Foundations FOR THE Future

Supporting the
Development of
Inquisitive Minds,
Self-Expression,
Independence,
Social Collaboration, &
Personal Responsibility

childpeace
MONTESSORI SCHOOL

THE 2011 STRATEGIC PLAN FOR
CHILDPEACE MONTESSORI SCHOOL

Childpeace Mission & Vision

The mission of Childpeace is to guide the development of the whole child, socially and academically, through the principles of AMI Montessori education in an urban setting.

Our vision is to shape the future of our world through the cultivation of inquisitive minds and socially responsible young citizens.

Childpeace Montessori School was founded in 1976 by a group of working parents aiming to provide high quality education and care for their young children. In the 35 years since then, the small group of founding students has grown to a vibrant and bustling community of 325 students and their families. The maturation process of our community has been successful only with the dedication and leadership of the many who came before. Our future success will be guaranteed by the important work that is happening now.

During the past several months the Board of Trustees, faculty, and staff have been developing a long range strategic plan for Childpeace. The process began with parent focus groups, moved to a weekend retreat, and has been refined by the Strategic Planning Committee into the plan that follows.

Any strategic planning process is about the future, but it necessarily reflects the past and the present condition of the organization as well. One outcome of this process is confirmation that we are starting from a position of great strength. We have an outstanding faculty and administration, and a community of responsible and engaged students. We have sound financial health and are in the fortunate position of being able to aim high and to dream big. We have a solid foundation from which to build the future of Childpeace.

Each of the four strategic goals will serve to strengthen and enhance Childpeace Montessori School. They represent our most important priorities – to ensure that we best meet the educational needs of our students and successfully fulfill the school's mission. Through this strategic plan, we continue Childpeace's evolution as a truly unique and outstanding educational opportunity.

Patrick O'Neill
Chair of the Board of Trustees

Sue Pritzker
Head of School

Strategic Planning Committee: Kirsten Brady, Cloie Cohen, Pamela Kislak, Meg McCauley, Patrick O'Neill, Sue Pritzker, Janet Williamson

September 2011

1 AN OUTSTANDING EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

The mission of Childpeace is to guide the development of the whole child, socially and academically. While developing the self-awareness and self-confidence needed to engage with the intellectual, emotional and social tasks before them, our students must be challenged and supported by a talented faculty that is well trained, creative and committed to the Montessori mission, and program.

INITIATIVES

1. Review our academic and enrichment programs to ensure our students develop the skills and values they will require to thrive in, and one day, shape the world they encounter beyond Childpeace.
2. Coordinate and broaden the curriculum, from the well established toddler, primary, and elementary programs through to our new middle school program. Ensure that the curriculum is consistent and cohesive, and that it prepares our students for high school and beyond.
3. Attract and retain the best possible staff to guide our children. Offer competitive compensation and benefits, further our commitment to professional development, allow sufficient time for reflection and collaboration, and ensure the needs of faculty and staff are considered and addressed.
4. Enrich our students' experiences with school facilities and grounds that reflect and reinforce the quality of education our students receive. All physical environments at Childpeace should facilitate the natural learning tendency of the student.
5. Provide the proper facilities for the Middle School program that allows for flexible instruction, creates a sense of community and allows the program to develop to its maximum potential.

2 AN INFORMED AND INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY

Children thrive when home and school are in harmony, with both surroundings sharing the same educational values and expectations. This works best when we have an engaged community that is informed on the principals of a Montessori education and is supportive of the school and its mission. Additionally, we believe that cultural and economic diversity teaches our children to value differences, promotes true learning, and encourages respect for others. We will continue to build a student body that is reflective of our urban environment and fosters understanding and inclusion.

