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## Fall Eclipse

### Two Local Teachers to Start New Pre-Kindergarten School

By STEVE GALLUZZO  
Sports Editor

Thanks to the ingenuity and determination of two local educators, a new school is opening in Pacific Palisades in the fall and it's called Eclipse.

Founded by former Village School teachers Beth Reilly and Shea Morris, the program is for students who will be entering kindergarten after their year at Eclipse.

"From the very beginning, we loved working with each other," Morris said. "We realized that our teaching philosophies, work ethic and beliefs about children gave us much in common. In the classroom, our experiences led us to have strong and clear opinions about what we felt was right and wrong about early childhood education, and because of that, we found in each other a close and supportive collaborator."

Eligible students should turn 5 sometime during their year with Eclipse. The school is located in a Palisades home, and there will be a limit of 12 students per class. It includes dedicated indoor space, outside play space and a large undercover area for outdoor learning.

The school day is 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Monday through Friday, and it will follow closely the private school calendar: starting at the end of August and concluding in the second week of June, observing the traditional holidays.

Founding the school has been a team effort.

"We bounced ideas off of each other and leaned on each other to advance our individual programs," Reilly said. "That professional collaboration evolved into a close personal friendship, which further evolved into the creation of our own program during the summers: Eclipse Summer Camps."

The two provided several reasons why they started Eclipse:

1. It is rare to find on the Westside two experienced, lead teachers working together in this capacity.

2. A unique curriculum that will prepare your child socially, emotionally and academically to ensure they succeed in any kindergarten—progressive, traditional or rigorous academic.

3. Our small size provides each family with an extremely supportive, tight-knit community.

4. This one year can be the most rewarding and formative of a child's primary and secondary education.

5. We are a licensed child care facility, which enables us to remain open in many circumstances where traditional schools cannot.

Morris has lived in the Palisades for 12 years and currently resides in the Marquez Knolls area. Reilly lived in Santa Monica for 16 years before moving to the Woodland Hills area five years ago. She has worked in the Palisades for the past 16 years.

The two ladies have been colleagues, business partners and friends for the last 15 years. They met while teaching together in the Palisades, Reilly teaching transitional kindergarten and Morris teaching kindergarten.

Eclipse is the brainchild of teachers who saw the need for a school and acted on it.

"The idea evolved from Eclipse Summer Camps, but it was not until the pandemic that we decided it was time to make it a reality," Morris said. "After a year of Zooming with 5-year-olds, we felt tested. It took all of our experience as lifelong educators to create a worthwhile program that the children deserved and needed to be prepared to move on next year."

She shared that the result was a focused and engaging program, stripped of many "unneeded activities and traditions."

"Personally, the pandemic made us focus on what was most important in our lives, what brought us the most joy and how we wanted to spend the remainder of our careers," Morris continued. "We knew that we were ready for

a change, and we wanted to do it together. We knew we could create a truly unique, exciting and needed curriculum, so it was time for Eclipse School to become a reality.

"We immediately felt a sense of joy at the idea of bringing something positive forward from the pandemic. We're excited to open this fall with our inaugural class."

"We're having fun, but the biggest challenge for us right now is keeping the program small," Reilly added. "We think big, we dream big and we have vision. There's a temptation to do too much, too soon. The strength and uniqueness of Eclipse School lies in its small, focused, adaptive size. This small environment fosters growth and allows for personalized experiences for our students."

Reilly and Morris are currently accepting applications for the 2021-22 school year and have started a waitlist for the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years.

For more information, visit [eclipseschool.org](http://eclipseschool.org).

