



Oneness-Family School

THE INTERNATIONAL PEACE ACADEMY

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www.onenessfamilyschool.org

Dear Parents,

We are delighted that you are considering the Oneness-Family School for your child. We offer Montessori-based programs for students ages two through grade eight in a caring and creative environment for learning, with a very closely-knit and diverse school community.

The Little Stars Program for two-year-olds was launched in 2007 and now consists of two classrooms with a capacity of twelve students per classroom. The Program Director, Stefania Rubino, has blended Montessori and Waldorf philosophies creating an enriching, fun, and creative day for the students. This is a nurturing program that many families use to transition into our preschool program. You may choose from half day and full day options for your child:

Monday-Friday 8:30 am-12 pm or 8:30 am-3:30 pm
Any three days 8:30 am-12 pm or 8:30 am-3:30 pm

The school day for preschool through grade eight students are:

Monday-Friday 8:30 am-3:30 pm
Monday-Friday 8:30 am-12 pm (option for preschool students)
Tuesday-Thursday 8:30 am-3:30 pm (option for preschool students)

All full day students are required to bring a packed lunch from home. Childcare is offered before and after school from 7:30 am–8:30 am and 3:30 pm-6 pm for an additional fee for the year or on a drop-off basis.

We offer a multi-age classroom environment, where the students are grouped together in the following classes: preschool through kindergarten; first through third grades; fourth through sixth grades; and seventh through eighth grades. We believe the continuity of staying with one teacher for several years provides an environment of consistency and personalized attention, enhanced by the development of a long-term parent-teacher-student relationship. The Montessori classroom also provides students academic flexibility by allowing them to work at their own degree of readiness. For instance, a student might accelerate in some subjects and work at grade level in others.

Our strong academic program is enriched by studies in art, music, drama, dance, yoga, tai chi and meditation. Foreign languages, multi-cultural studies, world religions studies, field trips, physical education and environmental studies are also an integral part of the Oneness-Family educational program.

Our curriculum and classroom structures enable students to discover their own gifts and talents. The school stresses essential values, such as acceptance, nonviolence through constructive conflict resolution, self-respect, respect for others, and kindness. We encourage every student to challenge themselves in each of these areas – to self-transcend – to continue growing and learning more as the opportunity presents itself.

We invite you into our classrooms and meet our teachers and ask questions. We look forward to meeting with you and your family.

Sincerely,

Andrew Kutt
Founder and Executive Director

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“Oneness-Family School is founded on the belief that peace begins within each individual, and that successful academic achievement must be balanced by comprehensive personal growth.”

--Andrew Kutt, Founder & Executive Director

“Our children have been blessed with gifted and committed teachers.

While each of their teachers has brought unique qualities and insights, all of them displayed a high level of perception and a commitment to bringing out the best in our children.

We’ve been impressed with how skillfully the teachers maintained the delicate balance of challenging our daughters to stretch and do their best – academically and personally – while still making each one feel fully supported and accepted. At OFS [they] gained a very solid academic foundation and an enthusiasm for learning...

They were enriched by field trips, nature studies, performances, songs and art projects.

One look at the classrooms speaks volumes about the rich environment...

and the festivals were great for reinforcing academic concepts

and an appreciation for diverse cultures...

We believe that our Oneness experience

illustrates the individual attention

and holistic approach

that OFS can provide

for children.”

- Lynda & Drew Wynn

Former OFS Parents



“...Oneness was not just a school; it was like a second family to me. The good people, the feeling of safety from the world’s hate, and the healthy and nurturing principles created a community and a social structure that I never wanted to leave... Attending Oneness pushed me forward so much, not only academically, but more importantly, as a person. [Andrew] saw my hidden strength in writing and helped me to dig deeper to explore the depths of my ability... You helped me to mature into a better person, developing a greater patience and tolerance of the world around me and the people living in it.”

- John Volpe
OFS Alumnus

“Over the past four years we have made good friends, and have felt very much at home in the community you have created. It is a home away from home... [her] teachers have been excellent...

