

LNS Board Meeting, September 18, 2023

Director's Report:

Start of School Updates

We've had a smooth start to the school year! The adjustment to including lunch into the morning program is going well. Helping the children to learn how to open & close containers is the work at hand.

**Umbrella Topic:**

The purpose of an Umbrella Topic is to facilitate collaboration amongst the faculty. A common point of interest is chosen by the teachers and our deC liaisons. This year the topic is **Nature/ Sanctuary**.

Language pulled from the Exhibition Proposal **Draft:**

"In spring 2024 deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum will open Nature/Sanctuary, a group outdoor exhibition featuring contemporary sculptures and installations that offer spaces and experiences of sanctuary, refuge, and shared gathering. These projects draw upon our co-existence with the natural environment and point to pressing ecological issues related to climate, biodiversity, and sustainability. Some of the installations recall domestic architecture, sheltered enclosures, or broadly connect to the idea of "nature as home". The exhibition is framed by deCordova's former identity as a family home as well as the museum's integration within The Trustees, a land conservation organization where the term "nature sanctuary" relates to the preservation of animal and plant life. Altogether the exhibition also aims to broaden public awareness of deCordova's "more than human" landscape."

Each teaching team will integrate Nature/Sanctuary into the children's experiences as relevant throughout the year. The accountability for this work is twofold:

- 1) At the start of school, Co-Teachers craft a letter of intention to studio families about the Umbrella Topic including their intentions on how they will explore the topic.
- 2) During the monthly Design Thinking meetings, teachers will share how the topic is unfolding in their studio. The admin team will support the documentation of the umbrella topic, making it visible to the community.

On non-faculty meeting Wednesdays, two teams (Red & Purple) and (Blue & Yellow) alternate weeks to meet with DJ, Design Thinking Coach to engage in the Design Thinking process. Design Thinking is a strategy that teaching teams use to develop an emerging curriculum, provocations and projects. Meetings with DJ focus on our 2023/24 umbrella topic, Nature/Sanctuary

**LNS' Design Thinking AGREEMENTS:**

1. *Empathize with children to Hypothesize their interests*
2. *Set an Intention*
3. *Prefigure/Ideate as part of the planning process*
4. *Document (in response to the hypothesis) and Interpret*
5. *Adjust and Relaunch*

**Faculty Affinity Groups:** Teachers signed up for a small group based on topics of interest. Teachers check in with their groups (meeting, google docs or both) prior to faculty meetings and may bring a question or an update to the faculty meeting to generate discussion and create feedback loops.

**Philosophy Circles:** Wendy, Mariana, Lauri

**Sculpture Park:** Sue, Karen, Lindsay

**DEI:** Paula, Sisy, DJ

**Outdoor Play Spaces:** Mark, Nancy, (Cindy?)

**Faculty Book Group:** LNS purchased for each teacher a copy of, The Original Learning Approach (Weaving Together, Playing, Learning, and Teaching in Early Childhood) by Suzanne Axelsson. We read the book over the summer (perhaps some of us are continuing to read it!) Each month a teaching team will lead a short book discussion on a chapter of their choice. The discussion will take place while we enjoy lunch prepared by the Staff Appreciation Committee. I am grateful for lunch, literature and most especially our teachers who are curious and continue pursuit professional development!