

Kite and Leaf...

The good news
email from TCS!

Important Touchpoints in Progressive Education

Recently, The Children's School held its annual "Curriculum Night" when parents are able to spend time in their children's classrooms, meet their child's teachers, and hear about the academic and socio-emotional learning the teacher has planned for the year. To kick off the evening, Ms. Christina Martin, our Director of Curriculum and Instruction, offered a welcome letter covering important aspects of our progressive education philosophy. We thought we'd share it as a reminder of what sets us apart, and why we are here. Enjoy!

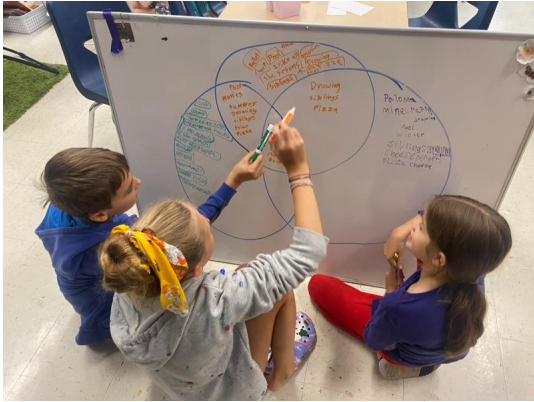
As we embark on our 20th year of progressive education at TCS, we as a community (much like our children) are growing and changing and finding new ways to live our core beliefs around teaching and learning. Below are some key principles you will see play out in classrooms, guiding our curricular decisions and how we spend our time with your children.

We believe in allowing space and time for development to unfold: A child's development can't be rushed ahead of its own timetable, it can only be nurtured by caring, supportive people and a carefully constructed environment.



Not everything has to or can happen all at once. For a child it is less important what math problem they solve in October of 4th grade than how they feel about themselves as a mathematician, whether they see mathematics as a tool for understanding the world, can persevere and collaborate to solve challenging

problems, can apply academic concepts to real-world situations, and have confidence in their abilities.



We believe in the power of emergent curriculum and curiosity to motivate

students: Students, like all people everywhere, work hard at things they find purposeful, meaningful, and connected to their own lives and interests.

Project work is a vehicle for rigorous academic exploration—alongside executive functioning skills, collaboration, and fun. When students have voice and agency in their own learning, they are more committed to the work and the learning is deeper and richer.



Mistakes and discomfort are part of learning:

It's no exaggeration to say that learning cannot exist without mistakes. An environment that encourages children (and adults) to take risks and to try things they haven't yet mastered is crucial to deep learning. Mistakes must be normalized and seen as opportunities for growth. This applies as much to our adult TCS community as it does to our students.

Process is (often) more important than

product: When we reduce learning to its products or outcomes, we lose the richness of experiences and interactions and self-discovery and enjoyment during the process itself.



In middle level this might look like “wood-shedding,” i.e. writing lots of pieces that are not meant to be polished or final but are in service of practicing and perfecting the craft of writing.

Yes, students will be guided to produce a certain number of polished pieces—but writing as a process has so much to teach students beyond merely evaluating the final product.



School should provide multiple avenues into the learning experience and multiple avenues for students to show what they know: Reading and writing are important but they are not the only ways to take in information or show what you know.

Hands-on learning (in which students are building or doing something) and minds-on learning (in which students are actively engaged in critical and creative thinking) remain the gold standard and the best way for children to experience deep, lasting learning. Throughout TCS classrooms you will see teachers prioritizing experiential, collaborative, complex learning tasks over rote recall or regurgitation of facts. This can look messy or chaotic at times but it creates an unparalleled environment for nurturing each child’s voice, curiosity, and love of learning.

Students Have Voted! Our 2023-24 Class Names Are...

One of the first "projects" each class tackles at the beginning of the new school year is to choose a name. We do this to build community and group identity and to get away from referring to classes by grade level or by the teacher's name. These names always provide a perfect snapshot of development as each group's name reflects their interests and knowledge and often their sense of humor as well. Here are the names each class chose for this year:



2nd Grade - **Blizzard Wizards**

3rd Grade - **Brainstorms**

4th/5th Ms. Lori - **All Hail the Cheeseburgers**

4th/5th Ms. Lisa - **Cloudy With a Chance of Gumdrops**

6th Grade - **Just Ian**

7th Grade - **The Democratic Republic of Socialist Tsunamis**

8th Grade - **Sharknado**



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