

# The Canaan Ridge School



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## A Little Haven for Learning in North Stamford

Hidden in the hills of North Stamford, since 1977, is The Canaan Ridge School; very private and secure. It is a warm, nurturing country day school that has evolved in 30 years to include a nursery through second grade program.

Our nursery and pre-k children have an option of a half-day or full-day program. Our K-1-2 program is a full-day program with children grouped by ability, not chronological age. These children enjoy one-on-one morning academic lessons.

The teachers strive to nurture and develop each child's strengths, be it in reading comprehension, math skills, or sensorial awareness. We keep in mind that they are still young children and need their space and time for unstructured and creative play while careful attention is given to different learning styles.

Each child begins an adventure the moment they walk through the door. The school is transformed each September with a fresh theme. Previous years have included The Beauty of Sea Life, The Great Rainforest, The Splendor of Africa and The Wonder of Space. All children partake in this learning through academic areas, music, crafts and field trips, culminating in our annual Family Day celebrated in November.

- Music is an integral part of the Canaan Ridge experience. All children have a daily music program which includes singing (from a repertoire of the Beatles to French songs), dancing with scarves, hoops, ribbon sticks and balancing peacock feathers. Our love of music is celebrated in so many ways. It is a constant background in all the classrooms and hallways. We listen to everything from the classics to Scott Joplin and Cirque. The school has produced many music CDs showcasing the children's voices and musical talents. They enjoy hearing them over and over again. Our Spring Music Review is a well-anticipated event. We feel our gift of music to children will be enjoyed throughout their lifetime.

- Art is not only an everyday program, but is presented to all the children in the hallways: the bold colors of Delaunay, the great African wildlife artist Simon Coombes, and the fanciful illustrations from James Gurney's *Dinotopia*. Students take part in a scaled down



"Learning to Look" program in their art room introducing the works of famous artists. Trips to art museums are part of the K-1-2 program.

- Teachers adept in Spanish, French, Chess, and Drama are brought in weekly for our K-1-2 children.

Mandarin will also be introduced as part of the 2008-09 school year. All children have science every Friday in our Science room as well as Yoga on Fridays in the gym.

The second half of our school year starts children with passports on a journey across the globe, exploring varied cultures and customs in our International program.

- Canaan Ridge School is a member of Jane Goodall's "Roots and Shoots" initiative. With this, our children are involved each month with fulfilling three objectives — diversity of cultures, care and protection of animals, and concern for our environment. In 2007 we had the privilege of meeting with Jane at Western Connecticut State

University, where we showed her several of our programs in these areas. Canaan Ridge children are also involved with the Riverkeeper organization, dedicated to efforts to stop pollution and improve the waters of the Hudson River.

- The children have been able to take part in many outreach projects both locally and around the world, which were set in motion several years ago. These projects include: singing at Stamford

nursing homes, giving to area shelters, and sending care packages and supplies to Beslan, Russia, the tsunami children and Hurricane Katrina victims. We have a sister school in Tanzania, The Meru School, to which we periodically send donations and supplies, along with the Keratu Orphanage run by India Howell in Tanzania.

- Sports is a daily program at our school. We incorporate the core and functional fitness training for all children.

Our outdoor program of Environmental Studies is very important at Canaan Ridge. It is more important than ever

to see that children enjoy nature and all that it has to offer. With electronic games, after school activities, and parents rushing here and there, children spend less time enjoying their natural surroundings. Our academic studies let children outdoors

for math, science, and overall nature studies. Our greenhouse allows children to grow plants year round.

So many former students and college graduates return to visit the place where their love of learning began. Some have even returned as teachers and summer session counselors. Children leave Canaan Ridge with the confidence that they are good learners, proud of their abilities, with a good foundation for future schooling. This is what draws them back to visit years later as they realize more fully the gift Canaan Ridge has given them.