

# BLUE SKY THINKING

A conceptual framework for understanding The Circle School



Personal fulfillment



Engagement in society

## PURPOSES OF EDUCATION

Education is about perfecting self and society. Across time and cultures, scholars and thinkers have said so in many ways. The Circle School agrees, stating its ideal this way: “Children and youth practice *personal fulfillment* and *engagement in society*...” (from Ends We Seek).



Respect for self-determination



Trust in an inborn tendency to self-actualize

## IDEALS IN SCHOOLING

There is broad agreement about *purposes* of education, but not so for *values* or *ideals* to be reflected in the schooling of children and teenagers. Although the ideals of respect and trust are not themselves unusual, The Circle School is unusual in building its program around them. The school strives to respect both personal and collective *self-determination*. The *tendency to self-actualize* has also been called “nature’s imperative to seek infinity” and “the subtle compulsion of the incomplete.”



## SCHOOL PROGRAM

Education’s *purposes* are about perfecting self and society. The Circle School’s *ideals* include respect for self-determination and trust in the inborn impulse to grow. To achieve these purposes in a program aiming for these ideals, The Circle School applies the metaphor of *practicing life* in a scaled-down version of the larger world. “Self in society” is the natural human condition. The Circle School’s program immerses students in it from an early age.

## SECONDARY IDEALS

These are secondary not because they are less important, but because to a large degree they follow from primary ideals. Look for them in The Circle School's program.



### Self-satisfying expression in all directions and dimensions

In mind, body, society, and culture; along multiple lines of intelligence; through all waves of development



### Openings to higher orders of development

No upper limits on development, where the impulse to grow will go; bottom-up structure comes with no ceiling



### Self-organizing community

Groupings based on interest and attraction, not age, make for expanded opportunities and accelerated growth

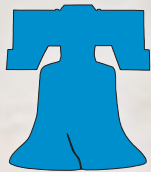


### Social structures for co-existence

Balance differing needs and aspirations; widely differing worldviews in different waves or levels of development

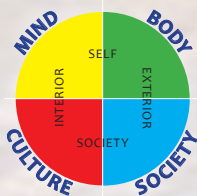
## DAILY PRACTICES

Much of what you see in the daily program falls into one of two categories of practices. Both are direct expressions of ideals.



### Freedom & responsibility

Endowed at birth with inalienable rights, students here enjoy life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness. 4-year-olds to adults, all share responsibility for safety, order, and public governance.



### All-quadrant opportunity

With neither status nor stigma, pursue at The Circle School safe, legal endeavors in any field: academics, athletics, government, arts. Know yourself, nature, the public sphere, and human fellowship. No quadrant left behind.