[She] has flourished into a wonderful child under their wings. They have encouraged, educated, instilled wonderful values and provided a nurturing, loving and safe environment. I cannot think of a better place than OFS during this greatly impressionable stage of her life! ...You certainly have achieved your goal: to create an educational community that implements and embraces diversity and peace. I know that these values are deeply rooted in her soul and she will not forget them --they are embedded and will be part of her throughout her lifetime.”

-Sue & Bill Clery
Former OFS Parents

“The presence of Oneness in the lives of our three grandchildren has been a gift for our whole family.

Beyond their learning to read

and reason, to observe and compute,

we delight in their growing awareness of positive problem-solving;

of the larger world and its geography, languages and cultural traditions;

in their respect for other people and for the earth around us;

and for the importance of peacemaking.

Our older grandson suggests a moment of silence before dinner.

Our granddaughter thinks about why people are marching for peace.

Our littlest grandson and his schoolmate come up with a way to avoid fighting over their favorite truck.

As they’ve learned, they’ve helped us to think more deeply about the ideas we value and to explore them together in ways that continue to enrich us all.”

-Susan & George Spangler
OFS Grandparents

FOUNDATION

The Oneness-Family School vision is to foster a new generation of leaders who can become meaningful contributors to the society of the 21st century by expanding their consciousness, realizing their potential, and coming to feel and understand that the world is one family. Our mission is to provide a holistic, life-enriching educational program and learning environment based upon the following 5 pillars: Skills; Knowledge; Self-Expression; Understanding; and Appreciation.

Andrew Kutt founded Oneness-Family School in 1988. Inspired by his contemplative studies with his spiritual teacher, Andrew wanted to make a contribution to a more harmonious planet by helping children learn to become good citizens of the world. Andrew's vision of a new kind of educational program took root, one that gives equal weight to physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual development. Out of his vision emerged several fundamental principles. It is upon the following core principles that our unique curriculum was established, and that Oneness-Family School was created.



*The *World* is one family. All nations and all religions have something unique and significant to contribute to the world.

**Education* is the vehicle to enhance humanity's evolution toward greater harmony and partnership on earth.

*The *School* is a place of learning not just for students, but also for parents and teachers as well. All members of the community learn, work and play together cooperatively.

*The *Curriculum* is based on self-transcendence – the idea of continual improvement and personal growth – not on competition with others.

*The *Child* is at the heart of the school's program. We nurture the students' dreams and empower them to find their life's purpose.

PHILOSOPHY

The name "Oneness-Family" refers to the idea that all human beings, regardless of their differences, belong, to one humanity. Oneness-Family School celebrates the wonderful, rich diversity of that humanity. At the heart of the school's approach is a strong focus on international studies, including foreign languages, so that our students can gain the multicultural understanding necessary to be tolerant and effective leaders in today's global society.

Oneness-Family School provides an educational environment that emphasizes relevant, thought-provoking academics; dynamic, multi-faceted creative arts; and social responsibility. The results are enthusiastic learning, respect for life, and an appreciation of each student's unfolding spirit. At Oneness-Family School, we believe every student deserves to be acknowledged as a unique, growing individual. We strive to treat every student with dignity and to provide an atmosphere where everyone can feel successful. We believe this is the best way to equip them to realize their natural potential and become conscientious members of the world community.

Finally, we believe that a school can and should be like the growing child, open to change and evolution. At Oneness-Family School, we are committed to continually improving our program, expanding our knowledge, and incorporating the best new ideas into our classrooms so that we can provide the best possible holistic learning opportunities for all of our students.

CURRICULUM

Our unique curriculum is divided into three parts: Academy; Self-Discovery; and Manifestation.

Academy: Exploring the World

In Academy, we strive to make learning fun and meaningful so that students will become self-motivated learners. They study the traditional academic subjects through hands-on materials, frequent field trips, classroom presentations, and specialist instructors. While giving consideration to the students' individual learning styles and particular interests, teachers impart an understanding of how the different subjects are related to each other and applied in the real world. In a competition-free, colorful arena, each student is challenged to reach his or her own potential.

