

*Our task must be to free ourselves ... by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature and its beauty (Albert Einstein)*

Dear Cuvilly Families

I am writing you today as the proud parent of a Cuvilly preschooler. I count myself lucky that my son will spend three years at Cuvilly Arts and Earth Center before moving on to Kindergarten. My only regret is that he can't have longer at this marvelous place. As current and prospective parents, I'm sure you understand how critically important a place like Cuvilly is for our children. We live in a hyper-competitive society and time. Our attention spans are often measured in seconds rather than minutes or hours, and our days are often devoted to rushing or racing to fit it all in before collapsing exhausted.



The school, however, is an oasis of calm where our littlest people are given the chance to discover themselves as well as their connection to the natural world around them. They are given the opportunity to see the wonder and miracle in something as small and simple as a tiny flower emerging from the soil after a long cold winter, the way in which each animal and insect fits within the habitat surrounding the school, and, most importantly, that we too, despite our technology and advancements, are part of the same web of life.

The farm and animals at Cuvilly are an invaluable part of this experience and education. Seamus the goat, Strawberry and Tyrone the pigs, and their many farm friends teach our children that we are all in this together and that we must care for one another. This coming year the farm will play an increasing role in the Cuvilly experience with more interaction for the children than ever before. Caring for and observing these animal friends both teaches children that they are capable in ways they've never imagined and exposes them to something that is vanishingly rare. It is difficult for me to foresee another time in my son's formal schooling where he will have the opportunity to experience the like.

Despite the farm and school's place in our children's lives as such an oasis, Cuvilly is not exempt from the financial pressures of modern life. While the tuition is reasonable, especially when compared with other private preschools, the truth is that it doesn't cover the cost of the animal farm portion. This piece costs in excess of **\$40,000 per year**. Maintaining this critical component of our school depends on donations at Cuvilly events and the incredible staff who go over, above, and beyond with their generosity of spirit, time, and effort. It is truly a labor of love. **This year Cuvilly's main fundraiser will be the Hop-A-Thon** involving children and families in a fun, but critical fund raising effort. **If each family can commit to raising \$250-\$300**, we will be in great shape. While the number may initially sound daunting, it can be as simple as getting **10 relatives, friends, and/or businesses to donate \$25-\$30 apiece** per family. I understand how busy we all are with life, family, and more, but one thing I've learned as a parent is that you push hard for the things that are important for your children. This school, this farm, these animals, and, ultimately, their importance to our children make up one of those things worth digging in and pushing just a little harder to support.

I wish you all a summer filled with love, laughter, and sunshine and look forward to seeing you in the fall.

Matt Plum (Matty's Dad)