



DAYCROFT
S C H O O L

DAYCROFT SCHOOL REBRANDING

Daycroft School has spent the past year rebranding itself by formulating a renewed identity for the School with input from all constituents. This terrific work has resulted in a name-change for the School, clarity of its program and mission and renewed excitement throughout the entire school.

Pillars of Montessori

At Daycroft School, we are committed to creating school and classroom **environments** inspired by Montessori principles that:

- Provide uninterrupted work periods with deep learning cycles.
- Create flexible, dynamic classrooms that foster creativity, inspiration and engagement.
- Maintain a peaceful and ordered environment that blends freedom of choice with personal responsibility.
- Maximize access to the outside world and nature.
- Utilize thoughtfully designed materials that nurture respectful use, independent exploration and focused learning.

At Daycroft School, we are committed to a Montessori-inspired **learning approach** that:

- Provides student-centered support with individualized academic and social-emotional learning.
- Inspires intrinsic motivation, perseverance and a love of learning utilizing hands-on materials.
- Fosters independent learning through dynamic, experiential methods.
- Celebrates and encourages multiple intelligences and varied learning styles.
- Gives space and time for personal reflection.

At Daycroft School, we are committed to fostering human **relationships** that:

- Are rooted in mutual respect for all members of the community.
- Exemplify dynamic interactions through multi-age classrooms.
- Encourage home and school engagement and partnerships.
- Allow each student to develop self-awareness, self-acceptance and self-esteem.
- Emphasize peace, empathy and global citizenship.

HEAD OF SCHOOL SEARCH

DAYCROFT SCHOOL

Ann Arbor, Michigan



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July 1, 2019



THE SCHOOL

Located in Ann Arbor Michigan, a short distance from the campus of the University of Michigan, Daycroft School provides a Montessori inspired education to students in Preschool through Grade 8. With challenging academics, a commitment to sustaining a kind and caring community, and

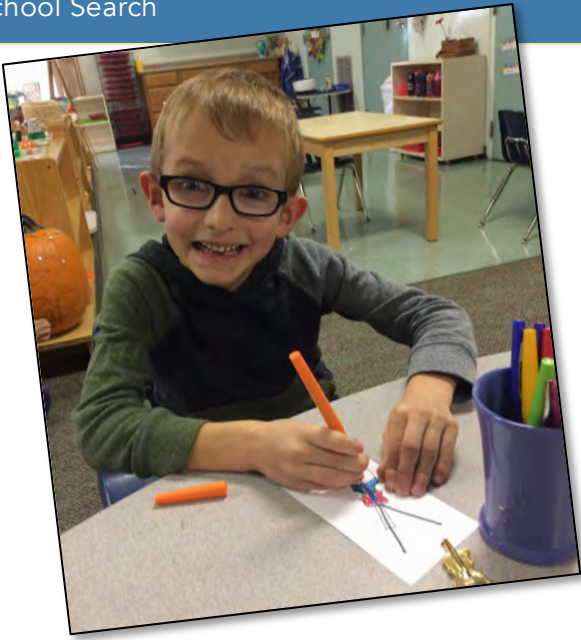
a focus on the individual learner, the School attracts families who value academic excellence, cultural diversity, and the development of caring and empowered global citizens.

Daycroft is spread between two separate campuses, which are located approximately eight miles apart. The Oakbrook campus houses the Early Childhood Program. The Zeeb campus, situated on 10 acres of land, serves children in Kindergarten through 8th Grade.

Daycroft is a school in transition. The School has an extremely capable Interim Head who is working to stabilize enrollment and bring clear focus to Daycroft's identity. Once his term is completed in June 2019, the School will be poised for new leadership and growth. Ann Arbor is a highly sought after university community, where diverse families seek excellence in education for their children.



To learn more about
Daycroft School:
www.daycroft.org



HISTORY AND MISSION

Daycroft, which is Celtic for “day shelter,” began its existence in 1960 in a church basement as a small privately owned preschool program. Over the years, the School has changed locations and has gradually expanded to serve the elementary grades. In April 2015, the Board of Trustees approved a plan to add a middle school program.

Daycroft’s mission is to provide a personalized learning environment that appreciates individual differences, nurtures the whole child, and enables students to develop at their own pace and achieve to their full potential.

Daycroft believes that children learn best when they learn in their own way and at their own pace. Inspired by principles first developed by Maria Montessori, education here is student-centered, not only in appreciating individual differences and accommodating individual learning styles, but also in enabling students to take significant responsibility for their own learning.



THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Daycroft is a school where the students trust adults and where they feel safe and valued. Daycroft enables students to create, to explore, and to engage in a variety of hands-on learning activities. Daycroft is not about memorization and worksheets. It is about purposeful learning in a very strong, relational community.

Daycroft faculty members are talented, professional, and supportive of the mission of the School, and most importantly are committed to the success of their students. Daycroft attracts educators who are deeply interested in educational theory and practice. They strive to truly understand in each of their students what makes them tick, their temperaments and their expanding interests. Students report that access to and relationships with teachers are among the very best attributes of the School. Classes are small and multi-aged with two teachers assigned to each room.

