

## CSCE: What Do We Stand For

### Our Mission:

Our mission is inspired by the Rudolf Steiner Waldorf methodology to partner with families and communities to provide a rigorous, highly personalized, college-preparatory program integrated into a culturally rich, arts-infused curriculum for the diverse students of Oakland to promote equity and prepare culturally competent, well-rounded lifelong learners to lead, contribute to and successfully participate in our rapidly changing, multicultural society (see Community School for Creative Education, or CSCE, Charter, p.1).

### The School Rests On Three Pillars:

We commit to:

- Provide a Standards-aligned curriculum
- Be inspired by Waldorf principles
- Stay focused on Equity. Creating change in our society's structure by helping all children to succeed in school and in life.

These pillars provide the school's foundation and direction.

We commit to knitting these together as a professional learning community continuously refining and reflecting on data as we go.

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### We Recognize Learning to Read as a Key Portal on the Path:

We recognize: Learning to read well is the cornerstone of creating equitable outcomes for our children.

We do it through integration of:

- core Open Court reading program components ("getting ready to read"; Responding to Reading; and ELA (writing/grammar)
- Core Waldorf practices: Teaching through the artistic; employing main lesson; main lesson book; reinforcement through subjects. (CSCE Charter, p.9) We follow cutting edge learning theory by drawing from Waldorf practices in our lesson design which always moves from whole (the story) to part (direct instruction) and back to whole (the artistic activity).

### We Aim To Be Preventive Rather Than Reactive:

The aim of CSCE is to focus on prevention, intervention and acceleration of all students. To achieve this goal, we are committed to create a process similar to Response to Intervention (RTI) that provides staff a routine systematic way to identify students in need early on so they can be provided with appropriate interventions ( CSCE Charter, p. 17).

### Our Accountability is To Ourselves:

We commit to conducting ongoing inquiry together around focus areas, collecting data and reflecting on outcomes (Cycle of Inquiry). By inquiring and assessing frequently, regularly and using multiple measures (CSCE Charter, p. 23-28) we learn how to do our work better. We engage multiple modalities and interdisciplinary curriculum drawing from Waldorf.

### Our goal is to:

Meet State Approved Standards: 80% of 5th graders and beyond will achieve at a proficient or higher level in both English Language Arts and Math by Year 5 of our charter. Specifically, in reading, our target is:

- by end of first grade, a fluency rate of 60 words per minute
- by end of third grade, a fluency rate of 110 words per minute
- by end of fifth grade , a fluency rate of 140 words per minutes (see Charter, pp. 11-12)

Do that and more: Develop life-long leaders by harnessing Waldorf inspired methods

Do that for all: Both those who are "school dependent" and those who are not (see Charter, p. 1)

## Our Reading “North Star”

We educate CSCE students to be strong analytical readers who can read independently with accuracy and speed (advance decoding/fluency) so that they are able to actively engage with the meaning and purpose of a variety of text (comprehension) as called for in the Common Core State Standards.

It is this equity imperative as expressed in our school charter that drives our professional learning and our teaching practice as a school community.

To ensure each child reaches this level of mastery, we teach so that at each grade level students master key reading sub-skills that move her along a “protective path” on the road to reading proficiency.

We focus on both internal fluency development and comprehension simultaneously.

We recognize that a student’s failure to master key skills at any point along the road to reading will result in learning gaps and ultimate achievement gaps as the child transitions from learning to read to reading to learn.

We as a school community take collective responsibility for every child’s reading development. We make a collective commitment to getting 80% of our students reading on grade level.

We do this by braiding together complementary Waldorf techniques with Open Court Reading strategies in new and innovative ways that build students’ internalization of essential decoding and comprehension skills so that they are able to apply this knowledge to reading text. We do this by attending to the **sensory integration** that is foundational to building a child’s “reading brain,” and by attending to the **social-emotional** and **cognitive aspects** of reading development.

Our inquiry this year is focused on identifying the complementary Waldorf techniques and Open Court Reading strategies that lead to mastery of the key sub-skills at each level of reading development (grade level reading standards and learning targets) *SO THAT* we create smooth reading development from grade to grade.

Our desire is to have each child show up to the first day of a new grade level with the necessary foundational skills to tackle the new stages of reading development, leading not only to proficiency but also a deep love and enjoyment of reading.