

# The Paideia Academy



**A Preparatory School**

A Public Education With A Private Focus™

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## *Introduction*

The Paideia Academy offers a public education with a private focus. The Paideia Academy currently seeks to serve families with children ages five through fourteen, and eventually through eighteen. The academy actively seeks racial, cultural, and socioeconomic diversity in its student body. The Paideia Academy is a non-sectarian establishment.

The meaning of the ancient Greek word **Paideia (pie-day-uh)**: “the upbringing of a child. (Related to pedagogy and pediatrics.) In an extended sense, the equivalent of the Latin *humanitas* (from which ‘the humanities’), signifying the general learning that should be the possession of all human beings.” In this use, it reflects the conscious pursuit of a series of intense, specialized educational goals by a community and conveys the concept of a child’s total education: intellectual, artistic, and social.

We encourage interested families to find out more about The Paideia Academy by attending monthly parent sessions designed to explore The Paideia Academy concepts and strengthen home/school educational partnerships. The Paideia Academy is different from most other schools and cannot be accurately categorized by *a single philosophy or approach*. We hope you are interested and we welcome your scrutiny.

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## *Formation*

In November of 2000, the Founders, Fred W. Robinson and Bernadine Stinson, organized the school with the concept of “wanting the best possible education for children.”

The Founders decided that an alternative to the existing education system was within their venue. Although beginning a school brings feelings of fear and frustration and requires a high tolerance for risk-taking, the Founders agreed to start The Paideia Academy in the fall of 2001.

The Founders are all St. Louis residents and are the products of the St. Louis School System (during the time of its excellence) and various State and Private Universities, including several top Black Universities. Each background brings different assumptions about the nature of education and the learning process. Each background brings something special, as well, a common and sincere interest in quality education for children. The Founders wanted to be involved in the education of children. But even more importantly, they wanted a caring atmosphere of give and take, and of open communication. This will be difficult, but the Founders are committed and determined.

Finding Space for the program may prove to be a difficult but not impossible task. An immediate charge for us is to approach the St. Louis Board of Education, the St. Louis Archdiocese, and commercial businesses within the St. Louis Metropolitan Area to secure properties that are no longer in use by these organizations.

It is anticipated that the school will open in the fall of 2005 with approximately 500 students per year. All monies collected or borrowed will be used to purchase supplies for the program, pay salaries, rent and utilities, field trip expenses, and other operating costs for the program.

The Founders truly believe that The Paideia Academy is a healthy alternative, within the community. The Paideia Academy will ensure quality educational services in a rich alternative environment.

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## *Our Mission*

The Paideia Academy's mission is to develop a diverse community of learners who support the concept of solid performance, to create an environment that places a high premium on human dignity and common decency and to instill a lifelong interest in learning.

## *Our Philosophy*

Central to this philosophy are several assumptions: children learn best when they are drawn rather than pushed to learning. Their experiences encompass structured group interactions as well as teacher-directed activities, free-play, physical skill development, problem-solving and socialization, all across broad curricula. Yet, even with the range of activities that take place within and without the walls of The Paideia Academy, each experience is thought out with respect to individual differences among students. Children are drawn to learning because they are neither asked to do things for which they are not ready, nor are they held back when they are able to move ahead.

Children will be comfortable at The Paideia Academy. The overall atmosphere shall be caring, encouraging and conducive to the development of self-esteem. Students, parents and teachers shall recognize that individuals develop along diverse pathways and at different rates. Children have different styles of learning, different backgrounds, different interests and different aspirations. Respect for these differences shall be paramount at The Paideia Academy. It is a respect that shall supersede simple expediency and that will guide the entire planning process at The Academy. It is, finally, a respect that shall permeate The Paideia community of children, parents and teachers.

Children will be challenged at The Paideia Academy. A favorable classroom teacher-student ratio will allow teachers to address individual differences effectively. Beginning in Early Learning and continuing through Middle and Upper Learning, teachers will encourage students to set and attain high standards of achievement. Teachers will assist students in developing problem-solving skills. The whole program at The Paideia Academy is crafted to bring children to accept responsibility for their actions, their freedoms and their learning for life. The Paideia Academy is many things. It is a place, an idea, a process, a student body and a faculty. It is all of these things together and more. The Paideia Academy is a community of learners, doers and thinkers.

