

Gardner Rodriguez

Strategy. Storytelling. Collective action.

CDS Mission & Values Meeting

April 24, 2019

*“In spite of ourselves, we seem to have a shared belief in something. **We articulate it differently, but there is some red thread that runs through, we all feel the magic.** I want to be a part of it, and I want my kids to be a part of it. It’s a shared belief that is unifying and incredibly special. **It has been sustained despite ourselves because it was strong enough to begin with.**” CDS Parent*

Objectives of meeting

- To share some of the learning and key insights to date
- To review where we are in the process
- To discuss your thoughts and reactions

What we have accomplished to date

We have **listened closely to over 150 members of the CDS community**

- **Interviews** with 14 people with deep understanding of the school, students, and community, including a founder, an administrator, teachers, an alum, alumni parents, current parents, and a dean of students from Urban High School.
- **Listening sessions** with:
 - Entire faculty/staff/administration
 - Shelly's advisory group
 - Approximately 50-60 parents
 - 15 students on the middle school leadership team (SLT)

Where we are in the process

- Interviews - complete
- Listening sessions – complete

Where we are now: developing alternate mission concepts and values

- Conduct three workshops with faculty, parents and board
- Report to MVV and work with them on final product
- Make recommendation to the board

Key findings and insights

- There is something **amazing and truly distinctive** going on at CDS.
- So strong it **prevailed** through a leader focused more on operations
- **The challenge for CDS is not so much “the competition,”** even though other independent schools are now moving towards CDS messages
- The challenge is rather **holding on to what is special as CDS grows**, the city and population change, and it becomes harder for teachers to live here
- The way to hold on to it is to **articulate it so clearly** that everyone understands and can describe it, so it guides every decision.
- What will differentiate CDS is **the way the school lives its mission and values, and the vivid and clear way CDS describes them**

Key findings and insights

CDS helps kids understand what a good life is and gives them the tools to live it:

- **Purpose and deep connections**
- Knowing **how to learn** and **loving learning**
- Knowing **who you are** and being confident, comfortable with your strengths and weaknesses, and able to recover from mistakes and setbacks
- Knowing **how to empathize with others and handle conflict**
- **Speaking up** for what you think is right
- Understanding **how to live in and contribute to a community** and also be your own person

Key findings and insights

Current mission

Children's Day School recognizes that every child is born with unique gifts. Our mission is to develop each student's genius by providing an inspiring environment where challenging academics are inseparable from social, artistic, and physical experiences, and where children of all backgrounds feel safe to be themselves, become avid learners, and strive to make a difference in the lives of others.

- **Not easy to remember**
- Many **don't like the phrase "each student's genius"** and feel the **language around "challenging academics" is too expected**; also the point around "inseparable from other learning" begs the question
- The **final phrases still resonate**: children feeling "safe to be themselves, avid learners, and striving to make a difference in the lives of others"

Current values

The Children's Day School community nourishes and celebrates diversity, promotes justice and respect for all people, and aspires to act always with integrity, compassion and generosity.

- **Generally liked, but not seen as memorable, active, or complete**
- Several mentioned wanting to **bring these to life as a code of behavior** instead of a descriptive paragraph
- Zappos values cited **as actionable and real**, providing all employees with a lodestar
- Some had issues around **the word "diversity" and using it without the word "inclusion"**
- **Missing values**: love, generosity, joyfulness, kindness, empathy

Key findings and insights

The culture is so rich that there are almost too many good ideas

- The goal is to find a **memorable way** to contain them
- Then develop a **hierarchy of ideas**, not all of which will be in the mission statement
 - The **values** should be articulated as more than single words that can come across as generic
 - They need to be **articulated as actions, behavior**

In terms of execution...

- Consider **visual ways** to communicate mission and values, beyond the words
- And look at ways to **keep them front and center** in the school

Our approach

- We have **written up all the interviews and listening sessions as source material**
 - We will put this material in the shared folder so everyone can read them
 - Great source material for website content and other marketing communications
- **The quotes were so profound and well-expressed** that we excerpted key examples and grouped them under the big ideas we thought they conveyed
- Using these ideas, **we will develop alternate mission and value concept statements** to take to the workshops
- We will **invite workshop participants to tell us which ones they like most**, to comment on the language, and to add new ideas

Definitions we use

Purpose is an organization's *reason for being*. It is a combination of vision, mission, and values.

