



A Letter From Our Founder, Renée Boey

Creativity is a process, just like baking is. We live in a time of instant gratification, rapid materialization, and constant updates that make the pace of progress feel breathless. We anxiously await the fruits of learning, but learning takes time, and it takes careful nurturing for nature to bloom. One of the biggest shifts taking place in education is a growing understanding of the process of learning and of creativity. Projects, portfolios, experiential learning, design thinking, gamification, personalized learning, mastery transcript - the new enthusiasm for these approaches is in a way a return to a very traditional idea - *trust* in each child's natural ability to learn, and *patience* for the process involved.

Innovation, of course, is necessary as our world - from technology to politics and ecological realities - transforms at a shocking pace. With such tremendous change, organisms and societies must adapt, and the value of creativity rises exponentially. This is why Baker & Bloom's unique mission of **cultivating creative literacy and confidence** matters. We do it by combining professionalism in teaching and passion for inspiring. We respect the pace of each child's learning, and believe that guiding them to reflect on their own process of learning will serve them well throughout life.

Five years ago, in my letter to parents to launch Baker & Bloom, I wrote about my dream of preparing young people to face challenges with positivity, integrity, and creative confidence. Building this place of joyful and deep learning has also been a process for me and for my wonderful team. We have been surprised by how quickly we grew from G6+ to K-12, how many new programs like inspirED Reader & Writer, STEM and Public Speaking have blossomed out of our commitment to the Four-Leaf Approach. We now cultivate creativity through multiple literacies - including computational and multimedia

literacies - and our students are writing stories, making podcasts and coding robots. They are also learning in new places like at STEAM camps in Ocean Park and at various startups through our inspirED Internship Program in partnership with CoCoon. This year, we are launching Chinese and Spanish and even an Innovation Program that combines social emotional learning with design thinking and project-based learning.

Figuring out how to creatively educate, using new methods and tools while retaining the best of traditional approaches like John Dewey's ethos of learning by doing, or classical education's values of truth, goodness, and beauty, and the humanist emphasis in a liberal arts education - this is the task we take on together at Baker & Bloom.

I am always grateful for the trust that parents place in us, and for the enthusiasm, curiosity, and openness that our children share with us as they grow. Their journey is our journey; their growth our joy. My hope for all Baker & Bloom students, past and present, is that they continue to cultivate their inner life, and connect that meaningfully to the outer world to make a positive difference.

"And now we welcome the new year, full of things that have never been."

— **Rainer Maria Rilke**