



GARDEN SCHOOL NEWSLETTER



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Thoughts for the week

By Richard Marotta, Ph.D., Headmaster



As this school year rapidly draws to an end, I found myself reflecting on the various events, projects and activities that have taken place over the year. For students, parents and teachers, the year was filled with all of the energies and activities that compose an educational cycle that continuously renews itself. My sense is that as we evaluate our year, we need to think about the various ways in which we gauge and evaluate success.

For some, success is academic achievement that is measurable. These standards and markers of success fall within the traditional parameters of educational life. For others, it was taking the lead in a project or an activity and exploring a side of oneself that was new. Being a leader can be an acquired skill as well as an inherent skill. For students to explore that side of themselves provides an opportunity for growth. Still others found success on a social level, which suggests that the individual's growth changed and was enhanced. There are

moments of personal success as well that took place throughout the course of the year.

When I think about success, I am always astounded at the many versions of this amorphous idea there can be. Our culture more often than not defines success in monetary terms. In an acquisitive society, such as ours, success is frequently determined by the amount of financial success one has attained. Schools, however, look at other modalities with which to define success. For us, it can be academic, social and personal. We all recognize that.

My sense of what makes for success involves three elements: the ability to focus, the ability to problem solve and the ability to work collaboratively. In our new global, technological and team-structured world, I believe that these three elements, when combined in one individual, provide a recipe for success. While there is no guarantee, with these three factors in place, the potential for success is greatly enhanced. Let us think about cultivating these ingredients for success in the world of the twenty-first century.

Our mission statement states that we promote academic achievement, personal development and social involvement; this is the first part of the equation. Focus, problem solving and collaboration complete the equation by providing the means to achieve those markers of a genuinely successful person.