



The Five Essential Elements of a Beacon Education

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Once we understand *how children learn best* at each developmental stage, which organizing, teaching and evaluating practices meet the goals of the Beacon vision and mission?

- 1. Time and Learning:** Learning needs govern the length of school day and school year. Teachers manage student learning at an age-appropriate pace. Students have enough time to experience a curriculum of in-depth and complete learning experiences. Increases time on task, which doubles the level of student achievement.
- 2. Authentic Accountability:** Developmentally-appropriate use of mastery-learning technique assures a sound foundation in the basic skills of every subject area without teaching only to the test. Assessments and student grades are tied to quantifiable rubrics that accurately demonstrate and communicate a student's full and complete learning results.
- 3. Visual and Performing Arts:** Arts learning influences the growth of critical thinking, creative problem solving and performance skills. Infusing arts with academics increases understandings -- a bonus to the wealth of aesthetic experience gained in the study of arts.
- 4. Social and Emotional Skills:** Learning the life skills of positive self-concept; respect for rules, rights and responsibilities; and increasingly more mature decision making and problem solving increase motivation for success. Practicing these skills daily at school, students learn ways to be secure individuals and accepted within a group.
- 5. Diversity and Pluralism:** Students are prepared to live, learn, and work in the 21st century by self-defining personal identity as more than race, gender and culture. Students learn the true value of diversity by working alongside students with a wide variety of physical and learning-style differences, as well as complexity of economic and family circumstances.