



Child-Centered, Play-Based **INSIGHT** Noncoercive, Democratic

Education: Vision, Family Goals and Priorities -

Flying high over learning goals and priorities, we discover that in many ways “culture” is harmful, toxic, directly with poison food, water and products, including exploitative technology and media, and psychologically, comparison, humiliation, rewards, punishments, often resulting in identities and behaviors that are isolated, estranged from what is natural, selfish, competitive and aggressive. With this in mind we might group learning goals broadly in three categories; One, protecting our children and cultivating in them the capacity to protect themselves, to recognize that which is harmful and developing healthy and safe alternatives. Two, knowing ourselves; discovering and expanding innate capacities, how to communicate and relate, creativity, happiness and lifelong learning. Three, finding and expanding our place in the social web. Mainstream schooling gives limited attention to the first two, elevating the third category to center stage. Our approach includes and appropriately balances all three.

Primary Goals: Personal Safety, Wellness and Happiness

- How to recognize and avoid toxic; being poisoned, over controlled, and/or manipulated.
- Becoming and remaining sovereign, truly free in body, mind and action.
- Cultivating and express human qualities such as; critical thinking, creative optimism, beauty, empathy, compassion, love and joy.

Personal Development Goals: 1. Self-Actualization, Unfolding and Expanding Capacity

- “To know thy self;” exploring what it means to be human, abundantly integrated in the natural and manmade world.
- To discover the astonishing capacities that being a fully developed human being offer, and simultaneously recognizing how that full potential is limited and constrained.

The above implies understanding one’s self, what it means to be human, our true nature and capacity, and how to cultivate and expand that nature in terms of wholeness and wellbeing for self, others and all of nature.

Social and Cultural goals: Enculturate/Socialization

- To acquire the skills necessary become a creative and productive member of society and culture. To become an efficient, useful and productive member of the social web. Simply to get a job.

The above implies understanding how to function in and provide value to society.

Each family must be clear about the weight and priority given to each of the above categories, keeping in mind that each learning and personal development goal must be converted into actual experiences that open and develop specific skills and capacities, and upon that foundation, abstract concepts rest.

The Environment including the school structure is a teacher

It is important to consider; just as math and history are embedded in classic curriculum experiences, empathy, equality, fairness, care, humility, kindness, compassionate conflict resolution, and many other relationship skills must equally emerge from experiences. In addition to books and worksheet, these experiences help create the form of the learning environment. Form is content, is the guiding phrase.

At the Oak Grove school, for example, students learn to use their minds, their bodies, and their hearts well because the overarching themes expressed in the Art of Living and Learning are embedded in the school’s culture, curriculum, classroom practice, and expectations of student learning.

“Form is Content.”

The Art of Inquiry

observation – questioning – fact-finding – research – self-direction

The Art of Communication

speaking – writing – listening – collaboration

The Art of Academia

knowledge and application of academic standards, conventions, and disciplines in core subject areas

The Art of Engagement

attention – self-direction – self-motivation – self-regulation
metacognition or learning how one learns – examining one's own thinking

The Art of Aesthetics

sensitivity and appreciation of beauty in all forms – finding the artist within – artistic expression

The Art of Caring and Relationships

Self

self-understanding and awareness – making healthy choices

Others

self-reflection and awareness in relationship – non-violent communication
service to the common good

Local and Global Communities

service and citizenship

The Environment

mindful stewardship

As the child participates in experiences that embody the above, the implicate meaning open, express and develops. How is empathy, equality, fairness, care, humility, kindness, and more embedded in the forms and experiences we create that shape and define how our children relate – in addition to 'exploring' and 'studying' these values as concepts? What priority are these core human qualities given in terms of time, attention and value, compared to traditional curriculum, such as reading, writing, math, history, etc.? Exploring this balance is part of the parent-child pre-assessment process.

Along with honoring the age and developmental stage of the child, temperament, sensitivities, strengths and limitation, passions, fears, we include parental hopes, concerns, expectations and goals. With this experiential framework in mind, please prioritize the list below, assigning each theme a (10) for most important and (1) for the least.

Themes to Build Relationship and Communication Capacity

- Empathy
- Altruism
- Kindness
- Honesty or truthfulness
- Feeling the difference between power based on respect, vs. force or authority
- How our body and its survival is intimately entangling with all other species
- Feeling that life is pulsing with energy or spirit, and that this energy has its own intelligence
- Egalitarianism or social equality
- Intrinsic morality or goodness
- Emotional intelligence
- To see directly, what is actual, rather than our personal assumptions and projections, prejudice