Self-Discovery: Learning About Ourselves

Self-Discovery helps students move toward greater awareness and mastery of themselves. Through the arts, athletics, lively discussions, and self-reflection they develop their imagination and individuality. Participation in these activities strengthens their self-esteem, cooperation skills, and creative courage. Self-Discovery opens their conscious minds to new experiences and to their own potential.

Manifestation: The Fruits of Learning

Manifestation is the outward expression of the students' work in Academy and Self-Discovery. Performances, field projects, classroom displays, school fairs, and outreach programs are some of the many ways they use their skills, energy, and insights. The students gain a sense of competence and achievement, and learn to see themselves as valuable contributors to the community. School-wide festivals such as United Nations Day and Festival of Lights, our winter solstice celebration, honor the different cultures and religions. In the spring, the children bring forth their appreciation of the earth at Earth Day and their studies of the physical world at the Science Fair.

And More...

Communications lessons, fitness, yoga, meditation, nature visits, and out-of-classroom activities play an important role at Oneness-Family School. Frequent field trips make use of the abundant natural and cultural resources of the Washington D.C. area. We are committed to making time for physical fitness and relaxation, as essential parts of all-around well being. Weather permitting, faculty and students are outdoors every day, taking part in non-competitive sports and athletic games or just having fun. All of the classes give daily time to centering activities such as silent reflection. (See *Director's Message on pg. 8*)



The creative arts are also integral to our approach. Students are exposed to a wide variety of creative experiences and they are encouraged to display, publish, and perform their work. Each year students present their work in a variety of media and settings, including our spring drama production featuring the students in grades 4-8. Interactions between the different age levels at the school are also an important aspect of our program. Older students learn through teaching and assisting younger children at work and in their play. The younger students benefit in their learning and in their self-esteem from the attentions of the older students.

