

Dear Families:

Every day I see amazing achievements and personal growth in Promiseland students. I watch parents and staff give sacrificially to facilitate student-learning opportunities. I consider it a privilege to participate.

It is with deep regret and after much prayer and consideration, that I announce that Promiseland will close its doors at the end of this school year. My personal health issues have contributed to this decision. Therefore, I am not able to continue the challenging and rewarding role that I began enjoying eight years ago. I have built many wonderful memories and relationships with students and their parents.

The most important goal of Promiseland Christian was to introduce the Gospel of Jesus Christ to students and their families. Another goal was to allow an opportunity for the students to gain confidence and build high academic achievement. I am thrilled to report that both of these important goals exceeded my expectations.

I appreciate your kind words of support and encouragement to the team and me as you continue to see progress in your children. Thank you for allowing me to share in your lives.

Here are a couple of options that you may want to check out for your next learning experience: *There are many great schools, too many to list, here are a few tips when looking for a new school.*

Montessori Plus (Kent) [www.montessoriplus.org](http://www.montessoriplus.org)

Sky's the Limit (Milton) [www.skysthelimitmontessori.org](http://www.skysthelimitmontessori.org)

Compass Montessori (Federal Way) <http://www.federalwaymontessori.com/>

Cedar River Academy (Enumclaw) [www.cedarriveracademy.com](http://www.cedarriveracademy.com)

*(This is not a Montessori School, but it is a wonder learning environment where high achievers are always challenge and the staff is wonderful)*

- Set up appointments at several schools. While Montessori schools share the same basic principles of educating, each school has something unique to offer. Tuition is usually competitive, so you must look at the whole package.

Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.

Proverbs 22:6

- Likewise, try to observe in multiple classrooms. Within each school is an array of talented teachers, each bringing her own unique talents.
- Observe the teacher's interactions with the children. Look for her to speak calmly and gently at the children's level. Watch for her to be actively engaged in *observation* of the children. Remember, a Montessori teacher is known as a "directress". Her job is to direct the children to appropriate activities as a result of her observations, instead of traditionally teaching by feeding information
- Observe the children's interactions with each other. Watch for examples of grace and courtesy. Look for their comfort level as they interact with each other and with their teacher. Watch how they handle disagreements. Look for a mix of children working independently and in small groups.
- Observe the children's interaction with their environment. Gauge the activity level of the classroom as well as the type of activities in which they are involved. Those tasks include an actual work from a shelf, as well as observing another child.
- Observe the environment in general. Look for comfort, yet order. The environment should be child-centered. This means everything should be easily accessible to the children, without requiring constant adult intervention.
- Make a list of questions you may have for the director or teacher. Find an appropriate time to ask them your questions after you quietly exit the room. You will probably think of more later, when you get home. Don't be afraid to ask them. Keep asking until you fully understand.
- Inquire about a trial period. Some schools allow a child to come into a classroom for a short period to try it out. Older children may get to experience a full day or two. Other schools have a probationary period at the beginning of a school year. It is most important that your child is comfortable and that it fits your child's needs, which may be different from your own.
- Follow your gut instincts. Nine times out of ten, your gut reaction to a school environment ends up being the right one. (Coventry, 2008)

Working for our Kids,

Diane Simons

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