**The Brain Friendly School**

**TLI - Child Psychology – Grade 11**

**Paragraph 1:** Our brain friendly school will be in a building with lots of curves. It will have the appearance of a building out a Dr. Suess book, intriguing to look at from the outside, and fun to explore on the inside. The colors will be bright blue, red and green on the outside, and on the inside, the colors will be the whole spectrum of the rainbow: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, violent. Outside we will have wide open lawns, that can be used for class activities. In addition we will have athletic fields for baseball, softball, soccer, football and lacrosse. Winding between all the athletic fields, and along the woods on the property, will be a mountain biking trail (the school is equipped with a set of 50 mountain bikes to borrow). The landscaping include trails for walking, a stream for kayaking, and a small lake for swimming when its warm. These things take advantage of Brain Principle 4: Attentional and Input Limitations. Students can only take so much “book” learning before they need to get outdoors and increase the brains flow of adrenaline. After exercising, the school capitalizes on Brain Principle 3: Susceptibility and Opportunity. The brain is more open to learning after periods of activity and changes in location.

**Paragraph 2:** On the walls of our school, students will find their own picture, along with photographs of all the students in the buildings doing various activities. In addition, the hallways will have works of art that have been created by students (paintings, sketches, sculpture) intermixed with the works of some of the world’s greatest artists. Both photographs and works of art will reflect many different cultures from Africa, the Americas, Asia and Europe and the school’s own cultural diversity. The hallways will be curved and sound proofed, so that sound will not carry and distract learning in classrooms. There will be circular places in hallways for students and teachers to sit and gather, with plenty of sunlight. These designs use the Brain Principle 5: Adaptive and Changing. Every moment of the day can be an opportunity to learn, and to feel part of a bigger world.

**Paragraph 3**: Our brain friendly school begins its day with music. As students arrive, jazz music is being played over the loud speakers. Mellow music that feels welcoming. This capitalizes on the ideas that “environments matter” and “perception is key.” If things feel mellow, then we can have a mellow start to the day, free of negativity. This takes advantage of the Brain Principle: Environments Matter. Each week, there will be a school-wide morning meeting where everyone will participate in a drum circle. By being part of this weekly musical event, which will be fun for all students, we take advantage of the Brain Principle: Reward Dependency. Doing well as a school will lead to more musical events.

**Paragraph 4:** One key interaction in our school will be to constantly monitor current events in the news, measure the health and status of the nation’s economy, and critique popular culture as it is released to the public: movies, music, websites, television shows. This will take advantage of the Brain Principle: Perception, not Reality Matters. We want our students to be informed about the world so that they can make informed decisions.