



****News Release****

Date: August 15, 2006

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SAN DIEGO SCHOOL FIRST OF KIND IN NATION

Cutting Edge Elementary Provides Distinct Alternative

San Diego – Integral Elementary School of La Jolla, which prides itself on not just teaching, but creating lifelong learners, opens the doors of its new 8,000 square foot campus on September 5, 2006.

San Diego parents in search of a more effective, thoughtful education for their children are turning to the new Integral method, which originated at the Sri Aurobindo International Centre for Education (SAICE) in India. According to the school's founder and principal, Prapanna Smith, the United States' current educational system is obsessed with test scores and this obsession is actually making it more difficult for children to learn.

“For too long we have had to sacrifice authentic learning for the sake of teaching to tests,” said Smith. “Students learn more and enjoy the process more when the learning is meaningful to them. Our Integral Education Free Progress philosophy strikes a much needed balance between curriculum, authentic learning, and student's interests.”

After teaching for a number of years in California public schools, Smith visited India where he saw a vastly different educational system at work. “Instead of seeing bullying and gangs, I saw older children acting like big brothers and sisters to the younger ones,” said Smith. “These children are well-rounded and passionate about life and learning.”

Since 2002 Smith has been successfully running Rainbow Kids Integral Preschool in San Diego. Back in the 1990's he set a long-term goal to offer the Integral Education system to U.S. parents, after he made the agonizing choice to send his only son to India so that he could receive the kind of schooling Smith felt he deserved. Because of this new elementary school, other parents wishing an educational system that addresses the *whole* child – mind, body, heart and soul – will not have to go through what Smith did.

While still following the California State Standards, an Integral education allows students to create, with the help of teachers and parents, a learning plan that focuses on their individual strengths and interests. This facilitates having the children experience a true desire for and joy in learning. The school uses nontraditional approaches and assessments to let children demonstrate what they know in real-world situations. It also utilizes cross-aged tutoring and cross-disciplined groupings based on skill sets and abilities. Grade levels become less significant in this type of environment, as students excel and learn at a pace that is appropriate for them.

Integral Elementary boasts an 11:1 student to teacher ratio. In addition to standard academics, students also focus on the arts, meditation skills, and physical education, including yoga. More information can be found at www.IntegralElementary.com or by calling (858) 450-4321.

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