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By Nicole Dominique Hillsdale Daily News

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Jonesville, Mich. —

Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) preschoolers gathered together to feed their families on Friday for their 22nd annual Thanksgiving Dinner, which was held in the cafeteria of Williams Elementary School in Jonesville. “It’s all made by the children for their families,” said teacher Melissa Trout.

She also said the children’s entire extended families are invited. In the past, there have been too many guests to even sit down. This year was a smaller turnout, though. The children began preparing for their dinner at the beginning of November by making decorations and placemats. They spent the entire week before the dinner making the food — which was all done from scratch. The kids chop vegetables and break up bread for stuffing, mash the potatoes — they even made cherry cheesecake for dessert. Before they ate, the children said the Pledge of Allegiance in front of their parents, and then performed a dance they had learned in class. “It’s just such a wonderful learning experience for the children,” said Linda Barnett, who has run the program since it started 22 years ago. “They’re so excited to be able to feed their families.”



Photo: Nicole Dominique

The children lined up with their families to get their food.



Photo: Nicole Dominique

The children said the Pledge of Allegiance and performed a dance for their families prior to the meal.

Unfortunately, this may be the last year that Barnett can do this with the children. She was informed by the health department that because their classroom is not a licensed kitchen, they can't cook or prepare food in it. But the GSRP is part of the Community Action Agency's Head Start program, which has a licensed kitchen, so they may take their dinner there next year.

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