- Feeling what it means to be an integral part of a community
- The Golden Rule. Treat other as you wish to be treated
- Respecting gender fluidity
- Feeling what it means to share, kinship economy
- Embodying generosity as a way of life
- Experiencing the difference between play based learning, being in the Zone, and work
- Feeling why humor is essential
- Feeling what being responsible for ourselves feels like, and to others, self-reliant
- How it feels to be free of comparison, without hubris, embarrassment or shame
- Competition means, “to strive together.” When comparison is useful and when it is not
- Experiencing what compassionate conflict resolution looks and feels like
- Appreciating what it means to be sovereign in mind and body, real freedom
- To express how we feel and what we need clearly and with ease
- To listen without judgment
- To know and appreciate what death is
- To imagine with creative passion, and develop the project management skills to manifest
- To face the harmful actions of others without aggression and to recognize the same harmful intent in ourselves
- Embody basic trust and be absolutely clear when it is absent, and upon that, respond in the safest way possible for everyone
- To experience ecstatic joy fees like, real happiness
- To appreciate the miracle of being a unique human being at this unique moment
- To have *this* nonabstract, embodied, self-world-view or identity, serve as the guide for creative imagination and actions.

Standard subjects for elementary education curriculum include:

Please prioritize the list below, assigning each theme a (10) for most important and (1) for the least.

Language arts, writing, reading comprehension

There are 3 strands in Language – Oral Language (Speaking and Listening), Visual Language (Viewing and presenting) and Written Language (Reading and Writing). Learning Outcomes are organized in developmental phases. The Program of Inquiry provides an authentic context for learners to develop and use language. Wherever possible, language is taught through a meaningful, authentic context of the units of inquiry. Literature studies and specific reading skills are taught as stand-alone lessons.

Mentors are expected to:

- Promote integrated language development
- Develop competency with letters, words and sentences
- View writing as a process
- Focus on meaning when teaching reading and writing
- Use a literature-based approach when teaching reading
- Teach literature as a means of understanding and exploring
- Encourage students to select own books according to their interest level
- Basic foreign languages such as Spanish, French, Latin, Chinese, or German.

Mathematics

There are 5 strands in Mathematics – Number, Shape and Space, Algebra, Data Handling and Measurement. Learning Outcomes are organized in developmental phases. There are times when students need to be given a range of strategies for learning Mathematical skills. Wherever possible, Data Handling and Measurement are taught through the relevant, authentic context of the units of inquiry.

Mentors are expected to:

- Engage students in problem solving with real-life contexts
- Use a variety of strategies to encourage multiple solutions
- Use manipulative to make mathematics understandable to students

- Engage in mathematical conversation with students
- Encourage to make their thinking visible – focus on the process
- Incorporate use of journals to foster thinking and reflection
- Use calculators and computers for appropriate purposes

Science, Geography

Science programs have four strands of study which are taught through the Units of Inquiry. The strands are: Living things, Earth and Space, Materials and Matter and Forces and Energy. The strands do not need to be taught each year and are developed throughout the program of inquiry. We encourage the students to act and think like scientists.

Mentors are expected to create opportunities for students to:

- Observe carefully in order to gather data
- Use a variety of instruments and tools to measure data accurately
- Use scientific vocabulary to explain their observations and experiences
- Identify or generate a question or problem to be explored
- Plan and carry out systematic investigations, manipulating variables as necessary
- Make and test predictions
- Interpret and evaluate data gathered in order to draw conclusions
- Consider scientific models and applications of these models (including their limitations)

Social Studies

Our Social Studies program has six strands of study which are taught through the Units of Inquiry. The strands are: Human systems and economic activities, Social organization and culture, History; continuity and change through time, Human and natural environments and Resources and the environment.

Mentors are expected to create opportunities for students to:

- Learn how to ask compelling and relevant questions that can be researched
- Gain a secure understanding of their own identity and their place in the world
- Develop an understanding of other cultural groups and an appreciation of other ideas and beliefs
- Gain knowledge that is of genuine importance in understanding the human condition through the exploration of themes that have significance for all students in all cultures
- Gain conceptual understanding through participating in learning experiences that foster sensitivity, creativity and initiative, leading to socially responsible action
- Gain a sense of time and place in relation to their own experience and the experience of other people
- Gain an understanding of humankind's role in, and dependence on, the natural and constructed world, and learn to apply this knowledge in responsible ways

Information and Communication Technology

The use of ICT provides students with a range of tools to: store, organize and present their learning, find information and communicate with a wide-ranging audience.

Special interests and project based learning

- Music; listening, playing, singing with movement ETM, drumming
- Performing arts, theater and dance
- Gardening, cooking, nutrition and environmental studies
- Building, tinkering and technology (computers)
- Visual arts, drawing, painting, photography, filmmaking, etc.
- Craft arts, pottery, textiles, flower craft, leatherworking, mixed media, paper craft, wood, metal.
- Wellness and physical education: the human body, food and nutrition, gymnastics, swimming, yoga, fencing, roller-skating, archery, jogging, tree climbing, and more.

Please note other activities that enchant your child?

Young adventure

Age

Family/Parents

Address

Phone

Email

Special talents, interests, needs, sensitivities, fears, food allergies. Anything that will help us create the very best play-learning experience for your child and family?
