Rainbow Community School, Asheville, NC

Rainbow Community School is a private school serving about 200 students, preschool through eighth grade in Asheville, North Carolina.

Note about Asheville: The Asheville area is thought by many to be a “special” place. Even the people who live and work there don’t seem to understand why the area fosters so much creativity, innovation, culture, and spirituality. Some suggest that it’s a combination of climate, thick forests, and geological formations. It is certainly a visually stunning area, particularly in the fall when the Smoky Mountains put on their annual show.
Not only does the city support multiple cultural events, but Asheville has established a food culture based on local foods and unique experiences. “Foodtopia is what we call our food scene in Asheville, N.C., home to a community of culinary collaborators crafting an experience to nurture your soul. We believe every meal is a celebration. A revelation. And a transcendent experience. And we’re on a pursuit to bring the most unique and memorable food and drink experiences to you.”

There is also a "Self-Organized Learning Environment" (described by Sugata Mitra) in the Asheville area. See http://blackmountainsole.org/

The residents are justifiably proud of nearby Black Mountain College--an experimental school founded in the middle of the twentieth century out of a desire to create a new type of college based on John Dewey’s principles of progressive education. It was founded on the ideas of balancing academics, arts, and manual labor within a democratic, communal society to create "complete" people. The environment proved to be one of the most important settings for twentieth-century artists in their quest to revolutionize modern art.

- Black Mountain College was the first American experimental college boasting complete democratic self-rule, extensive work in the creative arts, and interdisciplinary academic study.
- In the 1940s, guest lecturers included William Carlos Williams and Albert Einstein, both of whom became members of the board.
- In 1948, Buckminster Fuller, who taught at Black Mountain College, build the first geodesic dome with his students.
- First multimedia happening occurred at Black Mountain College in 1952, staged by composer John Cage.

**History:** Rainbow Community School is an impressive example of the holistic thinking common in the Asheville area.

In the autumn of 1977, Dr. Aostre Johnson, graduate of the Harvard Graduate School of Education, along with two other women with higher degrees in education, started Rainbow Mountain as a school that offered a truly child-centered education. Not only were these women brilliant and innovative, but they were also deeply spiritual Sufis, believing in universal peace and acceptance of all spiritual traditions.

Their motto was “excellence in educating the young child.” The founders built a unique educational program based on the development of the whole child in five domains:
- Mental development of the skills and knowledge that are useful to the student as a lifelong learner
- Emotional development to assist the child in understanding and communicating in the world of feelings
- Moral/social development supporting ecological thinking about the connections between all creation
- Physical development and the care and respect of the physical body
- Spiritual development supporting the child’s recognition and communication of his or her own truth

Rainbow Mountain Children’s School, as it was originally called, started with 15 families and rented rooms in historic Biltmore Village. The new school was well received by the Asheville professional community and soon was considered an educational leader in the area.

In 1986, the school acquired its current site at Haywood Road, earning an award for rescuing the historic building in vibrant West Asheville.

Over the next two decades, Rainbow grew to include middle school. It revitalized and clarified its identity after involving the entire school community in an in-depth self-evaluation process.

In 2007, Rainbow welcomed its current director, Renee Owen. She previously founded and led a charter school in rural Colorado. Under her leadership, Paradox Valley School received national recognition for its excellence in arts and in closing the achievement gap. Renee brings to Rainbow an innovative service-learning model developed with funding from the Annenberg Rural Challenge, evaluated by Harvard.

Renee began her tenure at Rainbow by leading the faculty in mapping and enhancing the curricular scope and sequence in all subjects from kindergarten through eighth grade. She helped facilitate the school’s transition to the systems-based Dynamic Governance model, which transformed Rainbow into the clearly-defined innovative model of education it is today. She also has made significant improvements in teacher salaries and professional development opportunities to ensure Rainbow attracts and retains the most talented holistic educators.
Renee’s early focus was creating cohesion in the academic rigor of Rainbow’s program so that Rainbow graduates would be widely known as outstanding scholars. With that secured, the community engaged in a spiritual rebirth of the school and a two year vision quest, which resulted in the most recent mission statement and principles. The original five domains grew to seven domains, with the addition of the Creative Domain and the Natural Domain. The name of the school was changed slightly to Rainbow Community School.