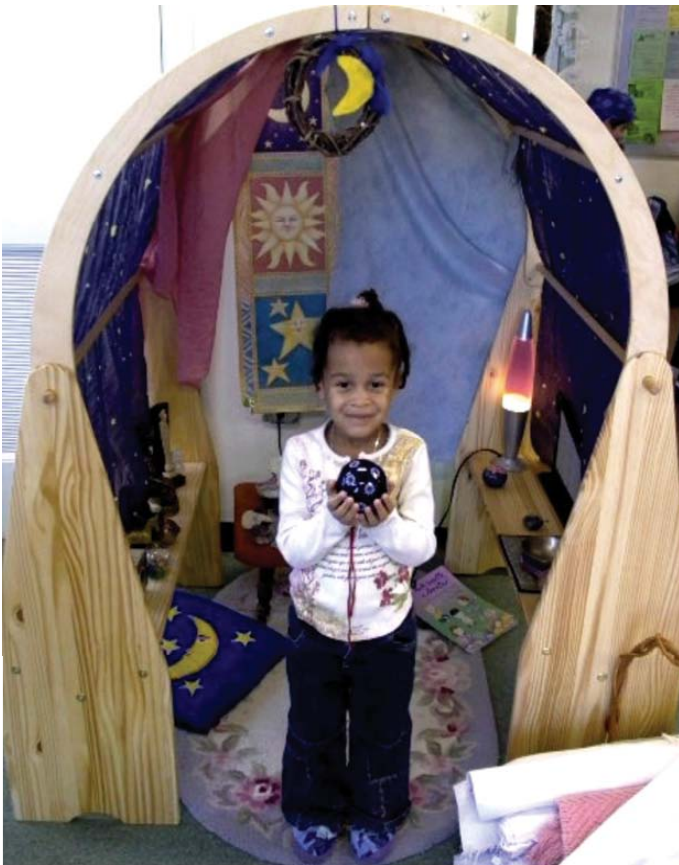
ACADEMIC TESTING

To ensure the quality of our academic program, assessment is essential. Research done in five Montessori schools in five different states shows a high positive correlation between the number of years in Montessori schools and high scores on standardized achievement tests. However, the use of standardized tests is just one way we evaluate our program and your child. We have found that this type of test is not a fully accurate measure of the strengths and qualities of each student, as these test results do not present a holistic view of the child. As such, we do not teach to the standardized test content, but follow our state approved Montessori curriculum that incorporates all of the general knowledge information covered in the standardized tests, based on a 3-year curriculum cycle. Other tools of assessment on which we rely include: teacher observations of student class work, student demonstrations of mastery through presentations and projects, ongoing evaluation of students' social-emotional development, as well as in-class quizzes and tests.

That being said, in the spring, we administer the Stanford Achievement Test to our students in grades 3-8. While individual results vary from year to year, all of the classes consistently score well above the national mean in all subject areas, receiving above average stanines (7, 8, and 9). Those students in the last year of their cycle (3rd, 6th, and 8th grade) average in the 95%. Of particular note, all of the students score above the 85% in Listening & Thinking Skills in all of the academic areas tested. At Oneness, while we do not teach to the tests, we do teach students to be conscientious, open-minded thinkers.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Virtues & Values Program



Virtues & Values, like other aspects of the Self-Discovery curriculum, are integrated into the school day and are not always a separate area of focus; indeed, many of the most powerful values lessons are to be found throughout the day -- in the midst of class lessons, projects, lunch, or recess. However, there are also times devoted to the discussion, exploration, and implementation of virtues and values. One of the most important times for this work is during each class's morning meeting. Students often bring up current events that involve ethical dilemmas. Discussion of these events can be starting points for deep philosophical discussions. Students have a chance to state their opinions, check in with peers and adults about their beliefs, hear another side of an argument to consider, and problem-solve with their community. School or class events also provide an opportunity to discuss the classroom community values, guidelines, and consequences. The balance between abstract discussion and real-life implementation gives students at Oneness-Family School a strong foundation for their own values, and an understanding of virtues to which they can aspire.

Peace & Conflict Resolution Program

Another important area of focus for our students is conflict resolution. Students learn and practice conflict resolution skills and are often asked to help mediate conflicts among students in the younger grades. They often role-play to practice appropriate behavior in challenging situations, and discuss the virtues and values displayed in movies, music and literature. Each classroom has a Peace Corner where students may choose to go to center themselves and practice the steps of conflict resolution. When a conflict arises in class, it is the students themselves who, using guidelines they have created, problem-solve and successfully deal with the conflict.



Peacekeepers, A Global Citizenship Program

In 2000, the school established a global citizenship program for students called Peacekeepers. It focuses on the twenty different areas of skill development listed below that are necessary for students to become young diplomats. We have worked to bring the Peacekeepers program to students in Montessori schools around the world.



1. Silence & Concentration
2. Imagination
3. Learning About Our Feelings
4. Virtues & Values
5. Harmony & Art
6. Pathway of Writing
7. Music
8. Affirmations
9. Fitness
10. Nature
11. Interconnectedness
12. Creativity & Problem Solving
13. Cooperation & Teamwork
14. Non-Violent Conflict Resolution
15. Partnership & Sharing
16. The World In Which We Live
17. Learning From the Past
18. Active Citizenship
19. Leadership Skills
20. Building a Just & Peaceful World

Peacekeepers began as an exploration of what might be possible if students were given more of an opportunity to effect real change. The results have been both inspiring and challenging. The students' enthusiasm is a constant source of hope and strength. At the same time, their conscious concern for the world is an ever-present reminder that we adults cannot shrink from our own responsibility as global citizens. The sky is the limit for what the Peacekeepers can achieve – now as students, and later on as adults. We look forward with anticipation toward the contributions to world progress that they will make, in small as well as perhaps big ways, and are grateful to them for the hope with which they supply us each day.

