



The Independent Mind

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The Importance of our Mission

Together, all at Clear Spring School promote a lifelong love of learning through a hands-on and hearts-engaged educational environment.

Our mission is the center of what we do here at the Clear Spring School. At teacher or board meetings we often ask, “does this new (or old) idea fit our stated mission?” As we navigate the current political climate and are faced with the COVID health crisis our mission seems even more important. So, how do we do what we do? The central tenet, and arguably the most challenging part, is that we do it together. This can make leadership hard, as it should be, but also nuanced. A brilliant idea, or a new way of getting things done is not enough, collaboration requires the building of relationships and trust. To do this, and to do it well, requires us to let go of some traditionally accepted ways of doing school. When you see pictures of students digging in the garden, building buddy benches, and investigating the rocks in a hillside you get a glimpse into the hands-on portion of our mission. This is the easy part to see, it is also the easiest part to implement, we DO a lot of things. We build, create, camp and make learning active and engaging.

The complexity of what we attempt to do is revealed in the hearts-engaged portion of our mission. This is harder to see, and much more challenging to live up to. Does it mean that every student is always happy to do every activity in their classroom? Heck no! Students are sometimes bored, frustrated, afraid, or just having a bad day. We even require them to do or try things they are not familiar with or outside of their comfort zone. This can be intimidating, scary and frustrating. What we aim for is an environment of trust, where the students know we will support them through challenges and that failures are part of learning. We want students to know that learning can sometimes be hard, and that frustration and disappointment are not to be avoided but embraced. Hearts-engaged reveals meaning and relevance, it reflects growth and pride. When a student or teacher has struggled to accomplish something that they know was hard for them they feel good about themselves. This lofty mission is harder to reflect for the students in the upper grades, as the pressures and expectations of the real-world seep into conversations about high school credits and college preparedness. This is when it is crucial for us as a school and parents to stay the course and remain true to the mission.

I believe that a student who graduates from our program will be prepared to navigate their life with compassion, critical thinking, and the ability to set and achieve goals with a wealth of knowledge and the ability to weather the failures and challenges ahead. As a school we are always learning, growing and challenging ourselves to do better. As a teaching team we attempt to model the experiential learning cycle ourselves and often go through the same emotions as the students with moments of frustration, anxiety and fear. Through modeling and empathy we share in the learning together. We really do care about one another and our program allows that care to be central to how we do what we do.

As always, stay healthy and be kind to one another,

Jessica, Head of School



“Education is not preparation for life; education is life itself.”

- John Dewey

Clear Spring School's Outdoor Education Programs are Thriving

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Above: Rigdon's first and second grade students worked hard moving compost to a new planting bed.



Above: Upper School 8-12 planting the newly installed garden beds.



Above: Upper School 8-12 learning beehive management and hive maintenance with Bethany.



Above: First and second graders working with Victoria on health and wellness, focusing on self-care and how to deal with stress.



Left - 5th-7th grade class visited the Four Wings Studio rock labyrinth to finish off their geology unit with Juanita.

Clear Spring Receives Grants to Support Curriculum, Outdoor Education and Health and Safety.



Kings River Watershed Partnership Grant of \$3,000 was awarded to support the Geology and Land Use Outdoor Science Blocks. This grant will help to support our outdoor education teacher Juanita Crider and her curriculum. Thank you KRWP for your continued support of the Clear Spring Outdoor Education Curriculum.

Pictured left: Head of School Jessica FitzPatrick with Juanita Crider with the check from KRWP.

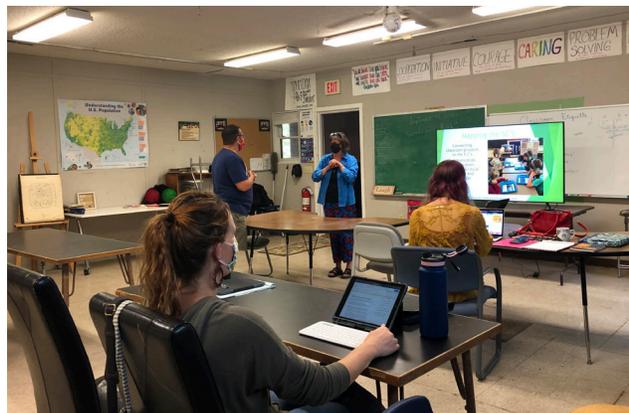
Carroll County Community Foundation 2020 Fall Giving Tree Grant was awarded to Clear Spring School for \$1,000 to increase our outdoor educational space with the purchase of picnic tables and to support the purchase of PPE for students and teachers. Jessica notes that “Clear Spring School is thankful for the added support for the health and safety of our teachers and students.”

Pictured right: Head of Clear Spring School, Jessica FitzPatrick accepting Giving Tree Grant check from Fred Eilskov, Carroll County Community Foundation Board Chairman.



Pictured above: Students using one of the picnic tables set up for outdoor learning purchased with the Giving Tree Grant.

The Arkansas Arts Council awarded a matching grant of \$4,266.00 to Clear Spring School. The Arts in Education Curriculum grant was awarded to the school to support



Arts Integration Projects focused on Teacher Training and Professional Development to be led by Dawn Ward. The goal of these workshops is to develop a collaborative

curriculum guide that will be used to identify best practices that can be used for for teacher training.

Above: Ward leads the first workshop on Mapping the 5C's in an Arts Integrated Curriculum.

