

Winnetka District 36: Core Values

In Winnetka, we look to our past to get inspired for our future. In 1998, The Winnetka: A Community of Learners Task Force observed, “The measure of our success lies not only in what we say but in what we do. Our quest for excellence requires us to act on our beliefs. As a community we dedicate ourselves to learn together, to recognize our collective strengths and individual differences; to seek to understand and accommodate each other; and to perpetuate the traditions and practices that have been a foundation of our district.” Over the years, these traditions and practices have become core values. The core values of *Community*, *Collaboration*, *Developmental Readiness*, *Child-Centered/Child Voice*, *Whole Child/Whole Teacher*, and *Reflection* are evident in every classroom across the district.

Community

- ◆ Developing and valuing community in the classroom
- ◆ Inviting parents to be a part of our learning community
- ◆ Broadening the sense of community
- ◆ Encouraging the habit of service for the common good of the community
- ◆ Bringing community expertise into our school community
- ◆ Supporting our community of teachers as learners

Collaboration

- ◆ Sharing passions
- ◆ Working together for the good of the group
- ◆ Fostering a collaborative environment
- ◆ Recognizing that each individual has a contribution to make to the group
- ◆ Sharing the responsibility and excitement of learning

Developmental Readiness

- ◆ Designing lessons that allow for exploration and entry at different levels of understanding
- ◆ Providing an environment that allows for individual attention to learning
- ◆ Creating activities that correspond to different developmental stages
- ◆ Challenging students to apply what they have learned at their level of understanding
- ◆ Supporting children in developmentally appropriate ways to be successful learners

Child Centered/Child Voice

- ◆ Respecting the value of play in child’s learning
- ◆ Mining the creative voice in children
- ◆ Establishing a tradition for children’s voices to be heard and affirmed
- ◆ Providing opportunities for children’s work to be honored
- ◆ Fostering creativity by encouraging originality

Whole Child Whole Teacher

- ◆ Teaching strategies to cope with social/emotional issues
- ◆ Ensuring that children have a safe environment for learning
- ◆ Helping children focus on their physical well being as well as their intellectual growth
- ◆ Recognizing the importance of social growth for middle school children
- ◆ Fostering an awareness of important social/emotional issues/Giving children a forum for discussion
- ◆ Understanding that our adult community of learners needs time together outside of disciplines and roles

Reflection

- ◆ Organizing opportunities for reflection on learning and growth
- ◆ Building on the understanding of portfolio reflection on learning and growth
- ◆ Providing opportunities for students to share reflections about other students’ work
- ◆ Valuing time for children, parents, and the teacher to reflect about progress and growth
- ◆ Committing resources to encourage reflective practice for teachers
- ◆ Sharing leadership with teachers to encourage important conversations about our core values