



## **Friends School of Charlotte (FSC) Curriculum Overview:**

One way to look at the life of the school is to envision concentric circles of support and action. The broadest band represents the Board of Trustees, who holds responsibility for seeing that the mission and philosophy of the school are upheld and that the school is financially healthy enough to meet its goals. The Board accomplishes this by establishing policies and procedures for the school, hiring and supervision of the Head of School, and setting fundraising goals and programs. The Head of School fills the next ring and is accountable for the day-to-day responsibility of the school. Part of that responsibility is establishing the curriculum and making sure that it actively supports the mission and philosophy of FSC. The Head, staff, and students will be engaged in determining the type of learning that needs to take place. A community of learners and teachers make up the core of the circle, being held and supported in their daily journey along the path of learning by the overlapping circles of support and action.

Our mission states that FSC will provide an educational experience that integrates the head, the hand, and the heart, resulting in a unique balance of academic excellence and spiritual depth. FSC will not rely on one prescribed educational model to achieve this, but instead rely on the components of educational models that meet the needs of our learning community.

To reach academic excellence and ensure that students will be able to transition in and out of academic environments as needed, the school will use the NC Standard Course of Study as a roadmap of learning goals and objectives. The school will not be satisfied with a shallow surface treatment of the subject areas, but will create a learning environment where students will be encouraged to seek, dig deep, analyze, and interpret. The strong academic core will have curriculum that is experiential in terms of learning opportunities, developmental and interdisciplinary.

**Experiential education** is learning by doing and is considered to be the oldest form of educational learning. It includes learning that comes about through reflection on everyday experiences. An experiential educator's role is to organize and facilitate direct experiences that will lead to learning. This often also requires preparatory and reflective exercises. This model does not rely on giving information with the expectation that the information be repeated back. There is an element of transformation as the students internalize what the learning experience means to them.

**Interdisciplinary education** brings together multiple disciplines to create a whole learning experience. It may be in terms of a thematic unit that combines multiple

content areas like social studies, math, language arts, drama, and art. Brain research indicates that students learn better when learning is connected and relevant to their lives. Interdisciplinary education looks at the whole subject and the whole learner.

**Developmental Learning** theorists believe individuals construct their own understandings. Learning is a constructive process, and the ability to learn goes through developmental stages as an individual matures. Jean Piaget is known for his work in child development. Piaget identified four developmental stages in the way children learn. In Developmental Education, the educators plan developmentally-appropriate learning experiences based on the children's developmental milestones and needs. Montessori Method is the best known educational method that relies on Developmental Learning as its foundation.

**Multiple Intelligences** model suggests that there are at least seven ways that people perceive and understand the world: verbal-linguistic; logical-mathematical; spatial-visual; body-kinesthetic; musical-rhythmic; interpersonal; intrapersonal and naturalist. This theory calls for instructional methods that appeal to all the intelligences, including role playing, musical performance, cooperative learning, reflection, visualization, and story telling. This theory uses assessment methods that take into account the diversity of intelligences, including self-assessment tools that help students understand their own ways of learning.

The hand and heart of the school will be based in the Quaker values of simplicity, peace, integrity, community, equality, and service. The school will take an active roll in establishing a conscientiously peaceful learning environment with the inclusion of a social curriculum, a conflict resolution curriculum, peace studies, and active engagement in listening within and to others while seeking the path of peace in daily activities. The curriculum will also include opportunities for reflection upon core subject areas. Service will not be a tacked-on auxiliary activity but woven into the fabric of learning and caring. Weekly school-wide Meeting for Worship and periods of meaningful silence in individual classrooms will create stillness where a deep sense of spirit and truth can be discovered. The Quaker testimonies of equality and integrity will guide the school in its respect for and acceptance of each child within the learning community. With no creed or dogma, the individual learner is free to seek his or her own spiritual truth and have his or her faith (or nonfaith) traditions honored.

These are just a few of the educational models that FSC will use. Strong academic goals balanced with the unique Quaker values and practice will ensure the exquisite balance of academic excellence and spiritual depth to which we aspire.

## RESOURCES

### QUAKER EDUCATION

<http://www.friendscouncil.org/>

<http://www.friendsschoolofcharlotte.org/>

### NC STANDARD COURSE OF STUDY

<http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/curriculum/ncscos>

### EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION:

<http://wilderdom.com/experiential/>

<http://reviewing.co.uk/research/experiential.learning.htm>

### PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION:

<http://www.uvm.edu/~dewey/articles/proged.html>

### INTERDISCIPLINARY EDUCATION:

<http://www.is.wayne.edu/mnissani/PAGEPUB/SMOOTHIE.htm>

<http://www.pen.k12.va.us/VDOE/newvdoe/curriculum-models.html>

<http://www.infed.org/thinkers/gardner.htm>

### PIAGET:

[http://teachvu.vu.msu.edu/public/designers/what\\_is\\_learning/index.php?page\\_num=3](http://teachvu.vu.msu.edu/public/designers/what_is_learning/index.php?page_num=3)

<http://www.funderstanding.com/piaget.cfm>

<http://www.childdevelopmentinfo.com/development/piaget.shtml>