

Teaching Philosophy

Avis Turner has an AA in early Childhood Development, a BS in Art Education and an MFA with honors in Sculpture. Ms. Turner exhibited and worked as a professional artist while teaching at the College of William and Mary, Sidwell Friends and the American University. She enjoyed twenty plus years in the Washington DC area before moving to Farmington in 1998.

In 1993, while living in Washington, Avis saw the original “*Hundred Languages of Children*” art exhibition from Reggio Emilia, Italy. This internationally acclaimed philosophy (now more than forty years old) dramatically impacted Ms. Turner’s pedagogy. She began to study Reggio then, and has continued Reggio studies at Smith College and the Eric Carle Museum.

In Connecticut, Mrs. Turner has taught briefly at Miss Porters, Canton Jr. High, and Independent Day School. She has presented workshops for Ct. HOT schools via the Ct. Commission on the Arts, and at annual state art conferences. Avis teaches summer art classes from her home studio and has a public studio space at the Farmington Valley Art Center

Mrs. Turner has combined the philosophies of Reggio Emilia with Farmington’s Arts PROPEL Model to create a unique **Atelier** classroom at Noah Wallace (since 2002).

The NW Atelier is an aesthetic, multi-faceted learning environment who’s primarily function is to serve as a creative **production** (*art making*) space for children. Even the youngest students maintain *artist portfolios* which function as record keepers to document student **perception** and learning. These **process-folios** place an emphasis on the value of **practice** and the time needed for **reflection**. Under the Arts PROPEL/ Reggio models, students are encouraged to become *constructors of knowledge* and *protagonists of their own learning*. In the atelier, the *visual arts curriculum* is richly enhanced by the other curricula ~ science, literature, music, and math.