The School's parents appreciate Daycroft's commitment to academics and to their children's development. They consistently rave about the supportive atmosphere and the extraordinary kindness of the community. Many choose Daycroft as an alternative to what they see as more high pressured and unhealthy area learning environments. They value Daycroft's amazing teachers and the individualized learning that takes place in its classrooms. They also value Daycroft's commitment to being an inclusive community that authentically embraces diversity. Parents believe that one of the hallmarks of Daycroft is their partnership with teachers in addressing developmental questions and concerns.

The Daycroft Administration is a small group that all report directly to the Head of School. This group includes the CFO, the Director of Advancement, a Director of Admissions and one Division Director.



The Daycroft Board of Trustees is made up of 12 dedicated parents and past parents who think strategically about the School and its well-being. The Board has been extremely well intentioned over the years in helping the School to achieve its annual goals as well as looking ahead towards its future.

THE PROGRAM

Several months ago, the Daycroft Board of Trustees formed a task force to study the School's identity as an independent school serving the greater Ann Arbor community. The task force was formed in response to Daycroft's recent ISACS accreditation report, which challenged the School to study how they were perceived in the community and to consider ways to improve their marketability. At the core of the ISACS recommendation, Daycroft was asked to consider the degree to which Montessori philosophy and methodology influenced their educational program.



The Daycroft Identity Task Force, composed of faculty, parents and board members, met over several months gathering information from various constituencies. The work of the task force is now concluded, and the findings form the following principles:

1. Daycroft is a Montessori inspired school focusing on key elements of the Montessori pedagogical model which include:
 - Following the whole child
 - Practicing personalized and individualized teaching
 - Encouraging self-directed and self-advocating learning
 - Assessing learning through hands on, creative and flexible measures
 - Creating an intentional classroom environment for optimal learning
2. Daycroft fosters academic excellence and learning that is stimulating, engaging, dynamic, and foundational.
3. Daycroft creates a strong sense of community, characterized by a safe environment, a caring and nurturing climate, and a clear focus on families.
4. Daycroft builds student character and instills values using the following measures: respect for relationships, a sense of independence and confidence, a calm, quiet and organized classroom environment, and a culture of kindness that prevails over the entire school community.

As a result of these task force findings, several action steps will be taken over the course of the next few months to ensure that these key findings are implemented to their fullest extent. These action steps include the following:

1. The formation of a branding and positioning action group consisting of members of the Board, Administration and parent community. Their charge is to recommend strategies for effectively telling the Daycroft story to the greater Ann Arbor community.
2. The formation of a Program Review Committee composed of members of the Faculty and Administration. The charge of this committee is to identify key Montessori and other progressive educational elements to be consistently infused into each classroom.
3. The formation of a Portrait of a Graduate Committee composed of faculty whose charge is to discern the key outcomes for a student who progresses through all levels of the Daycroft program.



OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Daycroft has a vibrant sense of community that permeates throughout the entire school. The faculty and staff are extremely dedicated to their work and care deeply about the students, the parents and each other. The hallways are filled with joy and passion for learning and teaching. It is very obvious when walking into the School that this is a place that cares deeply about children. There is also a high level of awareness among the faculty of the challenges faced by the School, and they are determined to work together to overcome these challenges and move the School forward. The next leader will enter a school that has many strengths and that is aimed in the right direction. Yet, challenges remain, and opportunities for further growth and improvement that will present themselves to the next head include the following:

- In the very competitive independent school market in greater Ann Arbor, school identity is crucial. Daycroft must continue to educate the broader community regarding the pedagogical and developmental benefits of a Daycroft education.

- The next head must work strategically, in concert with the Board, to align the School's priorities. A central focus must be on addressing current and future staffing needs in all areas of the School. Identifying the resources needed to hire and retain experienced and qualified candidates will be of utmost importance.
- Like many independent schools, Daycroft has experienced enrollment challenges within the last several years. The next head will need to make an early and important impact on enrollment strategy.

LOCATION AND CAMPUS

Daycroft is located in a fabulous American city, Ann Arbor, Michigan. Home to the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor is a metropolitan area that is full of cultural and athletic venues and events all year round.

Daycroft has two campuses located approximately eight miles apart. The Oakbrook campus which houses the Early Childhood Program is small and requires an investment if it is going to continue to appeal to families with young children.

The Zeeb campus was constructed in 1998 in response to increasing enrollment. A wing was built in 2003 to enhance the arts, library and technology programs. This beautiful building sits on 10 acres of land, much of which is protected wetland.



THE CANDIDATE

Daycroft seeks an extraordinary leader, one who embodies the values and virtues of the School and possesses exceptional interpersonal and leadership skills. This person must be an inspiring and thoughtful leader with a passion for setting direction and communicating vision to an entire school community.

A warm presence and a commitment to engaging with students as both a role model and an interested and supportive educator must be evident. Furthermore, Daycroft's next head must be someone who enjoys connecting with parents. This is a community where parents are actively involved and want to be true partners with the School.

Montessori training and experience are not required, although familiarity with Montessori principles would be helpful. The ideal head for Daycroft will have strategic and financial acumen, commitment to innovative educational practice and programs, and some marketing and branding experience.

This truly is an exciting opportunity for an educator who wants to make a significant difference in the health and well being of a very appealing Early Childhood to Grade 8 school.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Interested candidates should send (as one PDF) a current resume, letter of interest, and personal statement to:

John Farber, Resource Group 175
jfarber@rg175.com

Jerry Katz, Resource Group 175
jkatz@rg175.com

Application Deadline: August 1, 2018

