

THE GODDARD SCHOOL® HOLDS ITS OWN OLYMPIC GAMES

BY VANESSA VERA ROMAN • PARSIPPANY THIS WEEK • MAY 12, 2010



The Goddard School held their own Olympics. Pictured here are the closing ceremonies. (Staff photo: Dawn Benko)

The 2010 Winter Olympics have been over for a while now, but the games had only just begun at Parsippany's Goddard School, where recently, little ones finished their own version of the Olympic games.

In celebration of Young Children's Month in April, and wanting to do something special for the kids, Parsippany Goddard School owners Ravi and Sushama Patil, as well as the school's PTO, planned a special week for the kids surrounded with a kiddy version of sports and ending with a closing ceremony attended by Mayor James Barberio.

Throughout the week, children participated in activities such as scooter and beanbag races, Frisbee throws and egg races, and each class had a chance to cheer on classmates.

Each class also represented a team, and made matching t-shirts for their group.

After a long winter of bad weather that's left kids "trapped" in the school's walls, this allowed a nice change for them, Sushama Patil said.

“It’s fun. It’s (an) outdoor activity. It’s a nice way to get out,” she said.

Though children as young as those which Goddard caters to - children six weeks to five years old - may not understand much about the Olympics, Patil said she hoped the kids learned about team work through the various activities.

Parsippany Goddard School’s PTO president Stephanie Caponegro, 43, of Parsippany, said her son, 4-year-old Dominick would come home talking about the Olympic events of the day he participated in.

“I think it provided them with a little self-esteem,” she said.

For Goddard’s young children, the simple events were fun, many of them said, and the parents enjoyed the excitement, too.

Former Rockaway resident Jennifer Petronzi, 33, now of Bridgewater, has a daughter at Parsippany’s Goddard School.

Events like those, she said, are great. “It gives them something fun to look forward to that’s a little different from their daily routine.”

Parsippany resident Jigna Shah, 32, whose daughter is also a student at the school said events like the school’s own version of the Olympics are great because it gives parents a chance to attend the school and know what their children are doing. She also felt the event specifically was a basic introduction to sports at a very early age.

At the closing ceremony, surrounded by plenty of proud parents flashing digital cameras, Mayor Barberio was on hand to give out gold medals to the kids. At this game, everyone was a winner.

Barberio admitted that he doesn’t have a gold medal himself.

“I’m not as gifted,” he said in jest.

Barberio, who said he was happy to be among the “very young, young, young,” adults, said he enjoys attending events like these.

“That’s what I love about the community. You get invited to such events like this, and it’s heartwarming,” he said.