NATURE IMMERSION DAILY RHYTHM

9:00am	**ARRIVAL**
9:00-9:30am	**FREE EXPLORATION, GARDENING & SENSORY PLAY**
9:30-10:00am	**GUIDED NATURE STUDIES**
10:00-10:20am	**MORNING MEETING CIRCLE TIME**
10:20-10:30am	**BATHROOM BREAK/WASH HANDS**
10:30-11:00am	**COOKING AND SNACK**
11:00-11:15am	**STORYTIME**
11:15-11:45am	**FREE EXPLORATION, GARDENING & SENSORY PLAY**
11:45am-12:00pm	**GOODBYE CIRCLE**
12:00pm	**AM DISMISSAL**
12:00-12:15pm	**WASH HANDS/PREPARE FOR LUNCH**
12:15-12:45pm	**LUNCH**
12:45-1:00pm	**BATHROOM BREAK/TRANSITION TO NAP**
1:00-2:15pm	**NAP AND/OR QUIET ACTIVITY TIME**
2:15-3:15pm	**FREE EXPLORATION, GARDENING & SENSORY PLAY**
3:15-3:30pm	**CLOSING CIRCLE**
3:30pm	**DISMISSAL**

DROP OFF

Drop off begins with greeting an educator; this process creates connection and safety between educator and student. This is an essential time to connect to higher parts of the brain for problem solving, reasoning, and readiness to learn. Next, students are responsible for putting their lunch box and backpack under the porch to create responsibility for belongings and pride of place.

FREE EXPLORATION

Students have the opportunity to explore their playspace, manipulate tools in the environment, and notice changes within themselves, the environment, and others. The outdoor classroom is carefully designed with the intention of following students patterns of play and connecting to nature. Shovels, pots, and pipes are used freely as props to expand on play and work together to achieve goals. Students are able to problem solve with peers, build gross and fine motor skills, and exercise cognitive abilities through play. The natural environment is observable and attainable to our school family. We notice mushrooms, growing plants, birds in the trees, squirrels exploring our space, cicadas, weather changes, airplanes, trains, trucks, butterflies, millipedes, and anything going on around us. We observe the natural world over time; noticing changes, similarities, and things that stand out to us.

GARDENING

Gardening in NI is the introduction to the world of farming and the easiest way for the children to connect with nature and nurture living things in our environment. The goal of gardening is an opportunity for students to learn about parts of seeds , flowers and plants. Children learn how to care for the plants and are fortunate to observe the whole growing process. Our garden is an extension of our classroom.

SENSORY PLAY

Sensory play will involve the students 5 senses (touch, smell, taste, sight, and hearing) as well as vestibular and proprioception systems. It will give the students time to explore, discover, and create using many textures and items to help develop fine motor skills. We will be working with foods and learning how to wash and prepare healthy snacks. Exploring the inside textures, smells, and tastes of fruits and vegetables as well as harvesting their seeds to plant. Students will learn how to clean and sanitize their space when finished. Students will be encouraged to communicate with fellow peers on their experience.

GUIDED NATURE STUDIES

During our Guided Nature Studies, we take a closer, more in-depth look at some of the plants, creatures, and other natural elements in our environment. We identify patterns, make comparisons, sort by size, shape and texture. We take time to notice changes, the weather, the clouds in the sky, or anything else that we find interesting.

We draw and document our findings. Drawing gives children the chance to represent a real object in a pictorial way. The pictorial arts have their own language for creating meaning. In

human evolution and child development, the line is the earliest pictorial means of expression, and once we can create a line, we can go from line to plane. Guided representation in drawing and painting can enhance children's learning and expressive abilities in an interdisciplinary way.

With the developing child, it is important to honor the tension between freedom and rules, allowing them to create freely, but also providing them with some gentle guidance and instruction on occasion. It is the balanced interplay between the two that will be most beneficial.

MORNING MEETING

Morning meeting begins by taking breaths, telling ourselves we're safe to be problem solvers, and calming our bodies to spend intentional time together. It is a time for students to connect with peers and educators while practicing attention skills (listening to stories), control of body (staying in space), conversation skills (speaking and listening to others), and awareness of the environment (talking about what we can observe). Following the Conscious Discipline framework, students sing songs for connection and safety. We sing a connection song, safety song, and a wish well song. These songs cultivate social emotional development through routine, connection and feeling safe within our school family. Our morning story consists of observable nature experiences (identifying weather, growing plants, animals and habitats), social emotional development (feelings, handling strong emotions, being the boss of self), or expanding on student interests (dinosaurs, princesses, animals, or construction).

COOKING

Early childhood programs are a bridge from home to school, so cooking is a natural extension of home life and very comforting to the child. It is also an important life skill. Making bread, soup, applesauce, and hummus are some of our favorite snacks!

SNACK

Students practice being responsible for their materials by grabbing their water bottles, putting their food away, and making space for themselves and others. Students exercise conversation skills and appropriate table manners.

LUNCH

Full day students gather together and eat lunch together. Unprompted conversation topics include what is in our play space, I-spy, predator vs. prey, making up stories, and sharing their experiences. Students practice sitting down, opening and putting their food away, and how to eat at a restaurant.

NAP

A time to learn that our bodies need rest. This is also a time when educators clean and sanitize classroom materials.

GOODBYE CIRCLE

At the end of the day, our students gather together to say their good-byes and listen to a story and discuss their day. Students talk about acts of helpfulness they saw throughout the day and what they liked to do that day. We expand on topics of interest such as roads, volcanoes, ants, pretend play and how we brought it to life for the day. We sing our goodbye song to our friends who are leaving.