

Island Discovery

Description

Island Discovery supports families who are interested in continuing to foster attached relationships for their children, growing those through community connections, with mentors, other children, and supportive teachers. Island Discovery supports a child-led learning philosophy with a high degree of parent and student involvement in educational planning, with guidance from a certified teacher. Learning plans are developed cooperatively, and they include flexible funding for learning materials and classes for students.

Growth Plan 2016-2017

Background and Goals

Last year we began a series of evening and afternoon meetings with parents where we analyzed each of our classroom programs, as well as our full-time homelearning program. Our goal was to track the effectiveness of each program, and more clearly communicate the structure of each of them. This is continuing this year. We want to:

- Through dialogue with parents and staff, find ways to improve the program
- Increase current parents understanding of, and appreciation of, the program
- Help parents feel more knowledgeable about what happens during class time
- Analyze the relationship between classroom learning and home learning
- Attract new families to the program, by clearly delineating how the program works

Also, through these initial meetings, we have analyzed the reasons why people leave our program. 90% of those that leave do so because of reasons outside of our control: usually it is because the family is moving, or the parent needs to work more and cannot support the child at home any longer. But there is a small percentage of families who leave because the task of homeschooling feels overwhelming. We want to find more ways to support these families, so that they stay with us. We want to do that by improving our communication about the good things that are happening, and putting more of our resources into supporting what they do at home.

Structure 2016-17

In order to meet the goal of improved communication, we will, this year:

1. Continue with our Bowen parent focus-group meetings with teachers and admin. – K-1 group, 2-4 group, 3-5 group, 6-9 group, and full-time homelearning group
2. Develop a prospectus or written overview outlining the goals and structure of each of our programs
3. Develop a brochure or newsletter about the program to give to new families
4. Have staff analyze the results of the group meetings, and develop ways we can improve the program, which includes the following (#5-7) :
5. Develop and use a new template for conferences with families – one that focuses on goals both at home and in class
6. Review the goals established during family conferences each term – ensure families see that their children are making progress, both at home and in class. Revise goals as needed.
7. Use writing samples and rubrics through the year, and share these at family conferences, in order to demonstrate student growth through the year, and to set new goals.