

### **Mission**

The mission of the Seacoast Charter School is to provide excellence in core academics and the arts while cultivating the individual qualities and strengths of each child. At the Seacoast Charter School, arts and academics go hand in hand. We believe that the arts bring us joy, and when we feel joy, we learn more deeply and effectively. Through a rich and varied arts program, our students learn to look closely, listen carefully, respond thoughtfully, and work collaboratively. Opportunities for creative expression and independent thinking are an integral part of our rigorous academic program. The combination of challenging intellectual and artistic endeavors develops our students' hearts and minds and enables them to live more fully in the world.

### **Vision**

Seacoast Charter School is a student-centered community that uses the artistic process to enable students to live active, intentional, and mindful lives in the world.

### **Values**

In support of our vision and mission, we value:

#### 1. Community

- Students experience fellowship with other students based on shared values and interests
- Students view their school as a unique and important institution
- Students are respected and respectful as valued individuals by community members
- Students respect the norms of the community; students are empowered to engage the community in a reconsideration of established norms
- Students recognize that community is inclusive, that privileged or exclusive sub-groups have no place in community

#### 2. Self-Reflective Learning

- Students learn deeply by reflecting on their own learning with the aim of improving future performance
- Students understand the role of assessment criteria in examining their own work
- Students know that feedback is critical to self-reflection and improved performance; they accept feedback with a positive and appreciative attitude
- Students know that time is important for self-reflection
- Students enjoy a safe, supportive learning environment that encourages self-reflection

#### 3. Appreciation of Process

- Students know that while starting is essential, so is a well-designed process
- Students realize that attending to process will result in improved outcomes
- Students are willing to put forth effort to achieve desired goals
- Students do not fear failure, but embrace failure as learning opportunity
- Students learn how to design processes for success

#### 4. Problem Solving

- Students are skillful in defining and precisely articulating problems to be solved
- Students understand the value in the generation of many potential alternatives to address identified problems
- Students evaluate and select from a range of alternatives when seeking solutions
- Students are capable of follow-through in implementing solutions to identified problems

#### 5. Creative Exploration

- Students are open to new ideas and concepts
- Students actively seek and appreciate new ideas, methods, and applications
- Students' imaginations are valued and encouraged
- Students are confident in expressing their creativity
- Students enjoy a school environment that encourages imagination and creative exploration through a range of modes

#### 6. Growth

- Students know that their abilities and talents can be further developed
- Students view challenges as opportunities to learn and to develop their own skills
- Students embrace new and novel learning opportunities
- Students recognize that achievement results from hard work

#### 7. Risk Taking

- Students are open-minded
- Students are willing to think and act beyond their *comfort zones*
- Students do not fear the judgments of others
- Students are curious and seek to understand *how things became what they are*
- Students believe in limitless possibilities
- Students are capable of overcoming obstacles and moving beyond failure

#### 8. Active Learning

- Students engage actively with what they are learning
- Students are exposed to a range of active learning strategies, such as role playing, group discussions, and journaling
- Students collaborate with peers in learning activities
- Students take active responsibility for their own learning

#### 9. Intentional Learning

- Students are aware of and can articulate their learning goals, both short- and long-term
- Students take responsibility for planning and managing their own learning
- Students reflect on their new learning and recognize successful strategies in achieving new learning
- Students are able to apply their new learning to both familiar and unfamiliar situations
- Students are capable of demonstrating their own learning with others

#### 10. Mindfulness

- Students are present; they are aware of experiences in present time
- Students are open to new experiences
- Students are non-judgmental and are accepting of others
- Students feel connected with nature and other living things

- Students are compassionate

#### 11. Artistic Process

- Students prepare for artistic process through immersion or personal exploration
- Students allow for the incubation of ideas, which demands time for the churning of ideas realized in preparation
- Students experience the exhilaration of the “ah-ha” moment with the emergence of original ideas
- Students engage in evaluation of ideas, which entails self-reflection and self-criticism
- Students are committed to the elaboration or commitment to the work that has been still only imagined

#### 12. Student Centered

- Students believe and demonstrate that they have voice and choice in their learning
- Students are treated respectfully as individuals by all members of our community
- Students are provided with a learning environment that is safe and promotes their ability to learn and grow
- All decisions are based on what is in the best interests of our students

### **Goals**

#### **1. Emphasizing the process of learning, as well as the product.**

We create an engaging learning environment through hands-on activities and interdisciplinary studies that supports the innate curiosity and unique talents of each individual. Our students are expected to complete high quality work, but our focus is as much on the learning process as the product. We believe that students need to feel safe and empowered in order to take risks necessary for learning, and for growth to occur.

#### **2. Incorporating the arts as a serious path to broader learning.**

We provide opportunities for students to develop their artistic intelligences both by infusing the arts throughout the curriculum, and by treating them as discrete, core subjects. Our arts program encourages an intensity of effort and focus that is healthy for learning. As our students engage in serious work in the arts, they are required to think critically, generate multiple solutions to problems, and pursue long-term goals.

#### **3. Fostering individual growth, as well as community building.**

We foster a school culture that emphasizes responsibility and self-awareness. As we cultivate children’s individual voices, we promote a shared respect for each other, our community and the world around us. Our students develop their communication and leadership skills as they work together to raise questions, solve problems, and build cohesive, productive community.

#### **4. Building a strong home/school connection.**

We welcome and rely on family involvement. Children, families, school, and community form an interdependent system, and we value and utilize the tremendous resources available to our students through our parents and the greater community. We support and encourage a strong connection between learning at home and at school, which positively influences our students’ attitudes and achievement.