



What's the Big Idea



New Paltz Central School District Mission and Vision Statements



Our school community – students, staff, families and community members are citizens of the world, passionate about learning and empowered to achieve their dreams. Citizens of the world: responsible, ethical, contributing, participating members of local, national and global communities who value all peoples and care about each other; we respect the environment, work to improve the society in which we live, and understand our role in it. Passionate about learning: confident and reflective, curious, nimble thinkers whose knowledge of the past makes them capable of questioning, analyzing, and assimilating new information. They are technologically creative and able to imagine alternatives to what is and what is yet to be. They also dare to be risk takers in crafting their futures. Empowered: they are well prepared to be self-directed and expressive, to develop and use their personal skills and abilities, to be comfortable with change, achieve deep understanding, make informed and wise decisions, and to cooperate, collaborate, and compete. They live a healthy life style, are creative, and are empowered to achieve their dreams.



A Need for Something
More...

Recurring Theme: Assessments

The best assessments
do not interrupt
learning.

Recurring Theme: Connected

Moving away from isolated
events to connected
extended experiences where
children have multiple
opportunities to be immersed
in their learning

Recurring Theme: Time

How do we make
the best use of the
time we have for
teaching and
learning?

A “Thinking” Curriculum

Start With a Big Idea--
Interdependence

How does where I live affect
how I live?

How do I affect where I live?

A “Thinking” Curriculum

No windows or door on
learning

Big idea visited in various
disciplines—reading, writing,
science, social studies

A “Thinking” Curriculum

Less Facts...More Questions

Identifying problems, posing solutions,
testing solutions, refining solutions

Continuous cycle of refining thinking

A “Thinking” Curriculum

Organized in terms of
the Humanities and
STEAM—Science,
Technology,
Engineering, Art, and
Math

Comparing the Learning Kindergarten--Community Study Learning Experiences

Where we are...

- ▶ Roles and Responsibilities
- ▶ Teachers impart information
- ▶ Facts
- ▶ Memorization
- ▶ Recall

Where we are going...

- ▶ Who am I as a part of my community?
- ▶ Inquiry—Different Roles
- ▶ Choice
- ▶ Connecting relationships across documents and experiences
- ▶ Gather, analyze, report
- ▶ Share
- ▶ Ask and Answer
- ▶ Out in the Community
- ▶ Experience/Hands on

Comparing the Learning Kindergarten—Community Study Product

Where we are...

- ▶ End-of-unit assessment
- ▶ Worksheet
- ▶ Sketching and writing

Where we are going...

- ▶ Journals
- ▶ Big Books
- ▶ Photo Stories
- ▶ Original Writing Pieces in various genres
- ▶ Re-enactment (dramatic play)
- ▶ Creating Models

Meaningful Learning Experiences

Meeting the New
York State Learning
Standards in a not so
standardized way.

Through the Eyes of the Child

How Can We Preserve a Quality
Education For Our Students?

We Face Many Challenges...
We Are Determined to Provide
Creative Solutions