

World Academy celebrates 35 years of 'opportunity' for students

The world is changing at an unprecedented rate, and many traditional methods of teaching have been unable to provide the necessary skills that students require to keep pace. Kathy Nelson, who this year celebrates 35 years since founding World Academy in Nashua, knows that students require different skill sets, today, than they did in the past.



Photo by Bruce Preston Photography
Students find a unique way to celebrate World Academy's 35th Anniversary

World Academy has always made it a point to understand the shifting landscape of emerging technologies and to incorporate them into their curriculum. Last year, a technology survey by CIPP-G found that 94 percent of students report that they use technology to complete their homework. Instead of ignoring the ever-increasing list of technologies students can use to complete assignments, World Academy embraces them.

Nelson and her husband founded the Small World Learning Center - now World Academy - with a 35-student inaugural class. The private school now serves over 450 infants to Grade Eight students. So preferred has the teaching style of World Academy become, that the school currently has a waiting list for spots in many classrooms.

"Our fundamental goal is to build well-rounded people," says Nelson. "Small class-sizes, a focus on individual learning styles and a collaborative community of teachers, parents, and students creates the perfect environment for that to happen. They promote higher test scores and instill confidence in students to take risks, which fosters resilience. I think that parents sense that the second that they step through our doors."

Today's kindergartners will retire in 2024, and will live in a world much different than our own. Sustainability Manager, Social Media Strategist, User Experience Specialist, these are careers that did not exist a decade ago. New career possibilities require a new array of skills that students must learn. In our current educational system

preparing them to live in that world?

"Education is so much more than just core competencies, although a strong foundation is vital," Nelson adds. "Effective education must promote critical problem-solving skills and build strong character traits that students will benefit from throughout the rest of their lives. They will need to know how to find the information they require and to collaborate with others successfully and respectfully. These are some of the objectives of a 21st century education."

In fact, 21st century education is the basis of World Academy's entire philosophy. Perhaps the best way to define what 21st century education means is to explain the necessary 21st century skills. Critical thinking and problem solving, accessing and analyzing information, entrepreneurship, multi-literacy and global diversity are a few of those skills that Nelson feels best describes their 'whole' child approach.

The approach uniquely nurtures each student's academic, emotional, cognitive, physical, cultural, social and creative development. World Academy's continuous NWEA testing allows the teacher to customize individualized learning experiences based on the student's personal best and academic goals.

"A well-rounded student extends beyond just the classroom," Nelson adds. "We offer many extracurricular activities such as sports, community service programs, art, peer-mediation and peer-leadership groups, drama classes, and more. "Well-rounded, high quality individuals are what parents expect from the World Academy experience, and that is what students have received for the past 35 years."

World Academy parent, Zeina Kyouss appreciates the specialized attention that each of her children receive at World Academy. "My kids have two very different personalities and even different learning styles," she says. "World Academy nurtures their individual talents through specialized curriculum where academics are only half of the story."

The close-knit Nashua school allows students to try their hands at whatever they find most interesting and to test which ones seem the best fit. Often, they are surprised themselves!

Everyone at World Academy works tirelessly to create an environment where students discover a true love of learning. The community of parents, teachers, and administrators continue to embrace the value of an all-encompassing quality education. Just as World Academy has for the past 35 years and will continue to aspire to well into the ever-changing future.

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For each, a world of opportunity.

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KATHY NELSON