



From the Desk of the Head of School

by Gerri Faivre

Dear Parents,

At my request, the grade level faculty discussed the new Mission Statement with their classes to see how they felt about it and posed questions that ask how they see it impacting their lives as students of Westbury Friends School. The results of these conversations are on the bulletin board in the front hallway and will be up through the end of October. However, in case you do not find yourself on campus to view it, we are sharing their insights with you through this communication. We think that the children truly know what it is like to be a student in a Quaker school, what the essence of the Mission of WFS is, and how to behave in the manner of friends at all times.

Gerri Faivre
Head of School

MISSION STATEMENT

Embracing the Quaker values of Simplicity, Peace, Integrity, Community, and Equality Westbury Friends School

- **guides students through an academically challenging curriculum toward a lifelong love of learning**
- **inspires students to recognize and appreciate their individual gifts and those of others**
- **provides students with the tools to live peacefully in a diverse world in the manner of friends**

Adopted by Board of Managers on August 5, 2009

The **Nursery Class** focused on the testimony of **Community** when they thought about the Mission Statement. Nursery children learn the sense of community throughout the day and the year by being snack helpers, by helping one another with puzzles or picking up large blocks that need two people to do the job. They 'read' their favorite book to a friend and take their peers for rides on the 'double' bikes. They help each other open up their lunch boxes and paint together at the easel. And they cook together with lots of cooperation to get the meal ready for 'everyone.' Community building is a big part of life in the Nursery class.

The **Pre-K** thought about the testimony of **Simplicity** and how they enjoy the simple things in life during their day in Pre-K: just being silly, working together, making friends and smiling!

Kindergarten students thought about the last phrase in the Mission Statement that reads “**provides students with the tools to live peacefully in a diverse world in the manner of friends**” and decided that it meant at WFS you learn to be friends, to think about each other and to try and have no wars.

The overwhelming sentiment from **First Grade** was that we should be happy to make new friends and have fun and work together. They focused on **appreciating the gifts of others**. One student spoke specifically about how they should be nice to everyone as that would be the good thing to do and stated, “That’s why it’s called Westbury ‘**Friends**’ School. “

The **Second Grade** spoke about three separate parts of the Mission Statement: **love of learning, being special and unique and appreciated for their special talents, and living peacefully**. Each student wrote journal entries about how WFS really does help you **love to learn** whether it is in art, music, spelling, PE, math, or reading. The children also shared how they were **unique in many different ways** such as wearing glasses, having a strong pitching arm, being a good dancer, a great reader, a good friend, or a good helper. And finally, the class recognized that they can and do **live peacefully** each day in many different ways...either by feeling peaceful when they help a classmate, relaxing and reading a book, when they have been nice to someone or perhaps when they are simply looking out the window at the sun and feeling a sense of peace. As one student wrote, “WFS helps me be.”

Third Grade views the Mission Statement as a journey, their own personal journey through this stage of their life as students. They see the school as a gift to be treasured and shared with all. They focused on the word ‘**tools**’ and saw it as a way and means by which the values they live by each day at WFS can be applied now and in the future.

The **Fourth and Fifth Grade** students focused on the part of the Mission Statement that “**inspires students to recognize and appreciate their individual gifts and those of others.**” They like the idea that there are so many different faces at WFS and that everyone is appreciated for what they individually accomplish. They feel that the Quaker values are part of everyday life here and that they reflect the fact that no matter how many cultural backgrounds exist at WFS, everyone can live in peace and harmony and appreciate one another. Our older students see how the values are put into action each day and how they themselves try to live by them. They expressed how WFS has inspired them during their years here and how it is a very friendly school for each of us always tries to celebrate the gifts of others.