Renee’s recent focus has been on capital development. The school raised $600,000 and doubled the size of the campus by purchasing three additional acres with several buildings. A former church was converted into a fantastic performance center. The building also provided 5,000 square feet of new classroom space. The latest strategic plan contains a vision to convert part of the new land into permaculture gardens, to share Rainbow’s facilities with the West Asheville community as an act of service, and to share our educational model with the greater educational community around the world!

**What Makes Rainbow Special?**

[https://youtu.be/HdmKndjbfX4](https://youtu.be/HdmKndjbfX4)

This video is a good introduction to Rainbow, although you may be surprised at all the talk about academics, rigor, ‘being taught,’ and other jargon that might imply that this is not a “learner-centered” school. Unlike "free schools," which claim to be the ultimate self-directed, learner-centered type of education, Rainbow's students are separated into grades and there is an overall "curriculum." Some aspects of the holistic approach show in the video, but it also demonstrates that many of things that students and parents have come to believe are a necessary part of school can be done in a much more student-centered way. Is it the most self-directed model of learning? No, but because it is truly holistic and child-centered, the students feel valued and respected as individuals. And that is clearly one of the major factors in creating an environment of joyful learning. Rainbow demonstrates that there's no need to "throw the baby out with the bathwater" in order to create a true learner-centered school, focused on facilitating the growth of lifelong learners!
Mission Statement: We develop accomplished, confident, and creative learners who are prepared to be leaders in building a compassionate and environmentally sustainable world.

Our Method: We provide an engaging, nurturing learning environment to educate the whole child using the seven domains.

What is Holistic Education?

Holistic Education subscribes to the philosophy that the learning experience is a comprehensive integration, not only of traditional academic subjects, but of the many facets that comprise a human being. Humans are . . . multi-faceted creatures with a range of complex emotions, deep connections to the natural world, seekers of the mystery, with an innate need to create, to share, to understand, and to be understood. Holistic Education seeks to enrich the “whole” learner.

As a first step, Rainbow has defined those individual facets, much in the way that a prism defines white light into seven bands of color. At Rainbow Community School (RCS), the student is viewed holistically through Seven Domains: spiritual, mental, social, emotional, creative, natural, and physical. The purpose of this education model is to develop the whole learner into a healthy, intelligent, compassionate, creative, and productive human who is capable of leading an empowered and enriched life.
The principles on which RCS is based include:

1. **Holistic Learning** Each child is unique and learns differently. The child is a whole human being; therefore, a complete education develops the child in all seven domains: spiritual, mental, social, natural, emotional, creative, and physical.

2. **Harmonious Learning Environment** Children learn best in an environment that is physically and emotionally safe. Love and respect underlie each teacher’s approach to skillful classroom management. The more students are engaged and on-task, the more they learn: We provide a secure learning environment by giving students the daily structure they need to feel grounded, with the flexibility to drive inspiration.

3. **Creativity and Critical Thinking** Immersion in the arts expands the soul. Developing imagination also builds critical thinking skills. Critical thinking is the foundation for building the future. Therefore, there is time for students to build hypotheses, observe, and evaluate fosters curiosity and problem-solving. Children learn decision-making and leadership skills by exercising a voice in the classroom.

4. **The Natural World and Sustainability** Through understanding nature, we understand ourselves. Therefore, the learning environment extends into the natural world and into the greater community, and children spend as much time outside as possible. Children who have a relationship with nature will take care of it.

5. **Authentic Learning** The curriculum, based on thematic interdisciplinary learning, creates relevant connections for students. We inspire and empower through discovery, using experiential learning, inquiry learning, and real-world opportunities. In order to build confidence, students take risks and meet increasingly difficult challenges. Learning from failure teaches problem-solving and perseverance.

6. **Research and Innovation** Our pedagogy adapts and evolves according to the current, applicable research and our own rich experience and innovation. We are free to borrow best-practices from great learning models such as Waldorf, Montessori, and others, to create a hybrid model that adapts to contemporary needs, brain research, and practicality.

