

March 18, 2009

Enrolling our son in the College Park United Methodist Primary School has been a wonderful decision. Our son attended a Christian themed Pre-K program and he had truly made great strides in his learning and was definitely ready for kindergarten and advanced learning. We decided to enroll him in our neighborhood public school for kindergarten, it was rated as an "A" school and after attending a "new student welcome seminar" we felt that his learning would continue to grow in that environment. As requested by the school, we provided a letter written by his Pre-K Teacher outlining his learning style and his strengths and weaknesses. We were assured that the school would take the information into consideration and place him in the most appropriate class. Not only was our son placed in a class not conducive to his learning style, we later found out the teacher was never even given a copy of the letter I had provided to the school.

Although we had reservations regarding his class placement and his teacher's abilities, we tried to have a positive attitude and hope for the best. We were disappointed that the school year began with learning the letters of the alphabet...we were definitely past that phase. By mid-year, there were still no reading skills being taught and we had not had one night of homework. At home, we were noticing changes in our child's behavior and he was also having some mild behavior problems in class. At the school's extended day program, the children were often mixed with older students and several times I felt that movies that were being shown were inappropriate for my 6 year old to view. My concerns fell on deaf ears. Unfortunately, our son really suffered academically and behaviorally while in this school. Repeatedly I attempted to reach out to the teacher and the Administration, but emails went unanswered and calls unreturned. In March, I was told that my bright, capable child might not be promoted to first grade! Hearing this for the first time, when less than 3 months remained in the school year was extremely upsetting. My husband and I began implementing our own homework and lesson plans in the evening, and luckily, our child was promoted to first grade.

After feeling that an entire school year was wasted, we could not send our child back to the same school and suffer again. We made the decision to enroll him in private school and chose the CPUMC Primary School. What a difference a year makes!! Immediately, our son was bringing home work he had completed during the school day and also small homework assignments on a daily basis. His behavior dramatically improved and we noticed a respectful and thoughtful attitude at home. His reading skills and math skills have made tremendous progress and we are very pleased at his rate of learning. The small class size allows for great group learning, as well as, individualized instruction, something that was certainly lacking at the public school.

While at CPUMC Primary School, our son has gained confidence in himself as a student and we feel confident that the skills he is learning is preparing him for promotion to the next grade level. The communication with his teacher has been excellent- she is always quick to respond to any question or request that we may have. We have also appreciated the personalized notes she has sent home informing us of specific strengths or weaknesses she has recognized in our child and her plan to work with those areas. Communication with the administration of the school is also excellent. Emails and calls are always answered quickly and the friendly attitude of the staff makes for an "open door" atmosphere.

We have been very happy with our decision to choose the College Park United Methodist Church Primary School for our child's education.

Sincerely,

Stacy B.

I have two daughters, ages 11 and 12, who both started at the "Baby House" when they were 12 weeks old. My oldest graduated last year from the Primary School and started in public school this past school year, where she excelled. The transition from a small school to a large public school was no problem. I believe this is due to the great teachers and staff they have had at the Primary School, where they have not only received a solid education, but also learned drama and music, which has given them unbelievable self-confidence. When my 12 year old started 6th grade, she was able to start in the advanced classes that were offered, made the cheerleading squad, received very high marks on her FCATs, made straight A's and got the lead part in her middle school's spring musical (beating out 8th graders). I am saying these things only to show the foundation that is set for the children attending the Primary School. I know that when my 11 year old starts middle school in August, that she will also have no problem adjusting to a larger school and will do just as well as her sister has. The Primary School has been a blessing to our family and I highly recommend it.

-Donna V.

Dear Mary Massey,

I would like to thank you for affording my husband and me the opportunity to re-enroll our son, David, at the College Park United Methodist Church Primary School. David was with the CDC from 18 months of age until pre-K. We decided to give public school a chance and enrolled him in one of Orange County's best elementary schools for Kindergarten. This school earned an "A" on FCAT, students wore uniforms, and it also ranked as a "5-Star Community School". Unfortunately, we saw a huge decline in our son academically and socially almost immediately.

The first thing to go was the outstanding manners that are reinforced at the CDC on a daily basis. Because addressing his elders in a formal manner at school was no longer required, it was difficult to maintain at home. Further, the absolute lack of respect for adults and other children that he witnessed exacerbated the problem. At the Primary School, David is held to a standard of behavior that will serve him well for the rest of his life! It is now his habit and in his comfort zone to interact with others in a kind and dignified manner.

The next thing we noticed immediately was the lack of structure and continuity in his schedule; there were some routines he could count on (lunch always came at the same time), but how he progressed through the academic material and the expectation for extending that material

at home was subject to much change. At the Primary School, David has his STAR Binder to help with his organization, his teacher sends home monthly newsletters to let us know what is coming, he knows what to expect at school and what is expected of him in and outside of school.

Perhaps the most significant impact has been with David's academic ability. At the close of Kindergarten, David received an award for knowing the alphabet, and his shapes and colors. This was perhaps the most disconcerting of all because David had been doing these things since he was two (at the CDC). David is now reading exceptionally well, he is adding and subtracting, and engaging in complex abstract thought. I feel certain that this would not be the case if David was anywhere other than the Primary School! I am so happy to have both of my children there; I know that they are your number one priority and that they are getting the best education possible!

Thank you again, Mary, for all that you do for our children and for the families of the College Park UMC Primary School.

Sincerely,

Kerry C.