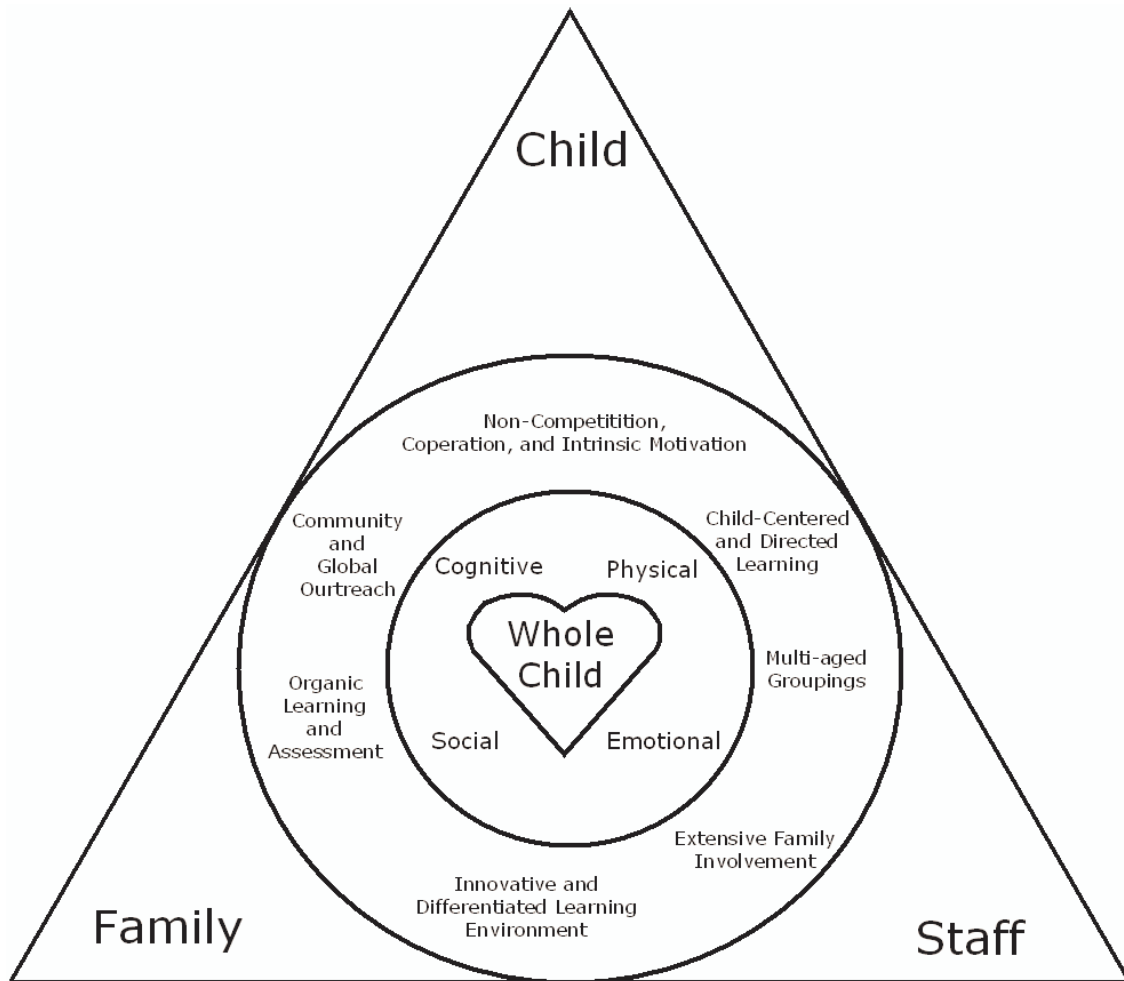


The Alternative Program at Riverview

At Riverview Alternative School, students, school staff, and families work together to create an inclusive, non-competitive, and nurturing learning environment.