7. **A Balanced Approach to Learning and Assessment** Fostering a love of learning is the key to creating motivated learners. Our curriculum is designed to introduce skills at key developmental windows (while allowing flexibility for differences among individual children) and inspiring children to challenge themselves. Students are assessed using multi-faceted methods to create a well-rounded understanding of both the level each child is at and what type of learner each is.

8. **Contemplation, Compassion, and Service** Contemplative methods support all aspects of development. Morning centering is a key time of day to help students focus and grow their inner life. We explore the world’s religious traditions for spiritual insight, as we develop a higher consciousness. We build character and compassion through service to the larger community. The development of values is the most important lesson.
9. Meaningful Relationships The relationship between the teacher and the student is the heart of education. Collaboration between students fosters ideas and social skills. Students become adept communicators. A parent is a child’s first teacher, and we will honor you and communicate with you as such while supporting your growth as a parent.


11. Community and Individuality A strong community is diverse, supportive, and cooperative. Within our strong community, each child is treated as an individual. Their unique interests, talents, and learning styles are nurtured. Social and emotional learning builds competent world citizens.

12. Gifted Teachers The most important component to our program is gifted teachers. Our teachers are trained in the best conventional practices (most with a Master's Degree in Education) and alternative, holistic practices, in order to provide a balanced approach to teaching. Educators must be excellent role models and passionate about life. Education is a sacred calling: Our goal is to make a positive difference in the life of your child, our community, and beyond.

What about Academics?

Traditional educational models rely heavily on standardized testing and rote memorization, often dampening children’s natural love for learning. Rainbow’s child-centered curriculum is designed to inspire curiosity through experiential thematic units of study. They use assessment rubrics and goal setting to encourage children to reflect on and take responsibility for shaping their own educational journey.

Rainbow’s integrated program covers:

- Language arts
- Mathematics
- Social studies
- Science
- Spanish
- Music (check out this video to see why music is much more than just an "elective")
- Art
- Peace studies
- Service learning
- Computer literacy
- Physical education
- Character development
- Environmental education
- Global Initiatives
Primary and middle school students receive regular Spanish language, art, music and physical education enrichment with specialized instructors. Equally important, these creative forms of expression and learning are incorporated in the classroom with our project-based curriculum. This multifaceted approach engages children in the learning process and makes the journey fun and relevant.

**How are the Seven Domains integrated into the RCS Curriculum?**

The RCS school day does not follow the traditional schedule of 50 minute class periods. Rather, large instructional blocks that integrate the Seven Domains are implemented. While some lessons highlight one domain more than the others, several of the domains are often integrated simultaneously into a lesson. For example, a Math class will primarily focus on the Mental Domain. However, students may be practicing Math facts through kinesthetic learning games which utilize the Physical Domain. Students may also ponder the deeper meaning of infinite numbers through the lens of the Spiritual Domain, or they may demonstrate how a Math concept, such as the Fibonacci Sequence, is found throughout the Natural Domain, thus making the concept more memorable and relevant. Students who are skilled in the Social Domain are proactive in asking questions and are adept in working in groups on math-oriented inquiry projects.

Learners are often drawn to one or two particular domains in which they have a natural proclivity or talent. When a student is nourished in the particular domain they resonate with, their success often builds confidence and enhances growth in the other domains. Reciprocally, the holistic approach allows for learners to explore domains that may be challenging, but in a way that utilizes the strengths they have in other domains. This method is an intimate and nuanced approach, where the teacher will adjust instruction and the learning environment based upon the individual needs and innate talents of the students. Students are encouraged to participate in this process, further bolstering the synergy of the unique learner and the interactive, perceptive teacher.