Earthkeepers, An Environmental & Ecology Program

In 2004, the school established an environmental awareness and action program for students called Earthkeepers. Designed for students in 1st-3rd grades, Earthkeepers nurtures the students' natural love and respect for the Earth. It focuses on teaching students ecology and the interconnectedness and inter-dependence of everything on the planet. Each week the students go outside to explore and interact with nature. The children develop tools for environmental responsibility, ecological understanding, and recycling awareness through team-building activities, field trips, and time for reflection, poetry and crafts.



Montessori Model United Nations Club

In 2008, the school established the Montessori Model United Nations (MMUN) Club for the 4th-8th grade students, with the guidance and support of Oneness faculty. Students learn about peaceful resolution of international issues such as poverty, the global food crisis, gender discrimination, racism, nuclear weapons, safe power generation, and trade equalization, through civility rather than discord.

The students research and study a United Nations member country and develop resolutions affecting that country. Their goal is to participate in the four-day MMUN conference that is held in New York City every spring. The Oneness MMUN delegates join other national and international student delegates for two days of committee sessions, and on the final day, each student will give a one minute speech in the U.N. General Assembly Hall.

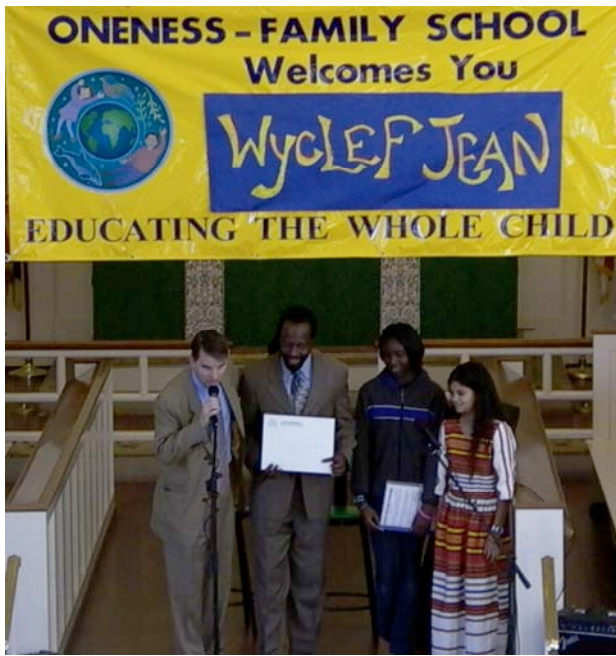
Students are empowered to be responsible for the preparation of the materials as they incorporate the MMUN objectives of research, writing, debate, negotiation, and presentation during the year, as well as during the MMUN conference. They are engaged as citizens of the world after the entire MMUN process.

MMUN engages the students on many levels – intellectually (as they research, write a paper, and debate), socially (meeting other national and international delegates), and physically (during the debate, students are encouraged to meet in small groups and move around during the conferences). MMUN philosophy is fully in line with Oneness' vision of "educating the whole child".

Community Service and World Outreach Program

Oneness-Family School participates in numerous service projects locally and internationally throughout the school year. Projects offer experiences that reflect the value that we are all part of the same family, and that what we do matters. Students work together while engaging in activities that empower them to make a positive difference by translating their feelings into action. Through hands-on projects, students gain understanding of their potential as stewards of the future.

Locally, our middle school students have worked at food banks and homeless shelters. Younger students have delivered hand-made cards to terminally ill children, visited nursing homes and raised funds for local shelters.



WYCLEF JEAN ACCEPTING OUR DONATION

Global outreach projects have included the preparation of “kid kits” to rebuild a school in Haiti that had been decimated by hurricanes. We personally presented the school’s donations to singer Wyclef Jean, nephew to Haiti's ambassador to the United States, Raymond Joseph. Since 2007, Wyclef Jean, has been the official ‘roving’ ambassador for Haiti.

In 2006, our students began working with international humanitarian organization Amman Imman: Water is Life to raise awareness about the water crisis in the Azawak region of Niger, West Africa. Oneness students made presentations at schools in Maryland and as far away as Ohio and Florida. Led by our students, over 50 Montessori schools around the world are collaborating to raise funds for a “Well of Love” that will bring water to this region. Our school community participates in the annual “A Walk for Water” alongside many students from area Montessori schools.