- **Vision** is aspirational. [What do we want to become?](#)
- **Mission** is [what we do](#) and how we are moving towards our vision.
- **Values** shape the culture—that is, [the way people behave toward others](#).

Key ideas that emerged from the CDS community

Several mission options, all student-centered:

- One about the unique combination of academic and life learning,
- One about the meaning of down-to-earth kids,
- One about moral compass

A cluster of values:

- That are authentically CDS and actually distinctive

Mission options

How to learn, how to be

So much of what we heard was about the dual focus of CDS: **how wonderful it is that CDS produces strong academic outcomes in its own unique way, and also teaches kids how to live and how to be.** This is distinct from other schools where the academic rat race begins at kindergarten. The strength of the social emotional curriculum was touchingly conveyed by parents who said their kids are learners during the day and come home and teach them.

*“My view of CDS students is that they are coming in with all the tools, habits of minds, and social skills, that you would call features of independent school educations. **But CDS students have a healthier relationship around success, what achievement looks like, and a more holistic sense of self, and how to be.** They are genuinely curious, want to perform well, but don’t want to burn the candle at both ends. Work hard, do your best, but stay genuinely motivated and have a social balance, not at the risk of burnout, not living fast, they are normal kids. Perform academically in the top half and some are top performers. **Grounded, more on the creative end of things, not popular BMOC types, quirrier, but not quirk for quirk’s sake.**”* Dean at Urban

*“CDS prepares **my kids for this century, by writing, public speaking, critical thinking, multidisciplinary learning, enacting, and problem-solving.** Not rote learning.”* Parent session

*“I used to go public school, which was a good school. It was a lot bigger and used the common core curriculum, teaching in a specific linear way. **Here I like how the teachers can do their very own style, conversations and projects, talking and questioning things in our world, why things happen. We think deeply about things.**”* Student session

*“Initially everyone has questions about CDS’s academics, because most of us did not learn in this way. **Our kids are not taking tests, not doing 10 pages of math problems. But over time we start to understand.**”* Parent session

How to learn, how to be

*“Kids are kids but CDS is **a breakthrough educational experience**. Compared to kids from other schools, **my daughter is more prepared for life**, taking responsibility and being accountable.”* Parent

*“CDS does not only academics, but social and emotional learning. The responsibility to others and the caring. We teach children to get to a place of self-discipline, **we teach them to find out what to do to repair, not to just say ‘sorry.’** There is a level of accountability. **There is a formalized social emotional curriculum.**”* Teacher

*“**When a kid starts to be labeled as mean or a bully, we ask why they might be doing it**, we talk with the children, we give tools to the person who is causing conflict, we educate them and the group, that **some people act differently, what are we going to do about that, because they are part of the community. Everything is about relationships.**”* Teacher

CDS also gave me an understanding of the dependence between the individual and the community: it is important that the two work well together and watch out for each other. If you have both, you will live the richest life. Alumnus

How to learn, how to be

“Families that are outcome-oriented don’t like it here. But our outcomes are great, academically and socially. We take the hard way of approaching schooling. Grades and proficiency are easy. Our standards are higher than external measures and simple theories. Ours is a holistic approach to growth and success of students –not a linear one. The ‘whole student’ is ignored by most schools. Not at CDS. The social-emotional emphasis is not found in many places. Our kids’ ability to communicate their feelings and resolve conflicts is unmatched by students from other schools.” Board, Parent

“CDS channels their passions. It sets them up for life with education and citizenship lessons. They are engaged and become life-long learners with strong social skills. I used to helicopter-parent my daughter. Now she is autonomous. She has the academic and social preparedness to interact in any situation. She has a big perspective on the world. We read the news together every morning. We volunteer. We are engaged citizens. I am passionate about my family, community, and school.” Parent

“Our kids are learners at school, but at dinner they are teachers. I am teaching my patients what my 6-year old taught me.” Parent session

How to learn, how to be

*“As a teacher myself, I learned a lot from CDS teachers. Discipline is so punitive in a lot of schools. **What the faculty does at CDS is ask ‘Why are you behaving this way and this is how it affects others.’** Learning from them made me a better and happier teacher. My son developed empathy and knows we are all connected. **If he does something wrong, they have a conversation, see what he can do better next time, he knows he has not lost their trust.**”* Board, Parent

*“CDS is good at figuring out what makes the kids tick, bringing out their goodness, understanding their weakness, developing the natural innate kid as opposed to imposing the standard. **I get so many compliments on how my kids interact and handle situations. It wasn’t me, it was the school. The CDS upbringing.**”*