Phyllis Poe Hands On Learning Center Classroom Renovations Near Completion



Students making their buddy benches (left) in the new woodshop at the POE. They are putting their benches around campus. A student can sit there when they are feeling stressed and need a buddy. (below and right are students using the benches.



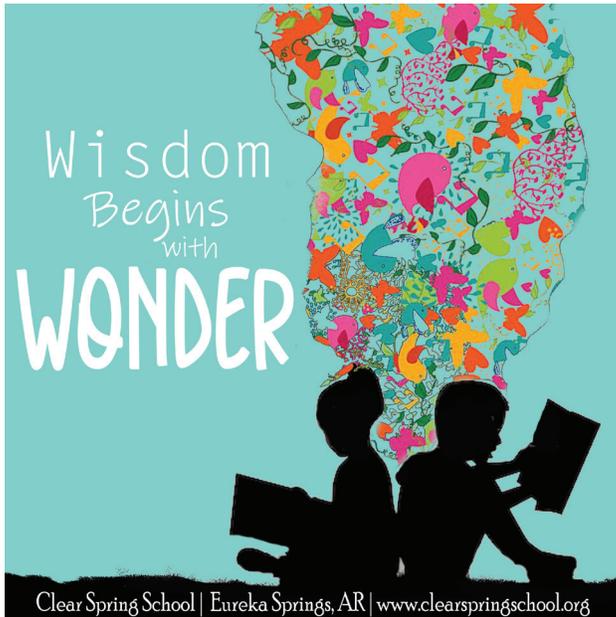
The new makerspace is in progress and will be available for students wanting to learn more about digital technology, 3D printing and laser cutting in the spring. Above: Glowforge laser cutter - left is the laser cutting a jigsaw puzzle.



The new Sewing room is complete and it's gorgeous. Mark can't wait to start sewing with the students again - especially in this beautiful sewing studio.



New Scholarships for Clear Spring Students!



Students at Clear Spring School have new scholarship opportunities in six categories: Wisdom of the Hands (Woodworking/Craftsmanship), Academic Excellence, Community Engagement (Service Scholarship), Hearts Engaged (Fine Arts), Naturalist (Outdoor Education), and Global Citizenship. These scholarship help students pursue their interests in more specific ways at Clear Spring and each recipient will commit to projects in their area and present their work at the end of the year gallery event. If you would like to support a Clear Spring student's scholarship please give to our "Adopt Excellence" scholarship fund. More details about the scholarships and ways to support them can be found on our website at <https://www.clearspringschool.org/giving>

GIVING TUESDAY

This year Giving Tuesday falls on December 1st. Mark your calendars and keep an eye out for a chance to support Clear Spring School on this nationally recognized day of giving. Announcements will be posted soon on our website, Facebook and Instagram pages.

SAVE the DATE!

The Clear Spring Fling Silent Auction will be here before you know it!

This year's Clear Spring Fling will be on Saturday March 6th. We are currently planning and preparing an exciting online silent auction for this year's Spring Fling along with other ways that you can participate in this year's event. We are accepting donations of local fine art and gift certificates so please contact the school if you would like to donate an item or service (479) 253-7888.



Tax Deductible Donation Form

Clear Spring School is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. We rely upon the financial support of individual and corporate contributions in order to continue providing the quality education we have been known for since 1974. If you or someone you know is interested in contributing to Clear Spring School, please complete this form or call us at (479) 253-7888. Tax Donation Letters are available. Donations can also be made online on our Giving Page.

Please visit www.clearspringsschool.org/giving

Name _____

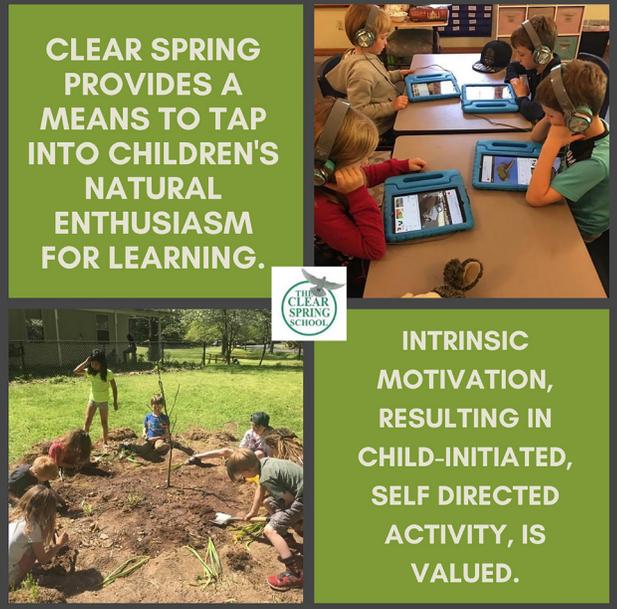
Address _____

Phone(s) _____

Email _____

I have enclosed \$ towards:

- Phyllis Poe Hands-On Learning Center
- Adopt Excellence (Scholarship Program)
- Annual Fund
- Wisdom of the Hands
- Other _____



CLEAR SPRING PROVIDES A MEANS TO TAP INTO CHILDREN'S NATURAL ENTHUSIASM FOR LEARNING.

INTRINSIC MOTIVATION, RESULTING IN CHILD-INITIATED, SELF DIRECTED ACTIVITY, IS VALUED.

Thank you for your generous gift!



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