WHERE OUR GRADUATES GO FROM HERE

The Barrie School
 The Bullis School
 Edmund Burke School
 The Field School
 Georgetown
 Preparatory School
 The Holton-Arms School
 Landon School for Boys
 Lowell School
 Lycee Rochambeau
 (The French International School)



Maret School
 The McLean School of Maryland
 The Newport School
 The Nora School
 Sandy Spring Friends School
 Sidwell Friends School
 Stone Ridge School of the Sacred Heart
 Thornton Friends School
 Washington Waldorf School

THE LIFE AT OUR SCHOOL

Oneness-Family School is a growing community of children, families, teachers, and friends, committed to excellence in education. We have a strong family-school partnership that strives to build positive and productive relationships among all the stakeholders in our school – students, parents, teachers, and administrators. We value healthy communication between family and school and we encourage our families to be active participants in our wide variety of school activities. Parents are warmly invited to visit and experience our unique environment.

Our diverse and international school community draws from a broad socio-economic spectrum. We strive to provide financial aid to ensure that we open our doors to families who could not otherwise afford a private school education. Our parents are critical to our community and are involved in many areas of the school's life through our weekly community (all school) meetings, encouraged parent observations, volunteer councils, community special events, fundraising, and by sharing their skills, hobbies and knowledge of international cultures in the classrooms. We provide childcare during school meetings and conferences to encourage full participation.

Oeness-Family School does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, gender, physical disability, national or ethnic origin, political affiliation, or sexual orientation in admissions or employment. We are committed to the ideal of diversity with regard to race, gender, religion or creed, nationalities and sexual orientations in our student body, faculty and staff.

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE: Why We Emphasize Self-Reflection

Childhood and pre-adolescence can be a time of great disillusionment, as the world becomes more and more complex and confusing, with competing messages in the media and in students' lives. But it can also be a time of great energy and hope, if students can feel empowered by their beliefs, their understanding of themselves, and the skills they develop to create the kind of world they want to live in as adults.



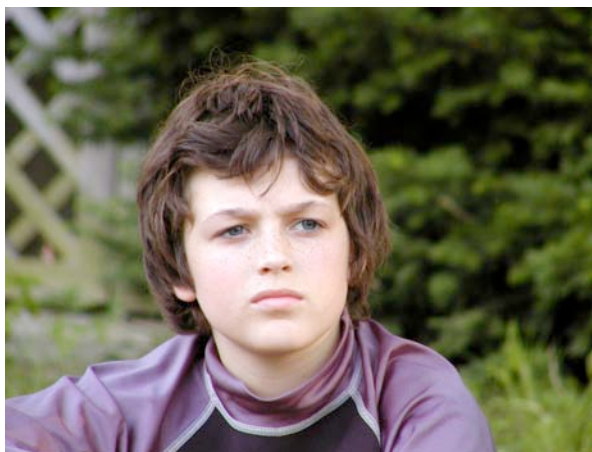
In the early years, children are gradually awakening to their deeper selves, their gifts, their potentials and the outer world. As they expand their awareness, they begin to understand the needs of others, the sacredness of life, and the ability to embrace a community consciousness.

At Oeness, circle time, the peace corner, and the sacred items are vehicles that naturally transport the students toward a place of self-reflection. During circle time, the whole class spends a moment each day "making silence". Circle time is also a place where students are encouraged to form and ask questions, to develop opinions, and to seek the opinions of others. The Peace Corner is a special space where the child can go to contemplate or appreciate a unique object related to a current or seasonal theme. The sacred items are special objects used in ceremonies and the honoring of the season. The children can touch and explore these objects, which inspire awe and help set a tone for the classroom. These tools help the child discover the power of silence, connect with a natural sense of wonder, and provide a respite from the clamor of the bustling, modern world.



