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Scott McCreery  
Director

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Dear Skyview School Families,

Skyview School was founded on the use of research-based standard of instruction, referred to as “best practices” in education. The expression “best practice” was originally borrowed from the professions of medicine, law, and architecture, where “good practice” or “best practice” were everyday phrases used to describe solid, reputable, state-of-the art work in the field. When a professional is using best practice standards, he or she is aware of the current research and consistently offers clients the full benefits of the latest knowledge, technology, and procedures.

Through rigorous research by the nation’s professional teaching organizations over the last thirty years, best practice standards have been formulated and utilized. The fundamental insights into teaching and learning discovered through the research have contributed to an educational paradigm shift that is slowly transforming the learning experience for students. Skyview School has been utilizing the thirteen interlocking principles for the past fourteen years. As you read through the following list of best practices used at Skyview School, I trust you will recognize how we are weaving them into our educational model.

**STUDENT-CENTERED:** The best starting point for schooling is young people's real interests. Across the curriculum, investigating students' questions should always take precedence over studying arbitrarily and distantly selected content.

**EXPERIENTIAL:** Active, hands-on, concrete experience is the most powerful and natural form of learning. Students should be immersed in the most direct possible experience of the content of every subject.

**HOLISTIC:** Children learn best when they encounter whole ideas, events, and materials in purposeful contexts, not by studying sub-parts isolated from actual use.

**AUTHENTIC:** Real, rich, complex ideas and materials are at the heart of the curriculum. Lessons or textbooks that water-down, control, or over- simplify content ultimately dis-empower students.

**EXPRESSIVE:** To fully engage ideas, construct meaning, and remember information, students must regularly employ the whole range of communicative media including speech, writing, drawing, poetry, dance, drama [storytelling], music, movement and visual arts [and visual displays of information including charts, graphs, pictographs and diagrams].

**REFLECTIVE:** Immersion in experience and expression must be balanced with opportunities for learners to reflect, debrief, and abstract from the experiences what they have felt, thought and learned.

**SOCIAL:** Learning is always socially constructed and often involves social interaction.

**COLLABORATIVE:** Cooperative learning activities tap the power of learning better than competitive or individualistic approaches.

**DEMOCRATIC:** The classroom is a model community. Students learn what they live as citizens of the school.

**COGNITIVE:** The most powerful learning comes when children develop true understanding of concepts through higher-order thinking associated with inquiry and self-monitoring of their thought process.

**DEVELOPMENTAL:** Children grow through a series of definable but not rigid stages. Educational institutions should align their activities to the developmental level of students.

**CONSTRUCTIVIST:** Children do not just receive content; in a very real sense they re-create and reinvent meaning for every system they encounter including language and mathematics. Teachers need to provide activities and interactions that structure or scaffold learning so students can create meaning in incremental segments.

**CHALLENGING:** Students learn best when faced with genuine challenges, choices, and responsibility for their own learning.

### ***Skyview School “Outer Space Disco” Dance***

Skyview School’s annual family dance is tomorrow, March 5<sup>th</sup> from 6:00-8:00 PM at the Prescott Mile High Middle School cafeteria. We are very excited to once again have Kirk Higgins, Skyview School’s long-time favorite DJ, select music to play for the evening. This year’s theme for the dance will be *Outer Space Disco*, so start dreaming up something fun to wear for the evening.

### ***Art Furniture Silent Auction***

The intermediate 3/4 is putting on a fundraiser at the school dance to earn money for a greenhouse. A few classes have decorated furniture and will be sold through silent auction from 6pm-8pm. The winners will be announced at the dance, but you do not have to be present to win. Please help us reach our goal of \$5,000.

### ***Re-enrollment Packets***

Thank you everyone who completed a re-enrollment packet for your child/children and returned it to the office. If you have not yet completed the packet, you have one more day to fill out the paperwork and turn it into the office! Re-enrollment officially closes at 3:00 PM tomorrow, March 5<sup>th</sup>. Again, we sincerely hope all of you re-enroll your children at Skyview!

### ***Kids & Company***

Kids & Company will be providing childcare during Prescott Unified School District’s spring break, which is March 15<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup>. Their hours of operation will be from 6:30 AM – 6:00 PM. Families who will be having their children at Kids & Company during those hours will need to provide their children breakfast, morning snack, and lunch. The afternoon snack will be provided at no additional cost. For more information call 541-2295.

### ***Spring Break***

We have one more week to spring break! With the make-up days and the multiple winter storms we have been having this year, there seems to be a building excitement among the students and staff. Spring break will be from March 12<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup>. While many of us will be in and out over the break, the office will be open Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM. In addition, we are planning to transform the courtyard and have the sidewalk removed and re-poured over the break to solve some of the school’s water flow issues that became an issue this year. All of us at Skyview School wish you all a wonderful spring break with your family and friends.

This will be the last Director Letter of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter. Next week our quarterly *Skyview Skylines* will be distributed to all families.

Sincerely,

Scott McCreery