

WHAT IS FOUNDATION DOING TO KEEP QUALITY STAFF?

At Foundation Prep we believe teachers are one of the most important levers to student success. Since our second year, we have had 100% teacher retention throughout the school year. We believe our Employee Value Proposition is why.

Our EVP affirms that these four principals make us a special place to work:

TEAM & FAMILY CULTURE

FIERCE INCLUSIVITY

SUSTAINABILITY & BENEFITS

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

FIERCE INCLUSIVITY

- At FP we have respect for each other and we trust one another.
- At FP, our values are lived out every day.
- At FP, all are aligned on the vision for what education should look like for children.

SUSTAINABILITY & BENEFITS

- We believe everyone has their own unique identity - we celebrate all of them.
- We believe having people of different backgrounds, experiences & abilities makes us STRONGER.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- We believe in working smarter, not on working harder for the sake of working hard.
- We believe in getting work done at school so staff can take care of their own families, friends & selves.
- "FP has the best health and retirement benefits that I've seen at any school I've ever worked with in my 20 years as an educator." Ms Johnson

TEAM & FAMILY CULTURE

- Every staff member has an individual development plan
- New and novice teachers are paired with experienced, mentor teachers
- Teachers receive bi/weekly coaching through observation or data analysis
- We believe in developing staff for long-term career aspirations

We hold ourselves accountable to our EVP by completing **three check-ins** with all teachers and staff (Beginning of Year, Middle of Year, and End of Year).

At these check-ins we ask staff:

- 1) How are you (personally)?
- 2) What is going well?
- 3) What are some challenges you're facing?
- 4) How can we support you to fix those challenges?

We keep notes and check-in to ensure that the previous challenges are no longer challenges, and continue to strive for a healthy work environment.

HOW DOES FOUNDATION KEEP PARENTS INFORMED OF CHANGES AT THE SCHOOL?

In The Moment

Safety/Health/Emergency Concerns:

Teachers use Foundation Prep's "Emergency Phone Tree" to make calls to families regarding the concern.

Non-Emergency Concerns:

School or Teachers will send a text and will follow-up with a letter sent home/emailed.

Regular Communication:

Daily: Students bring home notes about the day, daily in their homework folders. Families support homework nightly, by reading notes and signing completion.

Bi-Weekly: Teachers call families to tell them about what's going on in the classroom, things their students are excelling at and things they can help their children work on.

Monthly: We send monthly newsletter with upcoming events, important dates and reminders along with highlights of the previous month.

***Next Year:** We are launching a teacher/class page on our Foundation Prep website in the fall, so that parents/families can stay informed with the work happening in classrooms.

HOW DOES THE ADMINISTRATION KEEP TRACK OF WHAT IS HAPPENING IN THE CLASSROOMS?

We have an open door policy. We ask teachers to physically keep their doors open.

The Head of School and Principal make morning sweeps daily.

Teachers are observed, announced and unannounced, on a weekly basis.

Leadership is ever present. When not in classrooms, Leadership works in the hallways, and community spaces, so we are always engaged with what is occurring in our classrooms and our school building.

Take a tour, you'll notice our calm, safe environment first-hand.

IN WHAT WAYS IS FOUNDATION MOST SIMILAR TO CYPRESS?

We are similar because . . .

we have a family environment

At Foundation Prep, students are greeted every morning by a minimum of 5 adults by name before they enter the cafeteria. Staff know about family life and have relationships with students outside of our classrooms. Our teachers have taught several years of the same families, and the bond that this creates is special.

[of] mission alignment

We are dedicated to providing the highest-quality innovative education to a diverse student body of varying backgrounds and abilities. We don't do this in a silo and work in partnership with our incredible families.

[of] similar histories

Cypress and Foundation were authorized and opened in August of the same year, with the same grade levels. We have grown at the same rate and believe that every child is an individual who is seen and loved.

~Check out our "DID YOU KNOW" page for hiring updates!~



WHAT IS FOUNDATION PREP DOING TO ENSURE FINANCIAL STABILITY FOR THE FUTURE?

