



THE SIX GUIDING PRINCIPLES MANZANITA SCHOOL

INTRINSIC GIFT

*Inherent Genius * Skill and Knowledge Building * Cultivate Identity*

At Manzanita, we teach toward something that is coming out of our youth, rather than something we must feed into the youth. This is a different educational paradigm because it is no longer our agenda, but a belief that each young person has an agenda already, waiting to be discovered and nurtured by mentors. We structure our curriculum to call forth that individual genius that seeks its first clear expression during adolescence. We then support our students in building the skills and capacities they need to develop this unique gift in the world.

MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS

*Personal Connection * Active Listening * Strategic Questioning*

One of the gifts of age is the capacity to mentor a younger person. This is done by leveraging relationship to inspire another's growth. When we know someone well and call out their gifts, we help to awaken their deep inner greatness. Adolescents need ongoing mentoring to germinate the seed of their genius. For millennia, elders were the mentors of youth, and all generations benefited from this. At Manzanita, we train our teachers to serve as mentors. In the context of strong personal connections, we use the ancient arts of observation, questioning, and follow-up to inspire emotional and cognitive development in youth.

SYMBIOTIC EDUCATION

*Big-picture Understanding * Interdependence of Knowledge * Natural Cycles of Learning*

Individual facts and isolated ideas cannot grow a young person's understanding of the world. At Manzanita, our instructional content emphasizes big picture ideas and broad sweeps of history and time. Cultural events or scientific facts are framed in a larger context so that students can experience the links between disciplines, and find personal relevance in their studies. By witnessing the interconnected world of animals, plants, winds, rains, and soils, students find their own imbedded place in nature. This feeling of belonging to a living earth awakens a tremendous capacity to grow and learn. Connected experiences spark emotional engagement. This awakened attention drives passionate and committed learning.

COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY

*Personal Efficacy * Commitment to Service * Global Understanding*

Most people seek to be of service, to make a positive contribution. This natural calling awakens very strongly in adolescence. At Manzanita, we describe a world in transition, yet with a flowering of great hope and possibility. Through our curriculum blending science, humanities, and art, we reveal a human story of promise and healing. This story invites each young person to answer the core questions of: (1) where have I come from; (2) who am I, and (3) where am I going? As students form a strong personal narrative through their years of study with us, they help to grow a shared narrative for our world that is hopeful and transformative, and they position themselves well to contribute to a positive future for everyone.

INTERPERSONAL COMPETENCE

*Emotional Intelligence (EQ) * Empathy * Conflict Resolution*

One of the great predictors of a successful and fulfilling life is the capacity to know how our actions will be perceived, and how others will respond and react to our choices. At Manzanita, we develop strong empathetic skills in adolescents. We encourage a reflective understanding of our emotional lives, and teach youth how to approach and resolve conflicts non-violently and effectively. We highly value interpersonal skills and competencies, and build them into our school culture.

RIGOROUS EFFORT

*Physical Work * Emotional Resilience * Cognitive Engagement*

We want our young people to grow into adults who can forge ahead in life, even when things get difficult. Whether challenged physically, emotionally, or intellectually, adolescents should be able to endure with focus and commitment. At Manzanita, students engage in regular physical work such as building trails and maintaining the campus. They face emotional obstacles with clarity, competence, and a set of conflict-resolution skills taught by mentors. Intellectually, they become articulate speakers, forceful writers, and rigorous problem solvers. Creative and artistic pursuits, and the intuitions these build, will inform students' physical, emotional, and intellectual engagement.