



# GARDEN SCHOOL NEWSLETTER



Richard Marotta, Ph. D., Headmaster

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"Cultivating Success in Every Child"

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## Thoughts for the Week



By **Richard Marotta, Ph.D., Headmaster**



**"We empower every student in our educationally diverse community to meet responsibly the challenges of everyday life..."** Garden School Mission Statement Excerpt

In the past, I have written about how Garden School embodies the diversity present in our culture and how that diversity enriches the lives of every member of our community. In my view, diversity is the natural human and living condition.

We often hear about the importance of "tolerance". In some ways, tolerance is an unnatural attitude since nature does not engage in tolerance but simply in existence. The rose doesn't tolerate the orchid; they simply exist. Nature's *natural* state is diversity. There may be inequalities in math, but there are no inequalities in nature. While we think of tolerance as a positive, we should remember that tolerance suggests a standard against which the 'different' is measured and accepted. However, the standard consists of diversity not of a single standard. All nature shimmers with variety and difference that enhances life, makes it beautiful and ensures its development through endurance and evolution.

"Garden School has a long history of education students whose families represent every region of the globe. Our experience is enriched by our growing diversity and we are intentional about creating a place where each individual feel free to follow his or his own dream, ideals and beliefs. At this time Garden School take a moment to reiterate its mission and to underscore our belief in the value of every member of our community." Lisa Sohmer

When Ms. Sohmer sent me this in an email, I was struck by the reality that our school stands for that very diversity that corresponds to nature and embodies and reflects the beauty of variety and richness of a global community.

Each day when I teach or visit a class, I have the wonderful opportunity of hearing students express their views, which frequently originated in different parts of our world. How extraordinary is it for a teacher teaching Dostoyevsky to be able to ask how would this be said in Russian and have three students provide an answer. I have asked students for the Hebrew or Arabic translation of a word, or the word in Montenegrin, and I have had access to the cultural differences reflected in those meanings. Our community's diversity is the equivalent of having a living internet available to us all to educate us about the humanity in ourselves and in others. It is a window looking out over our ever-shrinking world for which we are preparing our students.

Garden School has created and will continue to sustain an environment that is welcoming to students from all over the globe into a safe and celebratory environment that empowers them to find and share their voices clearly and responsibly. We cherish our diversity because it enhances all of our lives by teaching us what our world truly is and how beautiful our lives can be. This is Garden's identity; this is Garden's vision; this is Garden's mission.