A letter from the executive director

LAURA TOMPKINS
To the incredible community that makes up the Joyce Preschool family, we hope this report finds you healthy and safe, especially after seeing the chaos that can ensue over the course of several months.

Our 2019-2020 school year started much like many years, with anticipation of what is to come along with excitement over seeing our young learners grow as people and as students. We celebrated many high points; a Kermés community carnival which brought the school and neighborhood together to kick off the year, an Around the World event which uplifted the broad array of cultures represented in our school, and a renewed commitment to family support programming to support our students.

As spring approached, we encountered the need for a new normal. Our utmost commitment to what is best for students compelled us to halt in-person classes and shift our focus to virtual family support as many of our families felt the burden of COVID-19 deeply through job loss, inability to access stimulus checks and government assistance, and already tight budgets being stretched to the max. Student assessments weren’t completed. Teacher trainings were paused. Spring events were cancelled and postponed. Graduations took new shapes and forms. But, we remain a connected family.

And then, as the entire state was rattled by the death of George Floyd, the southside of Minneapolis and, in turn, many of our families, were disproportionately affected by multi layered pain and destruction. And still, our community remained as connected as ever, finding pockets of joy and making efforts to lift one another up wherever possible.

2019-2020 was not the easiest year for anyone. But, what must not be lost, is that for 6 months, nearly 100 students accessed affordable, high-quality, bilingual education that taught not only the value of language and mathematics skills, but moreover, the extreme value of community. Thank you for helping this community thrive.

Laura Tompkins, Executive Director

A LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
LAURA TOMPKINS
**DIVERSITY**

Joyce celebrates diversity and brings it into every aspect of programming. We reserve 50% of our enrollment for Spanish speaking students and strive to fill 60% of our enrollment with low-income students, supporting them with tuition assistance. Our dual-immersion programming provides children with a way to map languages onto one another while giving opportunities for the students to be the experts in each language, educating their peers while learning. We strive for a board and staff which reflect our student body and ask each team member to bring their unique perspective to the table each and every day.

**QUALITY**

Dedication to diversity should not mean forsaking quality education. We view our programming as one method to help end the opportunity gap in Minneapolis and therefore, aim for the highest standards of programming. Joyce is nationally accredited through the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and maintains the highest rating (4 stars) through Minnesota’s Parent Aware quality rating system. Year after year, over 95% of Joyce’s graduating students are assessed as kindergarten ready, compared to a readiness rate of only 36% for Spanish-speaking children in Minneapolis.

**65% OF JOYCE STUDENTS IDENTIFY AS BIPOC**
(Black, Indigenous & People of Color)

**80% OF STUDENTS SHOWED AGE APPROPRIATE PROGRESS FROM FALL TO WINTER**
HOLISTIC

Success of each student cannot be accomplished through a one track method. What happens at home affects what happens in the classroom, and we believe preschool is the perfect place to build a foundation for healthy parent involvement in school. Joyce provides parent workshops in Spanish on a variety of topics spanning immigration, parenting support, and community resources along with home visits for personalized support. Students are assessed as a means to provide a plan for reaching standards which will set them up for long term success. We look at every angle to ensure a student will succeed.

RESPONSIVE

Community responsiveness is baked into our 53 year DNA. This means holding listening sessions to gather feedback, surveying parents for their opinions, and keeping our ear to the ground for what needs are arising in the current environment. This principle guides our decision making and helps inform so much of our program. Especially for the 2019-2020 school year, responsiveness required we be nimble, open to new options, in-tune with the amazing Joyce community.

JOYCE PRESCHOOL
PROGRAM HALLMARKS

100% OF JOYCE PARENTS WERE INVOLVED IN THE CLASSROOM THIS YEAR

$10k+ WAS GIVEN TO FAMILIES THROUGH JOYCE’S FAMILY SUPPORT FUND
Preschool programming has always been at the core of Joyce’s work, but the importance of family support has always been closely echoed as an important component to our student success. This year, we made extra efforts in this area, hiring a Parent Coordinator who provided home visits to families, conducted parent workshops in Spanish, and led a committee of parents in creating events and informing policy change at the school, local, and state levels.

This work allowed Joyce to connect families with a number of resources spanning mental health services, early childhood screenings, and library cards. Not knowing we would be hit with a global pandemic, this work proved fortuitous as it became our primary focus starting at the onset of COVID-19.

Teachers and our Parent Coordinator made efforts to connect with families, seeking to understand the new issues families faced and addressing those to the best of our ability. We connected families with affordable healthcare, food, rent support, and more. In the new normal the world faced this spring, our work in the fall became the rock we were able to stand on as we continued to serve families.

As our community was rocked even further by the death of George Floyd and the aftermath of riots in South Minneapolis, families were in need of even more support. Joyce created the Family Support Fund as a way for families to apply for immediate financial assistance to cover rent, food, utilities, and unexpected expenses. With donors from all over the globe eager to support the Black Lives Matter movement, we were able to use the Family Support Fund to provide financial assistance in some form to all families requesting support.
There are many things we strive for at Joyce. One of utmost importance, is that we are a safe space for individuals to come together and share their cultural backgrounds and heritage. This year was no exception. We celebrated one another at school wide events such as Kermés and the Around the World. We learned from one another by inviting parents into the classroom to teach about traditional cooking and dance. We challenged ourselves and one another through our Family Fridays program, which brings parents and students together to talk together across linguistic barriers. And most importantly, we grew each and every day as we ask students, parents, and teachers to bring their most authentic selves to the table, bridging language, socio-economic, and cultural barriers each day through our intentional program of diversity in language and income.
We ended the year out of our classrooms after closing down in-person classes in Mid-March due to COVID-19. With this change, there are so many things that won’t look like past years. There won’t be tiny graduation caps and gowns, walking across the stage for a diploma, or even the more mundane reporting on student assessment data. However, our teachers were pillars for our students, providing online content and videos, connecting via Zoom with preschoolers, and finding new and creative ways to maintain presence in the lives of the children they love so much. The year looked different, but we have always prided ourselves and celebrating difference.
MAINTAINING CONNECTION THROUGH DISTANCE AND ADVERSITY
Connection
THROUGH GIVING
2019-2020 was quite the year. From our most successful ¡Salud! fundraiser to date, featuring chef Justin Sutherland and raising more than $27,000, to our most unique spring, featuring social distancing and cancelled classes, it was an unpredictable, wild ride. With that in mind, the generosity of financial gifts coming from our community is received with humble thanks. On behalf of Joyce Preschool parents, educators, staff, and most of all, children, Thank You to everyone who supported our work during the 2019-2020 school year. Our commitment to lifting up students of the community, providing financial support for more than half of attendees each year, and maintaining enrollment space for Spanish-speaking students is all made possible because of your support. ¡Gracias!

This report was published before financial statements for the year were finalized. The donor list to follow was created as of June 12, 2020. Please check joycepreschool.org/annual-report/ for an updated digital copy of this report which includes up to date financials and donor recognition. We apologize if your gift is not acknowledged in this report. Please know it is in no way a reflection of our appreciation, which we express wholeheartedly.
THANK YOU SPONSORS, INDIVIDUALS, COMPANIES, AND GRANTERS WHO MAKE QUALITY, DUAL-LANGUAGE IMMERSION EDUCATION AT JOYCE POSSIBLE. YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE.
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