



Mission & Credo

Mission

The mission of Bank Street College is to improve the education of children and their teachers by applying to the education process all available knowledge about learning and growth and by connecting teaching and learning meaningfully to the outside world. In so doing, we seek to strengthen not only individuals, but the community as well, including family, school, and the larger society in which adults and children, in all their diversity, interact and learn. We see in education the opportunity to build a better society.

Credo

Lucy Sprague Mitchell, who founded Bank Street as the Bureau of Educational Experiments over a century ago, wrote a credo that continues to define the spirit of imaginative and critical inquiry that motivates and guides our work today.

What potentialities in human beings—children, teachers, and ourselves—do we want to see develop?

- A zest for living that comes from taking in the world with all five senses alert
- Lively intellectual curiosities that turn the world into an exciting laboratory and keep one ever a learner
- Flexibility when confronted with change and ability to relinquish patterns that no longer fit the present
- The courage to work, unafraid and efficiently, in a world of new needs, new problems, and new ideas
- Gentleness combined with justice in passing judgments on other human beings
- Sensitivity—not only to the external formal rights of the “other fellow,” but to him as another human being seeking a good life through his own standards
- A striving to live democratically, in and out of schools, as the best way to advance our concept of democracy

Our credo demands ethical standards as well as scientific attitudes. Our work is based on the faith that human beings can improve the society they have created.

Note: This credo, which was originally published in the early 1950s, is a historical document and reflects the time period in which it was written. Given this, although it contains references to gender that we would not choose to use today at Bank Street, we have decided to preserve Mitchell’s original language.



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