

Lincoln Montessori School: A Self-Study

At the request of the school's directors a self-study was commissioned in the early 1990s. Information was gathered through individual psychoeducational evaluations of the kindergarten aged children at the school., informal discussions with the classroom director and through "exit" conferences with the parents. From this formal and informal information gathering the self-study of the school's educational program is summarized briefly here.

In terms of intellectual functioning the results of the tests demonstrated that appropriate learning opportunities had allowed the children to work at levels at least equivalent to their abilities and in many instances to exceed the expected levels of performance. The measured academic levels indicated that the students were prepared to continue their education at first grade in a school of their choice.

Observation of and interactions with the children showed that they demonstrated a strong sense of self relative to the environment, were self-confident and self-motivated. Trying new and different tasks or problem solving appeared to be positive experiences and they were open to and utilized feedback to improve their performances. The approaches to the learning situations presented by the children indicated that the emphasis in learning (at LMS) is placed on opportunities to "learn how to learn" and a freedom to pre-plan and to self-correct when necessary.

In their concluding remarks the psychologists stated; "The educational program of LMS appears to be providing students with the opportunities to maximize their abilities as well as more than adequately prepare them for enrollment in other learning environments. Major strengths, in addition to the general educational program include interest of the staff as well as the support of parents. A basic tenet of the school, emphasizing guided rather than directed learning, has had a positive impact. The environment which has been provided has allowed the children to develop a positive feeling of self which will facilitate their development into adulthood. And, the ability to function independently coupled with high levels of self-motivation will serve these children well in a variety of settings."