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## Curriculum

The curriculum at **The Paideia Academy** shall be based on the integration of subjects. Math, science, language arts, literature, social studies, physical education, drama, art, music, and computer education will be woven together into major areas of interest for all age groups, Kindergarten through Middle School. The Board of Trustees is committed to a *philosophy of experiential, holistic education* that includes strong components for community interaction, service projects, and global interdependence.

In order to foster awareness and an understanding of interdependence, *community service* is an important aspect of the curriculum. The students will be involved in several ongoing community projects such as recycling, Christmas and Kwanza Cheer, and a monthly exchange with students at other schools.

The Paideia Academy emphasizes hands-on, exploratory, discovery learning. A developmentally appropriate philosophy lies at the heart of the decisions made, and *an integrated curriculum* leads students through activities that engage learners in reading, writing, and the scientific/mathematical processes of observation, fact-gathering, supposition, synthesis, analysis, and application. The classroom is a beginning point only; teachers use outside resources available to extend learning to include the local, regional, and global communities.

Curriculum at The Paideia Academy will involve more than traditional subject matter. Our teachers will be interested in *the whole child and every aspect of development*. Thus, emphasis is placed on responsibility, critical thinking, self-direction, and family spirit. A primary goal is to strengthen self-esteem by teaching children how to become independent learners. Curriculum is designed using The Missouri Standard Course of Study, and a national curriculum, Dimensions of Learning, created by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

School traditions, such as the Thanksgiving Feast, and other projects (including plays, reading partners, units of study, field trips, and foreign language), lend themselves to *multi-age grouping*. By grouping children of various ages together, students are given opportunities to learn to work cooperatively. Older students take *leadership roles*. Students who work as teachers, must first master information and understand concepts deeply in order to convey information to others and apply ideas in new ways. Younger students benefit from receiving *individualized instruction*, and all students develop *social-emotional skills* which can be used throughout life.

Small classrooms, committed teachers, and involved parents create an environment which nurtures and supports student learning. Students achieve personal academic goals while retaining a love of learning.

Evaluation of student progress occurs regularly through discussion, observation, portfolios and testing. Children and parents are made aware of personal achievements through formal and informal conferences throughout the year.

**Language Arts:** Language arts classes will utilize a comprehensive approach to developing reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. Interdisciplinary projects, specific skill development utilizing phonemic awareness, and whole language/literature based programs are the foundations of The Paideia Academy's Language Arts curriculum.

**Mathematics:** The work of Mary Baratta-Lorton (*Mathematics Their Way*) and Mary Laycock (*The Fabric of Mathematics*) provides the framework for the math curriculum. Math concepts and skills are taught by utilizing manipulatives such as pattern blocks, unifix cubes, Cuisenaire rods, and Dienes blocks. There is an emphasis on problem solving and written expression of mathematical processes and procedures.

**Social Studies:** Interdisciplinary units are taught in each grade level. Whether it's a kindergarten class learning about the diversity of our families, fourth graders exploring Missouri history, or a middle school class examining world religions, the emphasis is on asking questions, gathering information, and doing in-depth research from a variety of sources and perspectives.

**Science:** Science at The Paideia Academy is experiential and hands-on, focusing on students' discoveries and understanding of the scientific process. Units of study in life, earth, and the physical sciences take place throughout the grades. Field trips will be an important component of science education. An annual science fair will give students the opportunity to share their investigations with the wider community.

**Computers:** Hands-on experiences with computers will be provided beginning in kindergarten. The Paideia Academy's goal is for children to gain basic computer literacy by using the computers for problem solving, word processing, database and spreadsheet manipulation, creative expression, research, and multi-media projects. All computers will be networked and will provide DSL connection to the Internet.

