

# north shore news

## LETTER: True value of parent participation preschool is community

North Shore News

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**Dear Editor:**

Re: School's Out for [North Vancouver Preschool \(http://www.nsnews.com/news/school-s-out-for-north-vancouver-preschool-1.1970750\)](http://www.nsnews.com/news/school-s-out-for-north-vancouver-preschool-1.1970750), June 17.

Of all the choices related to our children's education, the best and most enduringly valuable was to join the Deep Cove Parent Participation Preschool.

All we knew going in was that it was an affordable option, allowing us to trade some "participation" for lower fees. We had also gathered that the preschool's teacher was something of a neighbourhood legend. What we had not bargained for was the extent to which this little institution is a veritable hothouse of citizenship. Friendships and networks are forged. The myriad skills required to run a non-profit are learned, honed and passed along to others.

Commitment to the community and its institutions and issues becomes second nature. Members have the pleasure of sharing responsibility for maintaining a valued resource, and adding their skills and effort to projects as satisfying and unifying as an Amish barn raising. Our kids, meanwhile, make friends and learn to share and settle disputes and generally have a wonderful time. They also see their parents being a part of the process, not just of the preschool but of the whole community.

As the kids grow up and head to kindergarten, the parents join the elementary school PAC and become involved in the life of the new institution, bringing all the things they learned in preschool.

What a bonanza for a school, to have such a ready-made level of skilled support roll in the doors every September, able to transform a good school into a great community resource.

Such support is quite literally priceless, and deserves the recognition and respect of the school district. It may be a difficult thing to quantify, or to describe in a lease renewal application, but this is truly a critical benefit of a parent participation preschool.

Going far beyond the provision of excellent preschool education, the PPP leverages the small investment of some school district land and a portable classroom into an enduring legacy for local schools and the broader community. No commercial preschool can do this. I urge the school district to consider this point of view in the case of the Queensbury PPP, and any others which may arise.

**Craig Johnston**  
**North Vancouver**

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