The next several pages expand on how RCS is committed to the Seven Domains. To see the original, go to:

http://rainbowcommunityschool.org/about/seven-domains/
Seven Domains Defined

Physical Domain

*Embody*es kinesthetic awareness, fitness, holistic health & nutrition and positive body image. 
*Expressed* through movement, dance, physical education, sports and tactile activities.
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<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Embodies</th>
<th>Expressed</th>
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<tr>
<td>Natural</td>
<td>awareness, appreciation, stewardship, classification and communion</td>
<td>through time in nature, caring for the environment, gardening &amp; animal</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>with the natural world.</td>
<td>husbandry, observation, inquiry and discovery.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>interpersonal communication, character development, social responsibility</td>
<td>through dynamic governance, peer relations, community celebrations, and</td>
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<td></td>
<td>and community organization.</td>
<td>collaborative learning experiences.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emotional</td>
<td>intrapersonal awareness, self-regulation, self-esteem, communication of</td>
<td>through reflective exercises, open dialogue, conflict resolution and the</td>
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<td></td>
<td>emotions and empathy.</td>
<td>arts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Creative</td>
<td>the visual &amp; performing arts, design, aesthetic awareness, imagination</td>
<td>through drawing, painting, dance, music, theater, sculpture, poetry,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>and innovative problem solving.</td>
<td>creative writing, storytelling, fine-art appreciation and play.</td>
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</table>
Mental Domain

*Embodies* reason, mathematics, linguistics, academia, learning strategies and life skills.

*Expressed* through logic, engineering & technology, puzzles & strategy games, experimenting & questioning, reading, writing and research.

Spiritual Domain

*Embodies* celebration & ritual, world religions & traditions, spiritual virtues, myth & story, mystery & contemplation and communion with the natural world.

*Expressed* through personal beliefs, myth making, ceremony, religious studies, states of grace & jubilation, the ‘big’ questions and contemplative practices (ie; meditation, yoga, tai qi, blessing ways).

Domain Profiles for Student Learners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Domain</th>
<th>Thinks</th>
<th>Loves</th>
<th>Learning Needs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>in movements and through somatic sensations</td>
<td>moving, touching, running, jumping, dancing, building, and creating</td>
<td>physical games, movement, hands on experiences, and opportunities to build create</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural</td>
<td>through the senses and through connection with nature</td>
<td>being outside, observing, exploring and studying nature, caring for living things</td>
<td>time in the outdoors, materials from nature</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>through collaborative communication and action</td>
<td>having friends, talking to people, social events, joining groups, leading and organizing people</td>
<td>social learning opportunities—partner, small group and/or large group</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emotional</td>
<td>with their heart and deeply inside themselves</td>
<td>reflecting on and talking about feelings, sympathizing and listening to others</td>
<td>ritual and routine, centering, class meetings, and conflict resolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative</td>
<td>in images, visuals, rhythms and melodies</td>
<td>the arts-drawing, designing, sculpting, creating, singing, music, playing an instrument, dancing, acting, role-playing</td>
<td>inspiration, time, space and supplies/materials to create</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Domain Personas</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Although we seek to foster a well-rounded individual, many people are naturally inclined towards one or two particular Domains, witnessing and engaging the world through their own unique lens.</td>
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The concept of the Domains is versatile and can be used not only for educational purposes, but as understandings of personality archetypes, much akin to Jungian archetypes or Rudolph Steiner’s 4 temperaments.