**Music:** The music program, taught by a specialist, shall be designed to familiarize the children with some of the main organizational factors of music: rhythm, melody, musical form, and musical notation. The children will sing, play instruments, listen to classical, gospel, blues and jazz music, and create their own music as well. The Orff approach is an important element of this program.

**Art and Drama:** The development of self-expression and each child's creative process is furthered through The Paideia Academy's arts program. Children of all ages work with varied mediums and concepts in the visual arts. Art shall be integrated throughout the curriculum and shall be taught by a variety of art teachers. Children will explore the art of many cultures and make use of the abundant art resources found throughout the St. Louis Area. Drama, taught by a specialist through the after school program, will provide opportunities for improvisation, writing plays, and scene study and analysis. Students will produce and perform plays by many different playwrights, from The Paideia Academy students to Shakespeare to Alexander Dumas to Neil Simon to Gordon Parks.

**Foreign Language:** A specialist will teach foreign language (Chinese, French, German, Japanese, Russian, Spanish, Swahili\*) several times weekly to all grade levels. Games, music, conversation, movement, and writing are all components of this program. The numerous resources of the St. Louis Area will provide community connections to this program.

**Physical Education:** A specialist will teach physical education to all the grade levels. The program is the integration of movement, healthy exercise, and teamwork. The classes will develop perpetual motor skills, fitness, coordination, and foster cooperation and rapport. The program will include track and field, swimming, team sports, tennis, games, and movement.

**Middle School:** The Paideia Academy's Middle School program is expected to begin in the Fall of 2002. Sixth, seventh and eighth grade students will work with a team of teachers and specialists in a vibrant, interdisciplinary, and academically rigorous program. Created to meet the specific needs of young adolescents within a supportive K-8 community of learners, the Middle School program will add electives and community service learning to the core curriculum.

\*If specialist is available in this foreign language.

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## *School Departments*

### **Administration and Finance**

Headmaster: Responsible for all of the day-to-day operations and decisions.

Assistant Principal: Responsible for all disciplinary decisions.

Assistant Principal: Responsible for all Elementary School education decisions.

Assistant Principal: Responsible for all Middle School education decisions.

Assistant Principal: Responsible for all High School education decisions.

Assistant Principal: Responsible for all Finance acquisition decisions.

### **Education**

**English Department:** Language arts classes will utilize a comprehensive approach to developing reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills.

**Mathematics Department:** Math concepts and skills shall be taught by utilizing manipulatives such as pattern blocks, unifix cubes, Cuisenaire rods, and Dienes blocks. There shall be an emphasis placed on problem solving and written expression of mathematical processes and procedures.

**Science Department:** Science at The Paideia Academy is experiential and hands-on, focusing on students' discoveries and understanding of the scientific process.

**Social Science Department:** Interdisciplinary units are taught in each grade level. The emphasis is on asking questions, gathering information, and doing in-depth research from a variety of sources and perspectives

**Music Department:** The music program shall be designed to familiarize the children with some of the main organizational factors of music: rhythm, melody, musical form, and musical notation.

**Art and Drama Department:** The development of self-expression and each child's creative process is furthered through the arts program. Art shall be integrated throughout the curriculum and shall be taught by a variety of art teachers.

Drama, taught through the after school program, will provide opportunities for improvisation, writing plays, and scene study and analysis.

**Foreign Language Department:** Foreign language, (Chinese, French, German, Japanese, Russian, Spanish, Swahili), will be taught several times weekly to all grade levels. Games, music, conversation, movement, and writing shall all be active components of this program.

**Physical Education Department:** Physical education shall be taught to all of the grade levels. The program is the integration of movement, healthy exercise, and teamwork. The program will include track and field, swimming, team sports, tennis, golf, games, and movement.

**Communication Department:** Hands-on experiences with computers will be provided beginning in kindergarten. Additionally, public speaking experiences and debate sessions will be provided beginning with sixth graders. The Academy's goal is for children to gain basic computer literacy by using the computers for problem solving, word processing, database and spreadsheet manipulation, creative expression, research, and multi-media projects; and to gain basic speaking proficiency in public and to accomplish literacy by using proper English for problem solving, and creative expression, research, and multi-media projects.

