Frantz Coe	2
Giddens	1
Greenwood	1
John Stanford	2
Catherine Blaine	3
McGilvra	1
Meridian	4
N. Seattle French School	1
Queen Anne	3
Salmon Bay	2
University Coop	1
UCDS	1
West Woodland	1

● Public ● Independent



Learning in Relationship

We seek and cultivate a wide breadth of *thought and ideas* as the foundation for meaningful connections with and intentional commitments to each other, which promotes social responsibility, interest in the unfamiliar, and respect for nature.

We believe in reciprocal influence.

Professional Development

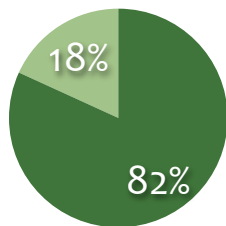
The ongoing education of our faculty is essential to the continued depth of our work with children.



Month	Professional Development Topic
September	Reflective Thinking Lens for writing documentation
October	Communities of Practice: Supporting and assessing children
November	Anti-bias community reflection and discussion
December	Presentations from "Complexities" and "Day of Dialogue" Reggio conferences
January	Ages and Stages of child development/ Emotional Intelligence: working in teams
February	Anti-bias experiences with children

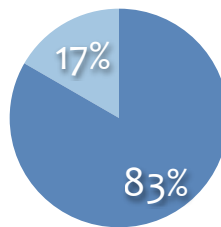
Month	Professional Development Topic
March	Presentations from Portland-based, Reggio-inspired Opal School visit
April	Presentation about New Zealand Reggio-based early childhood education model
May	Advocacy for early childhood education: Letter-writing and representation of the profession through art
June	Understanding gender identity in children/ Emotional Intelligence as a tool in the classroom
August	Improv as a model for pedagogy/Emotional Intelligence training: working with children

Educator Retention



● Retention
● Attrition

Administrator Retention



● Retention
● Attrition



Administrative Values

This year, we developed a set of values to guide our administrative decision-making process.

Stewardship

We believe in intentional servant leadership.

Sustainability

We aspire to be viable and in balance with our community.

Efficiency/Effectiveness

We believe in getting the right things done in the right way.

Transparency

We believe in accessibility of information and repeatedly meeting and exceeding expectations.



Leadership in Community

We foster courageous leadership and serve as a model of innovative, reflective early childhood education practices.

We believe that collective contributions lead to bold action.

Professional Development and Community Outreach

Connecting with the larger Early Childhood Education (ECE) community is crucial to maintaining Hilltop's high level of excellence. Some professional development (PD) is included in Hilltop's budget, some is paid for by other organizations, some is volunteer, and some is paid for by faculty themselves. PD gives other ECE professionals greater access to the inspiring work happening at Hilltop, while helping make us better educators.

Presentations/Conferences	Location	# of faculty
Olympia College	Bremerton, WA	1
Kawartha Child Care Services	London, ON	1
Crescent Park Child Development Center	Palo Alto, CA	1
Early Childhood Education Study Tour	New Zealand	1
Opal School	Portland, OR	2
"Complexities" and Reggio Emilia Exhibit	Vancouver, BC	4
Day of Dialogue	Shoreline, WA	4
Society of Richmond Children's Center	Richmond, BC	5
Given for visiting professionals	Hilltop	11



Publications

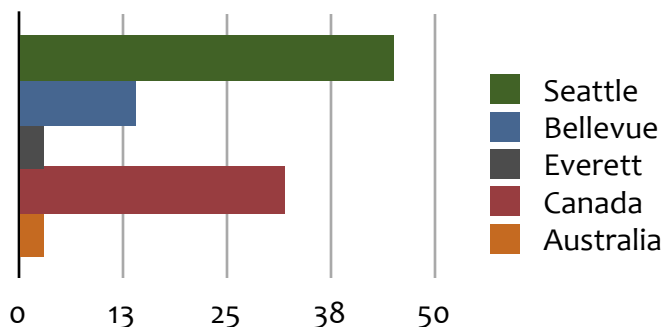
Reflecting in Communities of Practice by Deb Curtis, Debbie Lebo, Wendy Cividanes, Margie Carter: Hilltop is described as an example of Communities of Practice in action

Exchange Magazine: Hilltop faculty is quoted in the article, *The Rights and Longings of Directors* by Margie Carter

State of California training videos: Hilltop faculty are interviewed for multiple training videos for California educators

Blocks, Threads, and Offers: Exploring educator action in "emerging" a curriculum using improvisational tenets by Kelly Matthews: Hilltop's work in the classroom is video-taped, observed, and analyzed for a research-based book

Professional Visitors



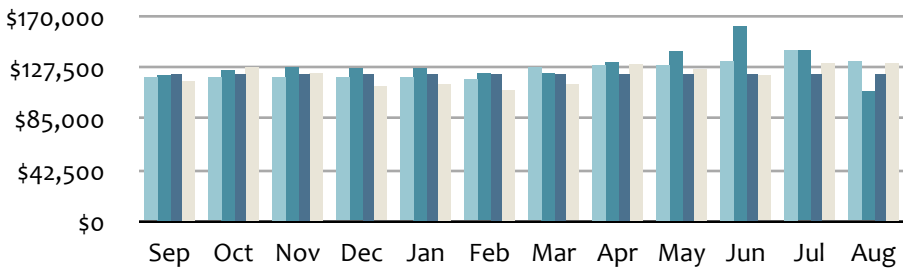


Organizational Integrity

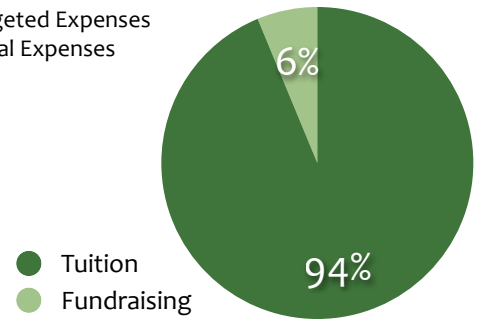
We commit to transparent and responsible organizational practices that uphold our mission, sustain Hilltop, and bring playful joy to our work.

We believe that root tending creates stability and intentional growth.

Revenue and Expenses 2012-2013



Revenue source



Fundraising



Total raised: \$80,000

For children: \$17,000

toward offering a mentor teacher to each classroom to support children's learning, families, and children's exploration of curriculum

For teachers: \$27,000

in direct teacher wage increase

For the Siri Mayo Scholarship Fund:

\$36,000

in scholarship money available for tuition assistance

Siri Mayo Scholarship Fund



Total awarded:

\$26,000

Percent receiving tuition assistance:

10%

Board of Directors



Greg Bjarko, Acting Chair

Eric Stoll, Treasurer

Heather Harman, Secretary

Sarah Bilton

Christen Blunt

Christi DeCuir

Cynthia Dold

Liz Heron

Ann Ilgen

Anna Woodard

Michelle Sanders, Faculty Representative