

February 6, 2014

Dear Mayor Scott and Assembly Members,

Thank you for all the time and energy you give our community – I know it is not an easy job and I am sure at times - not completely rewarding.

I am writing in response to the announcement that the Borough will not be renewing the lease for Chilkat Valley Preschool as of this coming June. I am a strong believer in Pre K education - be it Head Start or private preschool. In my humble opinion, it should be part of the school system. My daughter went to CVP honestly, I would have been just as happy with Head Start only our income level put us at the end of the wait list. CVP ended up being our option. It was wonderful; we had great care, education and safety for our daughter there for 2 years. However, what is important here - is that every child and every family deserves the chance to have their child in a pre-K program. If the Haines Head Start cannot take all of the children in their program it is necessary for another entity to take on these kids and that would be CVP. I do hope the borough and assembly support this critical program for our children.

I do not know the percentage, but I believe over the past 7 years Head Start has been full with a waitlist. Chilkat Valley Preschool has met the need of not just offering alternative pre-K but offering a service to those children that cannot get into Head Start -- a quality, caring, professional service. I would love to see them in a new building (I agree that building needs some work) and they are trying hard to make this so. I have looked over their plan as was submitted to the Assembly showing diligent action to relocate. Even if you are not a proponent of Pre-K education, to remove the preschool before they are prepared, before they have secured a new building, with a waitlist of 35 children – is unacceptable.

Please reconsider this ordinance and allow the preschool to stay in their building until they have secured a new spot.

Thank you for all you do,

Leslie Ross,

314-0543

POB 1646, Haines 99827

lesross@gmail.com