

**Summary Notes**  
**Parent Council Meeting: July 15, 2009**

*Special meeting called to address questions and concerns related to The Clifton School's loss of National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accreditation*

Attendance: 42 parents and teachers present, 22 callers, one member of the Board of Directors, administrators from both campuses

- I. Clifton Campus Director Beth Webb-Woods explained the loss of NAEYC Accreditation and events leading up to this loss
  - A. Loss of accreditation based on an incident of “rough [physical] treatment” of a child by a Clifton School teacher. The teacher and behavior were identified in a video recording and the teacher’s employment was terminated.
  - B. A complaint to NAEYC was submitted and NAEYC found that such behavior is not in compliance with NAEYC standards
    1. Beth Webb-Woods noted that, although the complaint letter stated otherwise, administration was not aware of teacher injuring children until co-teacher noticed rough placement to the mat and video tapes were reviewed.
    2. She also noted that parents had previously reported two injury events to administration without any witnesses.
  - C. Beth Webb-Woods and Laura Vandewiele explained that the loss of accreditation is a result of the incident having occurred at all and not a response to the way the administration addressed it.
  
- II. Appeal process —The Clifton School is in the process of appealing to NAEYC
  - A. Letter of appeal states that this one incident is not in keeping with Clifton School standards and that the teacher at fault was immediately terminated; training in positive guidance techniques and strategies to work with challenging children were increased; in a survey, 98% of parents felt confident about their children’s care at The Clifton School.
  - B. Parents can write letter of support to NAEYC. Contact information can be found online or obtained from The Clifton School administration.
  - C. All NAEYC criteria must be met to get accreditation. Laura Vandewiele noted that NAEYC has recently added new criteria that make compliance more challenging.
  - D. Reaccreditation was already set to take place before November 30, 2009.
  
- III. Questions raised about the reaccreditation process
  - A. Will such punitive measures discourage teachers from speaking up when they notice problems?

1. Administrators and teachers present felt that teachers would not be afraid to alert administration of any inappropriate interactions they observed.
2. A Teachers' Council has been created which gives teachers a stronger voice and support system.
3. Suggestion/concern boxes have been placed and are in use.
4. Teachers discuss issues during breaks and planning times.

B. What affect will the process of reaccreditation have on the school?

1. Administrators said that it will not require much additional time and work from the teachers because The Clifton School teachers already do much of the reporting required by NAEYC.
2. It will cost about \$2000 .
3. School tuition will not be affected.

IV. Related issues raised during Q & A

A. Was a child abuse report made to DFACS? No. Beth Webb-Woods said that she made the judgment that while the rough placement of a child on his mat was unacceptable and the teacher was terminated, it did not result in physical or emotional injury which would warrant a child abuse report made to DFACS.

B. What steps are being taken to deal with undocumented injuries?

1. Stressing teacher awareness, especially when children are on playground
2. Stressing parent communication regarding concerns
3. Beth Webb-Woods discussed a general injury report process that allows parents to confidentially write concerns (injuries) and submit these to administration

C. Parent suggestion that steps be taken to increase supervision

Meeting was adjourned with the reminder that the next Parent Council meeting will take place on August 19<sup>th</sup> at noon on the Clifton Campus.