

# The Laurel School

## Welcome to the Laurel School 2023 – 2024 school year!

### *Our History*

The Laurel School was founded in 1982 on the ideas of a loving and respectful environment in which children would be treated with kindness and respect, and where they could learn in a variety of ways using best practices. I couldn't agree more with this sentiment. As we continue with those core values we also incorporate 21<sup>st</sup> century skills.

### **Our Approach to Learning...**

*Laurel's mission is to encourage children to discover their unique talents through exploration, critical thinking, and intellectual discipline, which help them to become responsible architects of positive change in the world. To accomplish these ends, we engage in a total human development approach to education with a focus on the arts, music, nature, and service.*

Our mission statement incorporates philosophies that best illustrate our approach to education. Our approach is one that reflects students being known, needed, cared for, and having an opportunity to shape their environment with kindness, respect, and leadership. Our philosophy matches our educational approach by looking at all elements that have an effect on a student's learning.

Our philosophy of Total Human Development (THD) reflects several factors that impact the "Whole Child": Pedagogy (teaching/instructional methods), People (whole community), Programs (what we offer), Place (environment) and Proof (outcomes). Each of these important pieces completes a picture of the 'whole child' to effectively guide students through their learning. As educators, we explore educational influences to enable us to tailor projects and curriculum to align with our mission and philosophy, helping us build an education that fits each Laurel student.

The Reggio Emilia Approach aligns well with our philosophy and mission statement. The Reggio Approach emphasizes a strong family/school community connection, as well as student process and documentation of student work. It also recognizes teachers as researchers and co-constructors of learning, discovering how children learn about the world around them. Teachers are the facilitators of a student's learning by engaging them to think critically and deeply about different topics/themes based on student interests. Our Preschool and Elementary programs provide students with the ability to create, explore, and experience learning that support their interests and facilitate learning.

Laurel's mission statement, philosophy and educational influences are seamlessly intertwined throughout our curriculum. Broad themes in teaching create flexibility for our faculty and give students the space to create. Laurel students learn how to communicate effectively and problem solve through collaboration with their teachers and peers. Our Preschool program curriculum encompasses all domains of learning and engages students in activities as they explore their interests. Our Elementary program allows students to have the opportunity to explore and learn deeply through Project Based Learning. We accomplish this while keeping connected to the Common Core Standards. We provide support for our students as they increase their knowledge with 21<sup>st</sup> century skills. I look forward to a wonderful year with all of you!

Sincerely,

*Amy E. Carroll*

Head of School

\*For more information about any of the aforementioned topics or to learn more about our curriculum, please go to "Innovative Education" on our website for more resources.

<http://www.laurelschoolcapecod.org/innovative-education.html>

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