Each Domain persona *perceives* and *communicates* uniquely. Each persona is also presented with innate challenges. In understanding and respecting these differences, we can gain greater empathy towards others, form a stronger community and manage healthier dialogues. We can, as well, better understand and address the needs of our students.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Perception</th>
<th>Communication</th>
<th>Challenges</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>Intakes information through kinesthetic engagement. Perceives self as a physical being. Experiential learner.</td>
<td>Interacts through physical engagement (<em>dance, sport, physical play, acting, etc</em>). &quot;Doing more than Thinking.&quot; Action orientated</td>
<td>Needs to be engaged in body. May be difficult to be in structured academic situations. Must occupy body to be free of mind.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>Focuses upon connections &amp; bonds. Filters the world through a series of interactions / reactions.</td>
<td>Adept at interpreting social cues &amp; Flexible interaction styles allow for a more varied &amp; authentic interaction among</td>
<td>Needs confidence to be comfortable. Needs to ‘fit in’ &amp; has a hard time finding their own voice. Being alone.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reflections of experience often focus upon interpersonal interactions.</td>
<td>a wider &amp; more varied populations. Gregarious, affable &amp; engaged communicators.</td>
<td>Can manipulate or be manipulated, as they are so engaged in social dynamics. May lack empathy for those who are not as socially fluid as themselves.</td>
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<td><strong>Emotional</strong></td>
<td>Empathetic observers. Keenly aware of the ‘energies’ of their environment &amp; the moods of others. Intuitive. Compassionate. Sensitive to intrapersonal forces.</td>
<td>Seeks to communicate with authenticity &amp; validity. Active listener. Wishes to understand &amp; reflect the many variables &amp; perspectives that may be present. Overdependence. May need validation &amp; approval. May be overly sensitive / ‘moody’. Leadership can be difficult.</td>
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<td><strong>Creative</strong></td>
<td>Perceives aesthetics: composition, beauty, form, artistry &amp; arrangement. Curious &amp; passionate. Immersive in their art. Learns through process.</td>
<td>Utilizes a multitude of mediums to share ideas. Process orientated. Communicate abstract ideas or emotions through artistic expression. Seeks to be evocative &amp; engaging. Can be seen as aloof or confusing. Can be ungrounded. Difficult to work within a structure.</td>
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### Instructional Integration

The Seven Domains is an all-inclusive approach that nurtures the highest growth potential of each child that attends RCS. The Seven Domains underlie all teaching and the curriculum. RCS uses robust tools and strategies for effective instructional integration of this holistic approach. Some of the ways the Seven Domains are incorporated into our education model are described below. NOTE: the Appendices referenced in this section can be found here.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mental</th>
<th>Unfocused discourse will challenge. Communication style can be intimidating. May be rigid in their thoughts &amp; need concrete proof. Not open to “fantasy” or other such esoteric explorations.</th>
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<td>what is the goal?</td>
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<td>What are the</td>
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<td>steps to achieve</td>
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<td>utilizes formulaic methods.</td>
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<td>Intuitive</td>
<td>Being grounded. Structure. The hubbub of modernity &amp; social norms. Can be seen as aloof.</td>
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<td>Seeker</td>
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<td>Asks the “big”</td>
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<td>Linguistic.</td>
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**Mental**

- Seeks purpose: what is the goal?
- What are the steps to achieve this goal?
- Prioritizes & analyzes.
- Organizes information through structure & order.
- Synthesizes tangible connections & utilizes formulaic methods.

**Spiritual**

- Intuitive Seeker
- Asks the “big” questions.
- Seeks the mysteries & the esoteric.
- Questions often.
- Contemplative.

- Metaphor, myth & story all used to communicate.
- Non-verbal.
- Presence orientated.
- Being grounded.
- Structure.
- The hubbub of modernity & social norms.
- Can be seen as aloof.
Unit planning guide Cultivating a holistic learning environment takes intentional planning. Our teachers and/or teaching teams use long term unit plans and short term lesson plan frameworks (See Appendix A & B). These frameworks encourage thinking and planning through the Seven Domains while also inviting cross-curricular integration.

Teacher Observation Forms RCS teachers strive to develop strong holistic teaching techniques. In an effort to support the growth and development of holistic teachers, mentor teachers and administrators observe and evaluate teachers using a Seven Domains Observation Form (See Appendix C).

Student Narrative Evaluations/ Progress Reports RCS takes a balanced approach to assessment. Students are assessed using multi-faceted methods to create a well-rounded understanding of both the level of each child and the type of learner each is. The information that is collected using a robust set of assessments is integrated into student narrative evaluations/ progress reports (See Appendix D). These narratives are completed each trimester and are structured in a way that the classroom teacher reports on student growth and development in all Seven Domains.

Personal Domain Reflections As students become aware of the Seven Domains and their place within the RCS educational model, they begin to reflect on their own learning styles. These self-reflections vary in complexity across grades but all indicate the Domains with which the student most resonates and the Domains by which they may be most challenged. They are shared at Student Led Conferences (See Appendix E for a grade three example and Appendix F for grade eight example).