Parent session

Grounded and empowered kids

If we had done a word cloud on what we heard, “down-to-earth” would have been one of the most cited phrases about the kids and the community. **CDS wants children to be grounded: in the earth, in caring for animals and other living things, in who they are, in how to learn, in community with people with different life experiences, in what is fair in the world.** And CDS aspires to have them **leave empowered, eager learners with many life skills and unafraid to stand up for what they see as right.**

*“Down-to-earth kids. They care deeply, there are real connections between kids and parents, they are **less performative, more earnest.**”* Dean at Urban

*“**They know themselves really well, they know what they are good at and what challenges them.** They have a voice, they speak for themselves and for others. They can make a difference in the world and know that they should as citizens of the world. They love learning still, go into high school wanting to learn. We get feedback from high schools, ‘I love that CDS kids are not grade grubbers, they say this is interesting, I want to learn more,’ and they emerge as leaders, adept at navigating the social scene.”* Administrator

*“**They have a comfort in making mistakes** and not having to be right all the time. A comfort with public speaking.”* Board, parent

Grounded and empowered kids

*“Kids **have the safety and full permission to be themselves.**”* Faculty session

*“We don’t only read textbooks, **we do hands-on things. Everyone can learn.**”* Student session

*“Farm and Garden is a good complement to city living where everything is provided for you, it teaches kids respect for environment, the animals, growing food, stewardship. **They feel ownership and connection to the ground they are tending and the animals.** It’s a powerful learning tool.”* Administrator

*“**Our kids have confidence plus a degree of humility.**”* Parent session

*“I hope that the school always stays **rooted in the community**, not in a bubble, our hands are reaching out, clearing up Dolores Park, going to DC, that **the school is always looking beyond itself.**”* Parent session

*“The point is not to draft the petition, it is to teach about organizing people and events, the life skills that come from the project. **That is the grounding. Not to raise children, to raise adults. Grown up themes, tasks, activities, challenges, things they will encounter in adulthood, earlier in life, so they become almost second nature, a huge advantage in later life.** Things other students don’t get....an analogy is kids doing laundry at college, if for the first time, all the white things are pink. **It’s applying this early learning to general life skills, even to sense of self.** CDS is capable of doing this **because the curriculum is grounded in the world around students and the life around the community**, what is around them, not what is on standardized tests.”* Alumnus

Citizens with a moral compass

We have noticed there are many instances of creative tension at CDS: **one is combining the progressive activist stance of world changers with the traditional moral grounding more people used to get from their faith.** It matters that you are not a bystander, but an active citizen who speaks when something is not right. It matters how you treat other people. **Having a moral compass is essential and too many kids aren't getting one** from their parents, their faith, their school or even a Mr. Rogers.

*"We produce a particularly responsible community member. Our kids often become student body presidents. They are people who stand out, for a blend of achieving and being good citizens. **We are a secular school, but with a spiritual and moral component. There is a feeling that you need to provide more than academics, you need to develop their moral compass. We would rather turn out a student who is struggling academically than with being a citizen.** The preschool program here was the source of these ideas. These ideas are part of any good preschool education, be it Reggio Emilia or Montessori, **but schools just throw them out in higher grades and the rat race gets imposed. We made a conscious attempt not to lose sight of it.**"* Board, parent

Citizens with a moral compass

“A sense of social justice is intentional and woven into everything.” Parent

“Social justice is a founding principle, everyone can be a change-maker and everyone must be a change-maker. Turn it into action. We are environmental stewards, that has been there forever, and is also folded into social justice.” Administrator

*“Social justice has an impact on the kids’ lives, to exert leadership in a way that helps the community. CDS implements the idea even in preschool. **It teaches them not to be selfish: most are very privileged.**”* Parent

*“I had 12 years of Catholic school, I cherished learning right from wrong. Religion with a small “r,” moral fiber, so critical in early years, **they will take it with them. An ethical system.**”* Parent session

Citizens with a moral compass

*“They have a strong sense of their place and that they have a community. They feel seen and accepted, valued as learners. **They have insight into a big picture world view, equity issues, fairness and racial issues, LGBTQ issues.** CDS is not afraid to introduce concepts. They empower the kids.”* Board, parent

*“Compared to other students in my high school, I had a broader set of experiences, community involvement, awareness, even worldliness. **I was more in tune with the world outside the school yard than my contemporaries.**”* Alumnus

*“**Winning is not everything. Winning by corruption is less than everything.**”* Parent

*“**We try to be our best selves.**”* Faculty session

Values

*Current values statement: The Children's Day School community nourishes and celebrates **diversity**, promotes **justice** and **respect** for all people, and aspires to act always with **integrity, compassion and generosity**.*

The community generally agrees with these values: **they are true but fail to capture the distinctiveness** of how children are taught to be and behave and how that learning ripples throughout the community. *Compassion* and *generosity* were most liked, but none passed the memorability test.

