Survey for Writing Philosophy Statement for New School

Completing this survey will be the steps used in the process for writing a philosophy statement for a new school. (For further explanations and information read pages 68-69 of the text.)

Theories of Learning

Choose one and circle the bullet

- Children learn best when they are given extrinsic motivations in the form of rewards such as tokens or good stars. This is called the environmental or behaviorist approach. What the child learns is determined by adults and can be observed or measured.
- There is an inner force that activates cognitive systems as children grow and mature. When children are developmentally ready they will choose activities and experiences that they can accomplish. Their satisfaction at mastering tasks provides intrinsic rewards.
- Results from an interaction between children and their environment. Children construct their own knowledge through repeated interactions with people and objects. They experiment, test their errors or misconceptions, arrive at new conclusions, and thus, construct new knowledge.
- Cognitive abilities result from an interaction of children with more mature members of their society or culture. The social environment provides the support system that guides children from one intellectual level to the next. Adults carefully structure a series of learning experiences so that children gradually move from assisted performance to individual learning. This process is successful only to the extent that adults are sensitive to each child’s level of competence.

Values

Choose one and circle the bullet
The next step in the process is to consider the values held by those involved in planning the program:

- Whish is more important, children’s self-esteem or what they learn?
- Should children develop autonomy in order to enable them to participate fully in a free society or should they learn to obey adults?
- Do children have a right to make their own choices, or should they accept adult decisions?
- Should families be more a part of school activities, or should school be the exclusive domain of professionals?
Function of the School

Choose one and circle the bullet
Next, identify ideas about education and the function of the school.
- A preschool center should prepare children for kindergarten
- A school should teach children to be better disciplined.
- The environment of a school should be nurturing and protective.
- School should prepare children for life, not just for the next phase of education.
- The teaching of moral values should be left to parents.
- The school curriculum should provide an opportunity for students to retain aspects of their own cultural background.