Domain Days A Domain Day is an opportunity for students to gather together in groups based upon a specific elected Domain and to spend the entirety of the Day engulfed in the experience of that Domain. Domain Days give an opportunity for children to be immersed in an educational experience relating to a Domain to which they are innately attracted. As well, since the ages will be blended, it is an opportunity for students to interact in an educational setting with peers they may not generally mingle with due to the natural age boundaries of each class.

February, 2016 News: Rainbow director Renee Owen is always looking for ways to assess and improve their program. Recently, she had students from three levels at Rainbow (5th, 7th, and 8th) take a Lectica test. Lectica creates developmental assessments, called Disco Tests, based on levels of developmental growth in various concepts. They are open ended tests that require students to write and support their answers to complex problems. The tests taken by the Rainbow students focus on
students' theories of knowledge. The teasers present what is known as an ill-structured dilemma—a dilemma with no correct answer. Through their responses to a series of prompts, students reveal how they think about inquiry, evidence, learning & the mind, truth & certainty, conflict resolution, persuasion, and deliberation. These tests are still in development, but are currently being tested.

Renee received the following email from Professor Theo Dawson, who is the mastermind behind the Lectica assessments.

*I've been checking out your students' RFJs today and I think they may well be the most impressive results we've ever seen. It's making my heart sing!*

Although the success of Rainbow's holistic approach in facilitating the development of “accomplished, confident, and creative learners who are prepared to be leaders in building a compassionate and environmentally sustainable world” is obvious to the casual observer, results on test such as Lectica will hopefully contribute to the proof of concept and hasten the adoption of learner-centered holistic education in the public domain.

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**Experiencing RCS**

In all the grades, the day starts with centering. If you watched the video, you saw several examples. I joined a 7th grade class for this experience. The teacher had written the following Henry David Thoreau quotation on the board.

*Could a greater miracle take place than for us to look through each other's eyes for an instant?*
The students were seated in a circle on small round meditation cushions—these are found in each classroom. A candle and a few natural materials were in the center of the circle, along with a small chime. The teacher began by asking one of the students to open the circle by lighting the candle and striking the chime. He then asked students to think about what it might be like to see through someone else’s eyes. He divided the circle into four segments using a small painted medicine wheel. He then assigned each segment a season of the year—spring, summer, fall, winter—and combined that with a single image—a glass of ice water. We then went around the circle and each student described what they were seeing. Needless to say, they were all different.

Then he asked each segment to try to see from the point of view of a different age—a five year old, a teen-ager, a 40 year old, and a "senior." The visual cue in this case was a trampoline! Many of the students apparently had trampolines in their yards. One could see that the 40 year old and senior segments were echoing their experience of what their parents or grandparents might think about it—be careful, it's too dangerous, etc.

This took about 30 minutes and at the end, the teacher asked the students what insights they had gotten from the activity. As one might predict, they had come to the realization that just because people are looking at the same thing, they don't perceive it in the same way. It was clear from what they said that they had recognized the "message" of the quotation. They also discussed the dangers of stereotyping when I revealed my age and told them I had a mini-trampoline in my basement!

Sometimes the students lead the centering . . . beginning at about grade 4. In some classes, the teacher leads the centering 2 days a week and the students the other 3, so again, the students "learn by doing."

I also visited an "Omega" (7th and 8th grade mixed class) for a math lesson. They had previously been introduced to the concept of statistics and the different ways in which data can be represented numerically and graphically but without a lot of "definitions and examples." Here is how that became project-based, interdisciplinary, and appropriate for different learning styles (visual, verbal, auditory, kinesthetic, etc.)
The teacher gave each student one sheet of paper and a drinking straw. (They also had scissors and tape). She gave them 5 minutes to create a rocket/airplane that they would launch by blowing through the straw. The object was to create a vehicle that would travel the farthest. Designs ranged from vehicles with wings made form the entire sheet of paper, to tiny rocket-shaped vehicles that barely fit over the end of the straw. After five minutes, the teacher stretched a metal measuring tape (calibrated in centimeters) across the room. Students took turns standing at one end of the tape and launching their vehicle by blowing through the straw. All students recorded the distance for each vehicle, and the vehicles were left where they fell. When they finished, the distribution of the vehicles predictably showed data that would produce a bell curve—a few that went very far, most that fell somewhere in the middle, and a few that barely left the launcher.

