

Perhaps you wondered ...

why we closed school last Friday, especially so early in the year. The short answer is that on Friday and Saturday, our staff attended the bi-annual conference of the Pittsburgh Association for the Education of Young Children (PAEYC), which was co-sponsored by the Allegheny County Family Support Centers and held at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center downtown.

The more complete answer begins with the fact that **professional development is a high priority** at the Children's School because it supports our continuous quality improvement. For our high quality staff, much of our professional growth comes from preparing professional development experiences for other educators, as well as from mentoring practicing and pre-service educators on their career paths in early childhood. In terms of the PAEYC organization and its conference, our staff goes well beyond belonging and attending, which serves a strong model for our mentees.

Beyond the 20+ **memberships** the Children's School purchases (approximately \$2,000 annually), the PAEYC organization benefits from Maggie Rosenblum serving on the **governing board** and from our recruitment of Lindsay McGregor, the first student board member.

For September's conference, the school paid the **registration fees** for a total of 25 attendees (approximately \$3,500) so that all of our staff, substitutes, and students could participate together. In addition, Mrs. Rosenblum worked long days staffing registration and helping with the new attendance scanning system, and six of our teachers presented workshops on the importance of PLAY that were both well attended and positively reviewed by participants. While attending, we encountered Children's School parents Rachel Perovich (Lexi, PM 4's) and Shannon Wanless (Charlie, PM 3's) sharing their gifts with the attendees as well.



- Calming Play for Healthy Minds (Jean Bird and Brynn Flynn)
- Creative and Constructive Play with Light (Krissy Opferman and Charline Tomer)
- Using Games to Enrich PreSc & K Programs (Donna Perovich and Jillian Mangan)



Much of our remaining professional development time this fall will be dedicated to three **book-study groups** investigating individual differences in dual language learning, sensory integration, and gender. The specific books the groups are reading are listed below.

- *Basics of Supporting Dual Language Learners* (by Karen N. Nemeth, NAEYC 2012)
- *The Out-of-Sync Child: Recognizing and Coping with Sensory Processing Disorder* (by Carol Stock Kranowitz, Perigee 2005)
- *Cinderella Ate My Daughter* (by Peggy Orenstein, Harper 2011)