



Green Acres School

An intentional model of progressive education

Research Informs Practice At Green Acres: A Few Sources Which Inspire Our Thinking

Affirming Diversity: The Sociopolitical Context of Multicultural Education *by Sonia Nieto*

Nieto explores the meaning, necessity, and benefits of multicultural education for students from all backgrounds in the U.S.

The Best Schools: How Human Development Research Should Inform Educational Practice *by Thomas Armstrong*

Thomas Armstrong urges educators to return to the great thinkers of the past 100 years – Dewey, Piaget, Elkind, Erikson – and to the language of human development and the whole child. This book highlights examples of educational programs that are honoring students' differences, using developmentally appropriate practices, and promoting a humane approach to education that includes an emphasis on play for early childhood learning, theme and project-based learning for elementary students, and active learning that recognizes the social, emotional, and metacognitive needs of adolescents in middle school.

Brain Matters: Translating Research into Classroom Practice *by Patricia Wolfe*

Everyone agrees that what we do in schools should be based on what we know about how our brain learns. Until recently, however, we have had few clues to unlock the secrets of the brain. Now, research from the neurosciences has greatly improved our understanding of the learning process, and we have a much more solid foundation on which to base educational decisions.

Building Community in Schools *by Thomas J. Sergiovanni*

In this book for educational leaders, teachers and professors, Sergiovanni argues that creating a successful school requires a "commitment of the heart and mind." To capture that commitment, schools need to instill a vital sense of community whereby students, teachers, administrators and parents can join in a common purpose.

Holding Values: What We Mean by Progressive Education *edited by Engel and Martin*

These essays critique current policies in education and provide clear statements of progressive education practice. Important topics addressed include the ways children learn, testing, evaluation and assessment, staff development, racial diversity and community. The essays are "jargon free" explanations of ideas embodied in the progressive perspective.

Horace's School: Redesigning the American High School *by Theodore R.Sizer*

Sizer is one of the most interesting current thinkers on educational reform. Although this book is about high school, Sizer's thinking about school reform applies to all schools. He emphasizes minimum testing, maximizing student work into individual exhibitions and portfolios, and expecting lots of hard work and commitment from all parties. Humanistic and rational, Sizer proposes that students concentrate on an in-depth study of a few themes rather than attempting passively to absorb the whole gamut of the so-called comprehensive education.

Last Child in the Woods by Richard Louv

"Today's kids are increasingly disconnected from the natural world," says child advocacy expert Louv, even as research shows that "thoughtful exposure of youngsters to nature can... be... powerful." Gathering thoughts from parents, teachers, researchers, environmentalists and other concerned parties, Louv argues for a return to an awareness of and appreciation for the natural world. Not only can nature teach kids science and nurture their creativity, he says, nature needs its children: where else will its future stewards come from? Louv's book is a call to action, full of warnings—but also full of ideas for change.

Letter to Teachers : Reflections on Schooling and the Art of Teaching by Vito Perrone

"Teaching after all is about knowing children well." In this book, Perrone reflects on his many years of close observation of schools and school people, parents, teachers, children, and their communities. It is simple, elegant and full of common sense. These reflections on the art of teaching address the deepest concerns teachers have for their work with children and young people.

Multiple Intelligences in the Classroom by Thomas Armstrong

"To respect the many differences between people"—this is what Howard Gardner says is the purpose of learning about multiple intelligences (MI) theory, which holds that the human mind is composed of eight intelligences—linguistic, logical-mathematical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalistic—plus a possible ninth (existential).

Promoting Social and Emotional Learning : Guidelines for Educators by Maurice J. Elias

Fostering knowledgeable, responsible, and caring students is one of the most urgent challenges facing schools, families, and communities as we enter the 21st century. True academic success and lasting social effectiveness require strong social and emotional skills. Students today face unparalleled demands. In addition to achieving academically, they must learn to work cooperatively, make responsible decisions, resist negative peer and media influences, contribute constructively to their family and community, function in an increasingly diverse society, and acquire the skills, attitudes, and values necessary to become productive workers and citizens.

Yardsticks, Children in the Classroom Ages 4 – 14, A Resource for Parents and Teachers by Chip Wood

Though written primarily for teachers, *Yardsticks* is a must-read for parents as well. First published in 1994, and re-released as a third edition in 2007, *Yardsticks* explains the developmental stages of school-aged children, and offers educators and parents a window into the ever-changing world of children from four to fourteen.

Some Parenting Resources

The Blessing of a Skinned Knee, Using Jewish Teachings to Raise Self-Reliant Children by Wendy Mogel Ph.D.

It is Mogel's singular achievement that she makes these teachings relevant for any era and any household of any faith. *The Blessing of a Skinned Knee* shows parents how to teach children to honor their parents and to respect others, escape the danger of overvaluing children's need for self-expression, accept that their children are both ordinary *and* unique, and treasure the power and holiness of the present moment. *The Blessing of a Skinned Knee* is both inspiring and effective in the day-to-day challenge of raising self-reliant children.

Best Friends, Worst Enemies by Michael Thompson, Ph.D.

Friends broaden our children's horizons, share their joys and secrets, and accompany them on their journeys into ever wider worlds. But friends can also gossip and betray, tease and exclude. In this wise and insightful book, psychologist Michael Thompson, Ph.D. talks about the appropriate roles of parents, teachers and school administrators. They explore the stages of children's development, from parent-bonded to quasi-asocial toddler, the learning-the-rules phase in elementary school and adolescent and romantic bonding. Each phase may bring some negative experiences including some outright cruelty that can be hard on both parents and children, but sometimes necessary for learning about the world.