But they weren't finished. Next, the teacher asked students to think about how they would improve their vehicle for the next launch (reflection!). Several students described what they would do differently, and then they started again with a new sheet of paper and straw. They repeated this three times, each time recording the distances for all the vehicles in that round.

What is the benefit of this activity? Rather than use a table of data in a math book, the students had generated their own data. This gave them a sense of where data actually comes from! They had three sets of data that they could then represent in a variety of mathematical ways—mean, median, mode, scattergram, histogram, box and whisker plot, etc. And because they knew what the data actually represented, they could more easily see how each of these statistical tools gave them slightly different information. Not to mention that they had also learned a lot about science in designing their vehicles, even though this was "math" class.

Contrast this with a teacher standing at the front of the room "defining" and "giving examples" of each type of statistical measure. Which method would produce the greatest
"learning?" And not to be ignored, which is more fun? In which activity might students choose to engage if given a choice?

**Campus and Facilities** [http://rainbowcommunityschool.org/about/welcome-to-the-campus/](http://rainbowcommunityschool.org/about/welcome-to-the-campus/)

Named a North Carolina Green School. See also: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=swh3zZwzFuU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=swh3zZwzFuU)

You will need to stop the video on each page to get the full effect.

There is so much more to admire at Rainbow. Here are just a few of the links to follow if you want to learn more about the school.

**Awards and Recognition**
[http://rainbowcommunityschool.org/about/awards-honors/](http://rainbowcommunityschool.org/about/awards-honors/)

**Grade Overviews**
Does a good job of explaining how play-based learning works

Bridge between preschool and “academic” work

[http://rainbowcommunityschool.org/educational-programs/elementary-overview/](http://rainbowcommunityschool.org/educational-programs/elementary-overview/)
Scrolling through this page gives you a true sense of how ‘different’ Rainbow is.

**Faculty:** (note the number of male role models)
http://rainbowcommunityschool.org/about/our-staff/

**Articles:**
4 part series on educating for innovation:
http://rainbowcommunityschool.org/2014/03/31/educating-the-innovation-generation-2/

How do they do on assessments?

Great article on "Truth" from Heart of the Matter—a publication by Renee Owen.

Article about "heart-centered" education

Article explaining the "spiritual domain"

**Positive Approach to Discipline**

In the classroom and throughout the school, we employ the principles of Positive Discipline developed by Jane Nelson, Ed.D. This approach draws from the exceptional theories of Alfred Adler and Rudolf Driekurs, who believed that all people, even children, should be treated with dignity and respect.

Positive Discipline teaches important social and life skills in a manner that is respectful to both adults and children. According to this approach, a misbehaving child is a discouraged child; encouragement is used as the basic motivator rather than blame or shame. Positive Discipline builds genuine self-esteem and empowers children by teaching self-control and responsibility.
OMEGA HONOR CODE

As an Omegan, I will be:
Centered and in my highest integrity while on campus or on school related activities
Punctual with arrival, transitions and submission of all assignments
Respectful of all community property and members including elders, peers and especially younger students
Honest about all school related business
Responsible for my words and actions
Prepared with all assignments at the highest quality possible
Helpful to others at all times
Brave and take risks to grow

As an Omegan I will refrain from:
Cheating - any practice, method, or assistance, whether explicitly forbidden or unmentioned, that involves any degree of dishonesty, fraud, or deceit
Plagiarism - representing another's ideas or words as one's own
Stealing - the intentional taking of any property without right or permission
Lying - intentional misrepresentation of any form about school business

“On my honor, I will be centered, punctual, respectful, honest, responsible, prepared, helpful, and brave. As an Omegan, I will refrain from cheating, plagiarism, stealing, and lying.”

2015-2016 Rainbow Community School Tuition

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A few other photos

Third Grade food drive

Hands-on experiential learning
Rainbow Kids clean up a local river park.

6th graders create business plans for a new product.
Need no captions