As students grow, they are also transitioning into a new understanding of reality. They are much more conscious of others and the larger community. Their creativity is in full flower, and this helps them to learn about their feelings and ideas in more depth. They are often full of questions as they seek to understand the truths about life, becoming philosophers and grappling with ethical and social dilemmas. They are very concerned with what is "fair" and just. They are able to understand and explore value systems, their own and those of others.

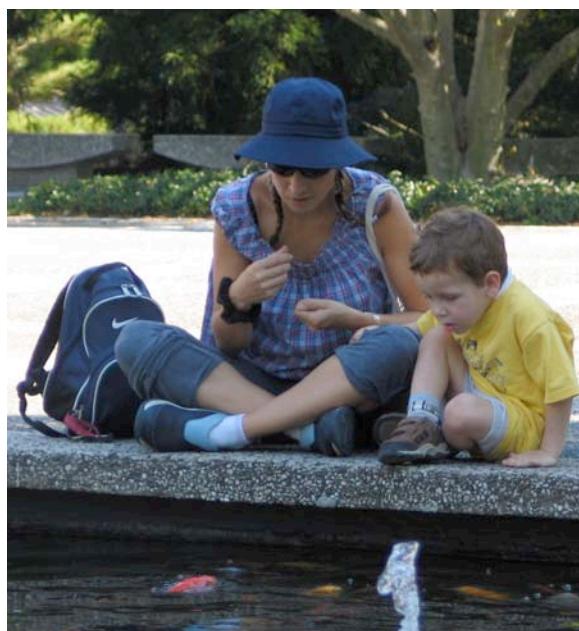
At the same time, their abstract thinking has more fully matured, allowing them to imagine what it would be like to be someone else and to develop empathy.



Children learn better when they feel good about themselves. Therefore, the curriculum includes a program that teaches self-esteem to children through cognitive restructuring and positive thinking skills. This allows the child to learn skills that help them know they are okay in spite of difficult things that happen, and empower them to be in control of their own feelings, thinking, and decision-making.

By the time the students reach pre-adolescence, morning circle time takes on new and deeper meaning for them. They are able to use the time to explore and

express their maturing belief systems and personal inner hearts. They may explore how they use the sacred space of morning circle, designing centerpieces with candles or special items and experiment with different ways to ring the chimes or bowls to get the most meaningful sounds to accompany their personal reflection time. As a class, the students discuss the basics of meditation, how it is used around the world, and its known benefits as stress management and concentration tools. The students have opportunities to try a variety of non-religious meditation techniques. During the school day, students further develop their skills in self-reflection by writing responses to guided questions in their journals. Journal questions give the students time to reflect on their own connections to current curriculum themes and to the units being studied.



Other experiences in and out of the classroom give students structured time to continue becoming more aware of their feelings, beliefs, and inner balance. Students often create art to inspire others or art objects to go on the sacred shelf in the Peace Corner. The class often chooses to listen to inspiring music to help them achieve their goals.



Nature walks or journaling time outside also help students discover more about how they fit in the world, and the interconnectedness of all things. At Oneness-Family School, these events are not separate from the academic curriculum, but serve to support and connect the learner to the learning, the student to his or her world.

Oneness-Family School Special Events Calendar 2009-2010*

Saturday, October 17	Jazz Night, 7-9pm (Annual Fund Kickoff)
Friday, October 23	United Nations Day Festival, 10am
Friday, December 18	Festival of Lights, 7pm & Holiday Bazaar
Friday, February 12	Family Dance, 7-9pm
Friday, March 19	Science Fair, 9:30am
Friday, April 23	Earth Day, 9am
Saturday, May 8	Community Spring Fundraising Event
Saturday, May 15	Global Outreach, "A Walk for Water"
Friday, June 11	Graduation 10am & Art Show/Fair 12 – 3pm

* For a complete school calendar, visit www.onenessfamilyschool.org

Our mission is to create, nurture, and sustain a learning environment encompassing social, physical, emotional, spiritual and intellectual development.