Central to our program is the commitment to nurture the whole child, recognizing the importance of cognitive, physical, emotional, and social development. Seven core principles and a learning triad consisting of the child, their family, and the school staff help to guide and support the Alternative Program and sustain the learning environment of the school.



Emphasis on Cooperation and Teamwork

Riverview Alternative is safe, inclusive, and welcoming. There is no competition for marks, for prizes, or for attention. Instead the emphasis is on cooperation, working together, and valuing everyone's contributions. Students are motivated by curiosity and the natural desire to learn.

Indicators:

*All students can participate in activities – there are no try-outs.
Students engage in sports as a team-building experience.
Collaborative problem-solving, and restorative conflict resolution are emphasized in all aspects of the school.
Everyone's contribution is valued.*

Child-Centered and Directed Learning

At Riverview, students' voices and interests are valued. Collaboration on meaningful projects among students, teachers, and community members of all ages is encouraged. Students and teachers work together to set learning goals. Students learn through activities and projects that touch on many aspects of the curriculum simultaneously, and that engage all learning styles.

Indicators:

*Children are encouraged to share their learning in special interest areas.
Teachers provide learning opportunities that are responsive to multiple learning styles.
Classrooms are arranged for group work and varied student groupings.
Students' voices are heard and valued in the learning process.*

Multi-Age Learning Experiences

Riverview is a community where older and younger children, teachers and staff learn together in a variety of settings and groupings. A commitment to shared learning activities brings students of different ages together, and nurtures a family-like environment.

Indicators:

There is intentional use of flexible cross-grade groupings and inter-class collaboration.

Innovative Programming and Delivery Model

There is a commitment to innovative approaches to teaching and learning through a shared responsibility among staff, students, and parents. Innovation requires creativity which is nurtured by risk taking and independent thinking.

There is ongoing reflection and evaluation of innovations by all members of the school community.

Indicators:

Authentic learning experiences and experiential learning are built into all subject areas and programmes.

Critical thinking, problem-solving, inquiry, reflection and technology, as core practices, are visible in inquiry-based learning units, outdoor classrooms, and extensive use of community resources which enrich this learning.

Extensive Family Involvement

Families are expected to participate in meaningful ways.

All family and community members are welcomed in our inclusive school environment. Diversity, with its many facets, is accepted, respected and embraced. Parental engagement allows teachers to enrich student-directed learning.

Indicators:

You will see parents involved in substantial classroom volunteering, School Council meetings and activities, organizing events and clubs, and in the preparation of classroom materials. The School Council identifies and works with staff to address and remove barriers to parent engagement.

Organic Learning and Assessment

Riverview provides an environment that nurtures the whole child, and engages them in learning that is authentic and individualized.

Assessment and evaluation is ongoing using multiple strategies. The primary focus of this process is personal growth as well as being used as a tool for program planning and assessment.

Indicators:

Multiple opportunities for feedback and follow-up are planned at critical checkpoints in the learning.

There is reduced emphasis on grades and traditional tests in favour of authentic learning and assessment.

Students participate in the development of their own learning goals.

Students participate in the collection and development of personal learning files (e.g., portfolios, learning logs, course notebooks, student files) that assist in informing the next steps in their learning.

Annual student-led conferences are held.

Community and Global Outreach

At Riverview, we recognize that we are not only part of the local community, but are global citizens. We use the curriculum to deepen students' understanding of the interconnectedness of our world and ourselves.

Indicators:

Students participate in activities that have a positive environmental and social impact.

Students are engaged in exploring real-world issues and solving authentic problems.

Students participate in community and global projects.

Alternative School Advisory Committee

Riverview Alternative is one of five alternative schools in the OCDSB. All the alternative school parents work together as part of the Alternative School Advisory Committee (ASAC). ASAC advises the OCDSB on alternative school issues and allows alternative schools to come together to share ideas. Please visit www.asac-ottawa.org for more information about ASAC and how to get involved.