

Philosophy and Goals

Respect

Respect is the fundamental value that guides our program's philosophy. We believe that all children at every age are competent learners who deserve our respect. As we care for and interact with children it is essential to be aware of each one's growth in skills, understandings and approaches to learning in all domains.

We believe that children learn best about the world through active inquiry: touching, tasting, watching, listening, smelling, investigating and testing. We recognize the importance of responsive adult engagement in children's learning experiences. As early care and education professionals, we are responsible for providing a safe, stimulating physical environment, as well as a nurturing, reflective social environment. As children pursue their own interests and the developmentally appropriate learning opportunities provided and scaffolded by skilled adult mentors within our thoughtfully designed environments, they develop a sense of competence and trust that impels them to further exploration and a deepening sense of personal effectiveness. A supportive environment that encourages curiosity and exploration thus helps children build the foundation for later learning and self-reliance.

We encourage and value family involvement in order to build partnerships that support children's healthy development. Respectful communication between staff, parents, students and children strengthens all our partnerships. The environment we strive to create is reflective and models a supportive community where all of us can learn and grow.

Desired Outcomes for Children and Families

Each age group program is designed and staffed to facilitate excellent learning experiences for all children, as well as support for their families. Teachers work within a flexible, inquiry-based curriculum framework to meet the needs and interests of each group and of individual children. During the Early Childhood Laboratory program, all enrolled children will:

- freely explore an appropriately stimulating, intentionally designed, and safe indoor and outdoor environment;
- exercise individual choice as they participate in activities and social interactions and, with adult support, learn to take responsibility for their choices;
- learn new critical reasoning and problem-solving skills and increase their mastery of existing skills;
- grow in their mastery within all developmental domains, including social-emotional, linguistic, physical, and cognitive;
- build their knowledge and skills in the curriculum content areas of early literacy, early mathematics, science and technology, creative expression, health and safety, and social studies,

through their active participation in curricular experiences based on their emerging skills and interests;

- receive adult support for self-initiated experiences that will foster their growing competence, sense of initiative, and positive dispositions toward learning;
- participate in developmentally-appropriate teacher-initiated activities designed to introduce them to new information, ideas and opportunities;
- become members of a school community in which children and adults can interact with honesty, empathy, interest and affection;
- feel supported in achieving their potential, enjoying their experiences, and participating according to their individual interests, abilities and preferences.