As a result of Foundation Prep being in its start up phase (What is a "start-up phase"? [Click here](#)), as well as our belief that it is paramount to have two teachers in classrooms, and specialized services, we spend copious amounts of time, energy and resources doing the following:

- 1. Fundraising:** In the past four years we have raised over 3 million dollars from private and public funders. We continue to cultivate relationships with funders both locally and nationally.
- 2. Competitive Rates:** Through the use of the legal expertise of the Head of School, we are able to find significant savings in critical contracts like a) janitorial/maintenance, b) financial/back office, c) food services, and d) buses
- 3. Compliance:** We have a third party auditor perform a financial audit that includes an audit of our fiscal and operational systems and routines. Those audits are public record. We are always above compliance both with the independent auditor and the District. Check out our most recent rating on Financial Health.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT THAT CYPRESS PARENTS COMMIT TO FOUNDATION PREP NOW? WHY NOT WAIT UNTIL THE END OF THE SCHOOL YEAR?

It is important to know who will be joining us next year for two very important reasons:

- 1. Hiring the best staff:** We believe in attracting, hiring and retaining the best teachers for all of our students. This process starts in November/December with a goal of finishing the school year (end of May) completely hired for the following school year. In order to ensure that we are hiring correctly for next year, we must know how many students will be attending our school, thus how many classrooms we need, and how many teachers we must hire to teach in those classrooms. We have already begun the work of ensuring our current teachers are returning and continue to be professionally developed throughout the remainder of this school year. Now, we are doing more of the heavy lifting of finding quality educators and hiring them for next year.
- 2. Fundraising/Grants:** In order to best fundraise for the needs that we will have next year (as well as beyond next year) we must have a sense of how many students and families we will be serving during the following, critical grant writing months. We are seeking grants to cushion the transition and support in the training and providing of extra services that we may not currently have a population need for this year, but could with the addition of Cypress families next year. To best financially plan for these different needs, in a way that allows for a seamless transition, we must first know that we have the needs.

Please look at later posts to see the Cypress Teachers and staff that have committed to Foundation Prep next year!

LOCATION/TRANSPORTATION: HOW FAR IS THE NEW BUILDING FROM CYPRESS? WOULD MY COMMUTE BE LONGER?

This summer we will move to the Medard Nelson building, located at 3121 St. Bernard Ave. It is 1.2 miles from our current location at the McDonough 28 building, 2733 Esplanade Avenue. Cypress Academy in the Dibert building (4217 Orleans Avenue) is 1.9 miles from the McDonough 28 building and 2.1 miles from the Nelson building. The Nelson building is .4 miles from I610.

For those who choose to take the school bus, we provide door-to-door service, whenever possible.

WHAT ARE YOUR DISCIPLINE POLICIES?

As a school community, we engage in Restorative Practices, ensuring that every opportunity is a learning opportunity. Every year our students' needs change, because as students change and grow, and we find ways to best support them in the effort of creating a safe, calm and joyful environment for all. We work in partnership with families and their children to ensure that students' needs, academic and social/emotional, are met, while creating a safe, calm and joyful learning environment.

We have a school wide Social Emotional Learning curriculum for all our students/grade levels, which is part of our Tier 1 curriculum.

We also take what we know from each year and implement it in the beginning of the following school year to keep services seamless and transitions to a minimum.

IS FOUNDATION PREP EQUIPPED TO HANDLE MY CHILD WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS?

We are in the process of hiring a full time, self-contained classroom Special Education certified teacher for students who are currently in self-contained classrooms at Cypress, as we are a full inclusion setting. We are also working closely with Mrs. Laverne Fleming and Dr. Shayla Guidry to ensure that our Exceptional Services/SPED teams are ready for a smooth transition, ensuring we have the staff and functional capacity to serve all of our students as well in the 2019-2020 school year (and beyond) as we have the past four years.

Every child is different, and we acknowledge, respect and create policies with this in mind. We also believe, per Federal Special Education Laws that all students should be educated in the least restrictive environment. Our vision is for our students to be advocates for themselves, their families and their communities. They must find their voice and be able to use it for this vision to become a reality. We strive to teach in an environment that promotes this growth for all our students.

MY CHILD HAS GONE THROUGH LOTS OF CHANGES, WILL THE NEW BUILDING HAVE ENOUGH SPACE FOR ALL THE STUDENTS TO GROW?

The Medard Nelson Building was created to house students from PreK-4 to 8th grade. The current Nelson school has over 600 students in PreK-4 to 8th grade. We anticipate that the building will be large enough to accommodate Foundation Preparatory for the same amount of grades and students (with lots of bathrooms!)

It has two outdoor play structures, a large field (big enough for football and/or soccer) and large courtyards for outdoor activities, like gardening.

DIDN'T SEE YOUR QUESTION ANSWERED? EMAIL IT
HERE INFO@FOUNDATIONPREPARATORY.ORG.