STRATEGIES AND INITIATIVES

1. Pursue long term partnerships with community programs to extend our children's exposure to diverse cultures and social issues. Cultivate a service and community leadership ethic and leverage the advantages of our urban environment.
2. Fully define and promote our plan for financial aid in order to increase the socio-economic diversity of our student body. Establish a goal for the desired level of funding as a percentage of our gross tuition.
3. Strive to make all communications with our community, clear, manageable, and timely. Provide meaningful information about the methodology, values, and outcomes of a Montessori education.
4. Develop a parent body that works in partnership with the school and embraces the Montessori approach. Provide a process of immersive and engaging experiences that expand their understanding of a Montessori education. Establish clear expectations of and to the parent body.
5. Ensure that we have strong Administrative and Board leadership that will be effective advocates and stewards of the Childpeace legacy.

3 A FINANCIALLY STABLE AND FLEXIBLE ORGANIZATION

Continued financial stability is critical to ensuring the quality of education we seek for our children and for the long-term viability of Childpeace. While tuition income will serve to cover our basic operating expenses, fundraising will position the school to have the flexibility to improve on its educational mission, physical environment, and long-term health. It is the intention of Childpeace to have a parent body that believes in our mission and supports it through service and resource giving.

STRATEGIES AND INITIATIVES

1. Work over the next three years to cover operating expenses 100% through tuition income. Shift our fundraising strategy to provide for strategic needs.
2. Build the Middle School program to its maximum potential in two years. Ensure we meet the needs of our student body, leverage the curriculum across the entire school, and grow enrollment through effective outreach.
3. Create a culture of philanthropy at Childpeace to secure our childrens' legacy. Ensure that our parents understand and support Montessori education. Confirm that all parents and staff support the Childpeace mission.
4. At the appropriate time, initiate a campaign to fund an endowment to further support tuition assistance.

4 A STRONG IDENTITY AS AN INDEPENDENT MONTESSORI SCHOOL

A strong identity allows the school to communicate to prospective parents, our parent body, staff, and our community at large, the exceptional education and lifelong skills acquired by our students. All forms of communication contribute to and advance the overall identity of Childpeace and each medium should support and express the high standard of excellence that Childpeace represents.

STRATEGIES AND INITIATIVES

1. Enhance our communications so they reflect the characteristics and core values of Childpeace in a consistent voice and identity that is intuitive and inspirational.
2. Refresh collateral material and communication mediums (website, social media sites). Clearly communicate that Childpeace offers a complete education, from toddler through middle school, that will prepare them for their high school years and beyond.
3. Embrace and maximize our urban setting and the infinite learning experiences it provides our students on a daily basis. Share these experiences with consistency through all our communication mediums.
4. Educate our community about the values and benefits that an AMI education provides. Leverage the life successes of our alumni to amplify the message and help secure the legacy of Childpeace.

The Next Steps

The broad participation of our school community in gathering information for the Strategic Plan gives us great confidence in their continued support as we execute the plan. The next stage of the process will involve a number of task forces, formed to focus on the objectives, and it will begin in the fall of the 2011-2012 school year.

Integrated Curriculum

As Montessori students are offered an “education for life,” all subjects and activity are considered connected to each other. The student is always encouraged to understand the context of information and to take a creative approach to researching and analyzing. From study of world cultures to the study of micro-organisms, the Montessori student experiences that they live and grow in relation to other people and other times, offering perspective to their life journey.

Concrete to Abstract

Montessori education follows the child’s natural development, moving from concrete, manipulative materials as a young child to symbolic and abstract work with the concepts those materials represent. Manipulative experiences are the foundation for true learning. The child builds the neurological pathways with the manipulative materials and retrieves the information in abstraction as a mature student.

Responsibility to Community

From the youngest age, the Montessori child is offered a social context to their development as a student and a citizen. Skills for social interaction, cooperation, and service are taught and supported alongside academic instruction. Understanding, empathy, and accountability to a social group encourage the child’s awareness of their individual value and responsibility to their community.

Global Change

Maria Montessori said that the world would change when all children could have the opportunity to grow up in a peaceful world. Global awareness happens when each child embraces their own special place on the earth and works to sustain our world for their children and grandchildren. Montessori students are offered every opportunity to understand how to respect the earth’s limited resources, how to live a simple and sustainable existence on the earth, and how to live in peace with their global family.

Guiding Principles

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MONTESSORI SCHOOL

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