



Salmon Pages
Summer 2011

Welcome CNH Families! There are so many amazing things going on at Hamilton that I would like to share with you before school begins next week. Here are a few of the curricula highlights for the 2012 school year, followed by an invitation to come together as a community:

Mathematics

After careful review we have decided to transition from Everyday Math to Math in Focus- a version of Singapore Mathematics. We were motivated to do so because of our abiding belief that it is best to go a mile deep into a math curriculum to ensure that all students have adequate time and opportunity to truly understand mathematical concepts. Math in Focus is designed to lead to mastery learning of mathematical concepts- a goal we strongly support!

Problem solving is primary to Math in Focus. From Kindergarten on up, our children will be operating on logical and mathematical problems individually and in cooperative groups. I am confident that given the support of their teachers and a math curriculum **designed to teach children how to approach problems strategically** our children will become increasingly skillful at mathematical and logical reasoning.

I am proud to be able to share with you that City Neighbors Hamilton was selected to be a research site for Math in Focus. As a research site, we will be working closely with Math in Focus staff to regularly assess students; to provide teachers with abundant training and support during this implementation year, and to offer parents information and support. So please mark your calendar because the evening of **October 20th** will be the first mathematics curriculum evening devoted to Math in Focus.

Science

This year we will be focusing on two branches of science, physics and earth science, using FOSS, which stands for the full option science system. FOSS is a research based curriculum that offers children interactive science experiences appropriate to their developmental levels. We have planned to focus on two branches of science to allow our children longer periods of time to develop science literacy in those areas. We will be studying physics from October through January and then turn our attention to earth science from February to May.

As in the case of Math in Focus, our teachers will be receiving training and support for the implementation of FOSS, and parents will also be afforded the opportunity to learn about

FOSS and how you can contribute to science learning at home. So please mark your calendar because the evening of **December 8th** will be science curriculum night devoted to FOSS.

Literacy

As a faculty, we are deeply committed to the development of the English Language Arts. This year we are focusing our attention on a central component of our formal reading program: Guided Reading. Guided reading is small group instruction based on the assessed needs of students. We will be using collections of leveled literature published by **Mondo Publications** to conduct guided reading.

As a faculty, we have planned to meet regularly to examine the best practices for assessing reading. We will look closely at how we go about evaluating reading assessments. And we will work collaboratively to develop instructional action plans aligned with our evaluations. By means of this process we will be able to offer our students what is tantamount to individualized reading instruction. So please mark your calendar, because we would like to invite you to join us on **November 17th** for an evening devoted to literacy education at CNH.

Arts Integration

The faculty of City Neighbors Hamilton is wildly enthusiastic about the coming year because we have **four arts integrationists** on our faculty. This means that our children will have opportunities to learn and to express their learning of core academic subjects through the integration of dance, theater arts, music and visual arts. Imagine the possibilities; the performances, the projects...

Our amazing team of arts integrationists includes: Marnee Keith (Visual Arts), Peter Redgrave (Theater Arts), Marilyn Mullen (Dance) and Wendy Elkins (Music). They will come together with our amazing team of classroom teachers, instructional assistants and special educators to create curricula that inspires and nurtures the curiosities, passions, and talents of our children.

A Unique Gathering for Unique People

On August 26, from 6 PM to 8 PM we will be holding the first annual gathering of CNH families. This event is being sponsored by the CNH Board of Directors and will be attended by CNH faculty and staff. Bobbi MacDonald our CEO and Mike Chalupa, the principal of the original City Neighbors Charter School as well as the Academic Director of City Neighbors schools will also be joining us. This will be a great opportunity for you to make new friends, connect with old friends, learn more about our school, eat good food, watch a good movie and have good fun. And while you are at, please volunteer to serve on one of our school committees. Committee service is at the heart of our governance model. Your active involvement on a school committee advances the process of democracy. Please feel free to make a choice; lift your voice, and allow yourself to be inspired to create!