

Concordia Preschool Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes
September 8, 2025

Attendees:

Helen Spillan, Julie Moore, Annie Masone, Nina Loudon, Deirdre Jeandell, Susan Dramis, Kelsey Piotti, Jenn Shellem, Coty Smith, Marissa Le, Nikole Heitmann

Call to Order:

1st: Nina Loudon 2nd: Jenn Shellem

Approval of May 12, 2025 Meeting Minutes:

1st: Marissa Le 2nd: Nina Loudon

Teacher's Report:

- The first day of school was great. The drop off line was great.
- Lunch bunch starts on Monday. Please sign up by 8:30 the night before.
- All the teachers are excited for a new year!

Director's Report:

- *Status:* Good first day. We have 70 students in 7 classes and 15 staff members. We have 8 sets of siblings and are doing our best to accommodate visits and other things. Helen is hoping to add a 2-year-old student this week.
- In addition to our already wonderful curriculum, our initiatives this year include providing increased opportunities in the areas of dramatic play, sensory play, utilizing our light tables at each age level and increased toddler level toys and activities.
- *Budget:* The preschool is running on a negative budget once again. We need approximately 5 more students to break even.
- *Marketing plans:* New flyers have been made and will be distributed in several areas in Garnet Valley (we used to have 10% of our students coming from here) and some apartment complexes in DE (our international students used to live here and accounted for 12% of our enrollment pre-covid). Both of these groups have not been here for the past 5 years.
- *Structural plans:* Next year, we plan to increase our 2 year old offerings to 3 and 5 days. We are hopeful we will get more little ones with increased offerings. We will need to hire new staff for this.
- *Decrease spending plan:* Our playground is one of our biggest expenses. We need to re-bid companies to decrease costs here.
- Welcome coffee for the 2s tomorrow in the upstairs lobby from 9-10:15. Parents will receive updates on how their child is adjusting.
- *Licensing:* Our annual application is finished and submitted. Helen heard from our licensing rep, and she will be coming within the first 2 weeks of October. Julie is hunting down missing paperwork for students, and Helen is working on the staff files.

- *Inspections:* The alarm (fire and sprinkler) system was inspected last Friday 9/5. The Fire Marshall did her unannounced walk through August 26. Middle Department Electrical Inspection came on August 25. There were 2 minor items that needed attention. Helen directed these to Chad Kazaba. Helen paid \$85 for this required inspection as we have in the past, and it is good for 3 years.

Church's Report:

- The church spent \$129,000 on the parking lot this summer.
- Walktoberfest is on Saturday, September 20. The preschool is collecting food items for Lutheran Services Food Bank, which can be left in the lobby of the preschool.

Treasurer's Report:

- Our budget is still negative. We need five more students to break even. Julie and Helen have been working hard to get the budget back to a positive.
- Our rent went from \$2,000 to \$3,000. The church has not raised the facility usage fee in many years and the cost of cleaning, paper products and other items has gone up a lot. The increase in rent accounts for a lot of our deficit.
- On the budget, the ½ student listed for the 2-year-old classes is a student starting in January so Julie counted him as a half a year student.
- Julie estimated a lot more last year in the budget for getting fees but switching to the quick books has saved thousands of dollars.
- The budget doesn't show the playground expenses/non consumables but money for those fees comes primarily from fundraising. Julie figured out that last year we spent all fundraising money earned on the playground or other toy/shelving/rug items, which was about \$12,500 for all of the items for this year.

Fundraising/Events:

- *Trunk or Treat:* Trunk or Treat will take place on Friday, October 10, 2025 from 5:30 to 7pm. This year, we will get more pizza. Nina will send a save the date this week.
- *Raise Craze:* Raise Craze will run from November 4 through November 29. We will highlight students doing acts of service each week and also if classes have 100% participation to get parents more involved and raise awareness for the fundraiser.
- *Guest Bartending:* Our guest bartending event will take place the first week of December. Nina reached out to Homebase who relayed the following information: there is only 1 guest bartender at a time for 30 minutes each, the event will start at 7, there is a \$100 fee, we can do a 50/50 raffle to earn more money which will be cash only. The kickback to the preschool is a 50/50 split in tips; 15% of sales. Nina will ask if the sales includes food sales and if it is for the whole restaurant.
- *Ladies Night Out:* Ladies Night Out Bingo will take place on March 12.
- *Spring Fling:* Spring Fling will take place on May 15.
- *Committees:* We would like to have a chairperson for each event for this year. We still need one for Teacher Appreciation Week and Trunk or Treat. Marissa Le volunteered to be the chairperson for No Cook Nights.

- *No Cook Night*: September's No Cook Night will be at the Ice Cream Shoppe. More details to come.

Parent Rep/Parent Report:

- *Emmanuel Dining Room*: The class representatives will be responsible for asking for brownie donations during their assigned months. We will need 12 brownie trays to be delivered to the preschool by September 25. September brownies will be provided by the Advisory Board. Marissa Le (2), Nina Loudon (1), Deirdre Jeandell (2), Helen Spillan (2), Kelsey Piotti (2), Coty Smith (2), and Annie Masone (1) have volunteered to make brownies.
- *Class Representatives*: Annie will give the teacher's favorite things list to each rep. An email was sent with information on the class representative position and class lists.

Old Business:

- Nothing to report.

New Business:

- *End of Year survey feedback*: Based on feedback received in last years end of year survey, we have decided for communication for advisory board is to continue to use text group chat to keep the group informed throughout the year instead of email.
- *Vote to update By-Laws*:
 - Page 3, Article IV "Executive Board Officers", Last unnumbered paragraph of Section – remove term limits of executive members.
 - Voting members voted in agreement of this change.
 - Page 4, Article VI "Finances", Section 2 "Tuition Fees", Paragraph #3 - remove in its entirety.
 - Voting members voted in agreement of this change.
 - Page 4, Article VI "Finances", Section 2 "Tuition Fees", Paragraph #4 - remove the following from the beginning of the sentence: "After September".
 - Voting members voted in agreement of this change.
 - Page 5, Article VII "Meetings", Section 3 – remove in its entirety.
 - Voting members voted in agreement of this change.
 - Page 5, Article VIII "Elections", Section 2 – remove in its entirety.
 - Voting members voted in agreement of this change.
 - Page 5, Article VIII "Elections", Section 4 – add the following to the end of the sentence: "whenever possible."
 - Voting members voted in agreement of this change.
- Our next meeting is October 13, 2025.

Closing:

1st: Jenn Shellem 2nd: Coty Smith