"It is harder to maintain an intentional community as this place grows. It is not of linear difficulty; it is exponentially more difficult. You must steward the values, going from a small group of 40 in the beginning to 300 students today. And hold on to the intentionality, shared values and goals of CDS. There are pressures from directions that are not seen. There is a need for clear values as markers as we grow. That's the purpose of church. Once a week you hear the reiteration of the belief system. You need constant messaging of the creed and shared values. Underscoring events and rituals that embody those things. The assembly does this. A reminder to the body about what brings us together. Embracing the other, diversity, inclusion, empathy. This is demonstrated through seeing the actions and hearing the words of little children. The kids were embracing these values, reminding the adults and preaching to the community." Board, parent

*"Values should go beyond one word. They should be expected behaviors....short sentences, a framework. **I don't like the word diversity, I like 'people with many different experiences.'** CDS fosters connection, intentional community, justice, open communication, supportive, partnership with other parents, responsibility (teaching my daughter that getting to school on time is her job). **With values, it is also how do you implement them, how do you workshop them, share stories, use assembly to talk about it.** With teacher turnover, there are examples of not living up to the values, when we screw up. There should be experiences put in place to make them living values."* Parent

The following additional values suggested by the CDS community

Joyful

“I was struck by how happy the kids were running into the school. I was drawn to the community, parents and faculty. They were genuine, did not exude a sense of entitlement. I was happy to be part of a down-to-earth community that seemed to be pulling in the same direction. Despite all the changes, we have overall preserved the down-to-earth, friendly atmosphere. The existential threat now is holding on to what is special.” Administrator

“A daughter of one of the parent tour guides who is still in preschool came in and **hugged the building, saying, ‘I love my school.’** Administrator

“Diversity, justice and respect. Integrity, compassion, generosity. **And something intangible that is missing in the current values. Joy in teaching, administering, in being part of this community.”** Parent

“The joy and the enthusiasm to go to school. My kid bolts to his classroom, and is bored on weekends. There has not been a single day my child does not want to go to school. **She says ‘I wish I was at school:’ that’s winning.”** Parent session

“CDS is like an old school bus, with kids hanging out the window, **super colorful.”** Parent session

“Volkswagen bus: **cool, funky, for a welcoming and happy gang.** Good for fun adventures.” Board, parent

“We value love and generosity in ways that you would not find in other schools. **Joyfulness is encouraged.”** Parent session

“I walk in the gate and feel happiness and kindness.” Faculty session

Kind

*“We have diverse backgrounds and perspectives as well as different families, professions, cultural backgrounds, and ideas about the best way to live life. However, **our wagons are all circled around what we love about CDS and its core value of kindness.**”* Parent session

*“The organization was fortunate to have stewarded its values. The institutional memory held. Everything is changing when you grow. CDS is getting better at exemplifying the values of inclusion and tolerance. What’s most important is the foundational values of the CDS are still the same. **Kindness and community.** Inclusion and tolerance.”* Parent

*“**We look for those who are friendly and seem kind, who don’t try to impress us with who they know, what they know, or how much they have. It is easy for schools to have parents who are very self-satisfied, but it is not good for the culture of the school. We look for nice people, who even if privileged, are aware of that and acknowledge and unpack what that means.**”* Administrator

Kind

“Our kids see kindness and helpfulness modeled all the time.” Administrator

*“It’s something magical, with important life lessons: **over the last twenty years they have lost animals, grieved their passing.** The animals got autoimmune disease, the kids gave them injections, they learned about life and death. The children are not adjunct to them, but part of their herd. When one of the sheep died, someone thought the other sheep would have to go with other animals because they are herd animals, but **the sheep was okay because the kids were his herd.** They were with the vet when he put the sheep down. **They learned about caring.**”* Board, parent, co-founder