**Extended (After) School Department:** The after-school program extends from Pre-K through 12, and parent pick-up of younger children is available until 6:00 pm. The classroom is a beginning point only; teachers shall use outside resources available to extend learning to include the local, regional, and global communities.

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## *Admission and Enrollment*

The Paideia Academy Board of Trustees admits those families who embrace the philosophical foundations of experiential education, parental involvement, and community service. School leadership seeks to build a community of families with a broad range of socioeconomic backgrounds in order to enhance the ethnic richness of the school. The admissions process seeks to guarantee the continuance of the founding philosophy and diversity of the community. No formal testing is required if you decide to enroll your children. Instead, we will assess whether TPA can meet the educational needs and expectations of applicants through private interviews and classroom observation.

The Paideia Academy embraces diversity in all forms. TPA does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national or ethnic origin in the administration of our educational policies, admission policies or any other school-managed programs.

Just as parents have expectations of TPA, the school, likewise, has expectations of the parents and the students. Therefore, steps for enrollment are established to assure clarity of communication, and the securing of adequate information for wise decision-making.

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*Our Staff*

Teachers at The Paideia Academy will bring a rich variety of backgrounds, experiences, and knowledge to the instruction planned for students. That diversity and depth of experience shall enrich the educational experience for both students and faculty.

Teachers shall stay current on educational research through area workshops, university course work, and group study. Our teachers shall be a highly motivated and dedicated team of professionals who practice ongoing educational development as they work as a faculty.

<b>Administration</b>	<b>Department Heads</b>
Head Master/Mistress Brenda Johnson- Pruitt	English Jerry Graham/Veronica Hall
Alvinita Whitehead Business Manager	Mathematics Victoria Forder/Todd Valdez
Secretary Felecia Goins	Science Alana Jordan/ Christina Blassingame
Principal-College Hill Campus Patrice Coffin	Social Science Taneisha Jamison
Principal- Carondelet Campus Patrice Coffin	Music and Movement Christopher Walter
Asst. Principal/ Special Educ. Coordinator Wendy Gilliam	Art and Drama Jill Hinsch
Counselor Deborah Jones	Foreign Languages
Technology Services Steve Bembry	Physical Education Doel Bailey
Nursing Services Belinda Hillard	Reading Specialist Bettye Vint
Food Services Dir. Tamara Henderson	Speech Therapist Sharon Cleveland

Facilities Manager Samuel Johnson		
<b>After School</b>	College Hill Campus	Carondelet Campus
After School Director	Karen Cross	
After School Assistant		
<b><i>Elementary School</i></b>		
Classes	College Hill Campus	Carondelet Campus
Kindergarten	Sherita Ming	Kimberly Glenn
First Grade	Daisy Field	Nancy Wall
Second Grade	Shelby Johnson/ Alyshia Newsham	Joy McRoy
Third Grade	Jessica Harrison	Eleanor White
Fourth Grade	Michelle Hople	Kristen Daffron
Fifth Grade	Victoria Forder	Tara Sullivan
<b><i>Middle School</i></b>		
Sixth Grade	Veronica Hall	Todd Valdez
Seventh Grade	Alana Jordan	Jerry Graham
Eighth Grade	Taneisha Jamison	Christine Blassingame
<b><i>Special Education</i></b>		
Special Education Teachers	Nicolas French	James Walters
Title I Education Assistants	Kyley Williams	
Education Assistants	Alandon Pitts	Shannon Windsor
Alternate Learning Center	Ariette Williams	Daniel Peaver
<b><i>High School to follow at a later date</i></b>		

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*Board of Trustees*

Fred W. Robinson - Chairman of Board

Brenda Davis - Secretary

Larry C. Williams - Treasurer

Luther G. Bellinger, Sr., D HL

Ralph Tidwell, MS

*Board of Advisors*

Joe E. Beard, Ed D

Charles Reid, MSW