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Dear Families and Friends of the Grand Rapids Child Discovery Center,

We are enormously glad that the Grand Rapids Child Discovery Center is able to provide the richness of a Reggio Emilia inspired grade school program in a tuition-free, public charter school setting to families from all socio-economic, racial, and ethnic backgrounds within Grand Rapids and surrounding areas. For ten years, we have been able to make real our core mission of continuously expanding the potential of these children.

Today, all public schools in Michigan face cuts in state revenue that translate into reduced funding and inevitable budget cuts. The Child Discovery Center is not exempt from these troubling developments. Our school too faces a major financial challenge. Even in the best of times, public charter schools receive less funding than traditional public schools. But unlike traditional public school districts, we cannot go to the voters with a request for a bond when additional funding is needed.

To help us during this very challenging time, we need your support. Unless we are able to supplement our traditional government funding with much needed fundraising revenue, the school will be forced to make further cuts in the essential programs that define who we are as a Reggio Emilia inspired charter school. Unfortunately, we do not have the luxury of cutting extraneous or supplementary services. In fact, just this year, we had to sacrifice a very important "Sound and Movement" Studio Coordinator position due to a drop in state funding.

The gap between our state and federal revenue sources and the essential costs to operate the school this year is equal to approximately **\$390** for every child enrolled in the school. We need to raise \$75,000 this year if we are going to be able to balance the budget and have the chance to maintain present staffing and program levels. In addition to this request for support, we are launching a series of fundraising initiatives that we believe will allow us to meet our financial needs now and in the years to come. Other fundraising initiatives include planned events (concerts, etc), grants, partnerships, and targeted fundraising programs. Together, these initiatives are designed to address our broader need for long-term financial sustainability and prosperity.

We need your support, but please understand -- **we are not asking that every family contribute \$390 for their child!** Yet, we hope that every family can contribute in some special way toward our fundraising goal. There are many ways to help and contribute, whether it is by volunteering your time and talents, taking advantage of your connections in the community, or contributing funds. We understand that each family will have a different ability to contribute to our efforts. Please get involved and do what you feel comfortable contributing.

Might you be able to provide a one-time gift of just five dollars? Perhaps you can pledge to offer a monthly contribution of \$5 or \$10. Perhaps you could offer us either a one-time gift or a monthly pledge amount of a greater sum. Every contribution is a great help to us in order to reduce our budget deficit. We are very grateful for every contribution of time or money that each of you can offer!

The school's operational security and viability depends now on our ability to raise these necessary funds in the very near future. Please look for ways that you can contribute to our **2010 Fundraising Campaign!** Together, we can ensure that our children have all that they need to be successful and that our school will be here for many years to come.

We would love to share our story with your extended family and friends! If you would like for us to also request their support of the school, please provide us with their names and addresses and we will send this letter to them. Please remember that all financial contributions to the school are tax-deductible. Checks can be made out to the *Grand Rapids Child Discovery Center*.

Thank you very much for your generosity and support in our time of need!

Sincerely,



David R Hill  
Principal