Scrappy and all-in

*“Our kids are **kind and scrappy**. We model the scrappiness to the kids—pitch in at the desk, I will staff during naptime.”* Administrator

*“We clean up the yard on work day, and my son was so excited to get the school ready. It sets the tone for the school. There can be a joyous participation. **Everybody came to help, not ‘someone else will take care of it’....that is a thread here the whole time.**”* Parent

*By taking responsibility and being accountable, we built this school. Here we say, “Let’s get this done, let’s all pitch in, let’s be scrappy, **let’s have everyone do the work and no one is too good to do the basic stuff**. No bystanders here.”* Parent

*“A jalopy with a certain patched-together quality, a scrappiness, highly important and desirable, hard to hold onto, **a can-do attitude, very entrepreneurial, by the seat of our pants.**”* Administrator

Valuing different life experiences

The words “diversity” and “inclusion” have become of-the-moment checkboxes and have lost some of their meaning. This value requires explanation, e.g. **“CDS families have different life experiences and we value the differences because they lift all of us.** Our community includes families of different nationalities, races and ethnicities, religions, occupations, economic status, sexual orientation, gender identity, and family structures. CDS reduces barriers to access by specifically raising money for families who can’t pay full tuition.”

“I don’t like the word diversity, I like ‘people with many different experiences.’” Parent

“We have diverse backgrounds and perspectives as well as different families, professions, cultural backgrounds, and ideas about the best way to live life. However, our wagons are all circled around what we love about CDS and its core value of kindness.” Parent session

*“They have a strong sense of their place and that they have a community. They feel seen and accepted, valued as learners. **They have insight into a big picture world view, equity issues, fairness and racial issues, LGBTQ issues.** CDS is not afraid to introduce concepts. They empower the kids.”* Board,parent

This is a place where people from different backgrounds and socioeconomic diversity can feel safe and able to thrive.” Parent

Just and courageous

*“There was a fifth-grade teacher from a different environment who had different way of managing the classroom. My middle schooler is small and he is not the kid for whom self-advocacy comes easily. **He has to work up the courage to go to a teacher.** This teacher had no leadership helping her. The teacher did not like the kid’s choice of a graphic novel. She barked at him, made him feel bad, and embarrassed him. Jack raised his hand, and told the teacher, **‘Sometimes when you talk like that it scares us. We have been taught that graphic novels are worth reading.’ After, he hid his face with a book and cried, because it took so much courage.**”*

Parent

*“Our kids are worldly. For example, at seven years of age, they talk about homelessness. **Our bubble has difficult things in it.**”* Parent session

*“**Teachers encourage and support kids’ activism, rather than questioning it.**”* Faculty session

*“**Focused on social justice, not like a lot of other schools. Trying to build bonds between communities and different kinds of people.**”* Student session

*“**We stand up for what we believe in.**”* Student session

The experience of CDS

Beyond mission and values, CDS has another strong and distinctive suit: **the experience of being part of a warm community**, where people look out for each other as they once did in small towns, where you can find partners to help you bring up your child, and a spiritual home. Farm & Garden and all the traditional activities from Country Fair to weaving the sheep's wool, signal that there is something of value here that has been lost in many other places, something magic.

There is power in paradox and people are attracted to dynamic opposition. **CDS is both a 60's VW bus and a Tesla Model 3.**

CDS is a small town community in the big city, social justice in a capital of wealth, garden and farm animals in the midst of urban life, a place of responsibility in an independent school world that rewards individual achievement, a strong ethical framework to live by in a non-denominational school, and nostalgia for past rural and communitarian values combined with scrappy "how do we do this better" innovation.

Small town community/spiritual home

*“We are all individuals, but **we depend on each other. We’re a community.**”* Student session

*“It’s so welcoming here. **Everyone is treated like everyone else, equitable,** given what you need and more than that. We are a diverse, tight knit, small community.”* Student session

*“People choose CDS at the preschool level, so they will be here for quite some time. Look around, these are your people, **a lot of people come here from elsewhere, the school becomes the village, people get it.** Generous and giving, and I am on the giving and receiving end myself. It fills my bucket.”* Teacher

*“Down-to-earth, no one at the school talks about my kid goes here as an emblem of having made it, a badge, a parent’s sign that they are worthy. No one feels that their child being at CDS validates them as a human being. **They are happy because their kids are happy and because they have found like-minded parents** who believe the things they believe are important, a spot where they can be happy as well. **School is the new church, that is where you find your new community. You are selecting values.**”* Administrator

Small town community/spiritual home

“We are like a small town. I come from a family of educators. I was telling someone in my family that I was explaining to the child about the mom who was dying, and he said, ‘That’s not your job, it is not a requirement.’ But here we would never do otherwise. We created it, what small towns used to have, because it was lost. People don’t even realize it until they get here and see it, because they have learned to live without it.”

Teacher

“We felt like the school was an extension of our family. Our values were aligned. Down-to-earth, authenticity. This is why we picked CDS, to be a partner, for the social emotional learning. We live far away from our families and we have never been parents before: they become your family.” Parent session

“The parents’ community at CDS is not competitive, it is more supportive, not status-oriented. There is an authenticity to people in the community.” Parent session

“A commitment to community. Conscious community. In hopes that the kids will realize their best selves and have a positive impact in the world. Intentional community. We start kids on the path of kindness, empathy, and compassion.” Board, parent

Small town community/spiritual home

*“We came to the school and it felt very welcoming, no barriers, **the community was real**, and we did not expect that. People talk about it, but **we actually felt the warmth.**”* Parent

*“We are well known for the community, people want to join it. The adults want to join. We have an 84% yield....**what attracts the adults is that we are a spiritual home, a place where there is a village to help you raise your child.** A lot of support for the parents. A lot of community involvement. Friendly, welcoming, known for being diverse, not a clique that runs the PTA, open to new people and ideas.”* Board, parent

*“Beetle, a yellow Beetle, a fun place to be, **kids have a great time, parents have a great time.** A great community.”* Parent

*“This community is **generous, connected, down-to-earth**, and very real, very warm, and very welcoming. That’s why we picked this school. **In a city full of entitlement, these people are kind and normal.**”* Parent session

Farm & garden

*“Kids get up close with animals and the plants and it is socially acceptable to parents to teach the birds and the bees. **The kids learn to appreciate the earth, and take care of it.** There is nothing like holding a warm egg in your hand, it looks and tastes different. The kids planted trees, then harvested the apples from the tree they planted when they were three. Animals are a very rich learning experience, and this does not get enough attention. They care for the sheep, watch them grow, see the wool taken off, wash the wool, card it, spin it with a spindle, learn how to weave, knit, crochet: where else will they see this? **It empowers them, they become socially aware of the impact of plants and animals and of getting their hands down in the earth.** They are much more environmentally-minded. **I love that word stewardship: it means they have a responsibility. The magic of the environment, CDS utilizes it to help children want to learn..”** Teacher*

*“**The kids are connected to the earth.** Especially given this city environment. They know that food doesn’t come from a grocery store. You cannot buy that level of understanding.” Parent*

*“**The farm and garden is the clearest most specific example of how the school is different than what I had: learning is about doing, doing math and science, getting your hands dirty while you learn.**” Parent session*

*“**Farm and Garden taught us about caring for others. The lessons that stuck with me were when I didn’t realize I was learning.** After the fact, the revelations, minutes or years later, are when lessons leave the most lasting impression. Farm and garden were about being healthy. A teaching aid in many subject areas, science and math. **They were a grounding in the world around us.**” Alumnus*

Magic

“We experienced a magic I didn’t know you could have at a school. Every decision was made through the lens of the student.” Parent

*“There is a contradiction, a creative tension. In spite of ourselves, we seem to have a shared belief in something. We articulate it differently, but **there is some red thread that runs through, we all feel the magic.** I want to be a part of it, and I want my kids to be a part of it. It’s a shared belief that is unifying and incredibly special. It has been sustained despite ourselves because it was strong enough to begin with.”* Parent

*With the farm and garden, they see where food comes from. Have access to the animals. Weigh the hay, the care she puts in. There is a richness to it. Everyone on admissions tours says no one has this farmland in San Francisco, **it magical for children.**”* Parent session

*“It is cool having a preschool on campus. **The sprouts see what the seeds are like, and reflect on their own growth. Continuity.**”* Faculty

*“Our school has sheep and chickens. **I like taking care of the animals. They need me and I need them.**”* Student session

Mission and values themes emerging from the community

Mission themes:

**How to Learn,
How to Be**

**Grounded &
Empowered Kids**

**Citizens with
a Moral Compass**

Values:

Joyful & Kind

Just & Courageous

**Valuing Different
Life Experiences**

Scrappy & All-in

The experience:

Small Town Community

Farm & Garden

Magic