

# Montessori Pathways' News

March



*These children have free choice all day long. Life is based on choice, so they learn to make their own decisions. They must decide and choose for themselves all the time... They cannot learn through obedience to the commands of another. ~ Maria Montessori*

## Notes from Ms. Alena (Head of School)

Getting more confidence by this time of the year, our kids are exploring many new things, doing more challenging work, and helping younger friends a lot.



Many students did a lot of map work as a part of cultural study, spent a lot of time reading books or journaling, doing deep study of plants and animal kingdom and creating booklets after that, are moving on to the next level of math discovery. Building and working on 2, 3, 4-digit numbers or exploring all 4 math operations are the most favorite works for many of our Pre-K / K students at this time of the year.



This time of the year, we observe a lot of positive changes and satisfaction in our kids. Wat to go, our friends! Two more months of blooming!

## Elementary Class Visit Days for Kindergarten Students

During two weeks in February-March, our kindergarten students were invited to spend a morning in the Elementary classroom.

Our elementary students have created lovely invitations for their younger friends and personally passed them out to the kindergartners. The kindergarten students were so excited to know that they are very welcomed to visit our elementary class and that their older friends are looking forward to showing them around. Some of the kindergartners were constantly chatting with their classmates about it. On their visit day, they were so ready to explore the new environment.



It was interesting to observe growing leadership maturity in the Elementary class when our Elementary students were able to demonstrate their ability to make a presentation and help with work to their kindergarten friends, while successfully working with their own materials according to their work plan.



It was a very inspiring experience for our students. All Kindergarten students were very proud to be a part of their older friends' group, noticing a very welcoming and helpful atmosphere in the classroom.

## Parents' Corner

### ~Montessori and Freedom of Choice~

**One of the key features of Montessori homes and classrooms is that children have choices.** Most of us try to structure choices into the lives of our children. Even toddlers can play with this toy or that toy. They can wear their green pants or their blue pants. They can eat an apple or an orange for snack. They can decide to sit on mama's lap or daddy's knee. Life is full of choices. Why is choice important in schooling?

**Each one of us has our unique gifts and talents.** One of us may be a fast reader, another a math whiz, yet another has a talent for all things mechanical. One may be a swift runner while another is a great cook. We are not all the same. Nor are all our children the same.

You can take ten children of exactly the same age. They may be different heights, different weights. Their skills and capabilities may be vastly different. Some are early bloomers, some are late bloomers. **Some learn through visual input through what they see, some learn best by listening with their ears and some need to touch to learn.** They all learn but they may have vastly different tastes in what interests them and when they are ready.

*If these very different children go to the same traditional school and they have a teacher who lovingly offers them what the curriculum offers for that day, some are interested and ready for the new information and challenges, but some are not. The new tasks are just perfect for some, way too difficult for others and far too easy for others. It may be that some of the children are just smarter than others. But it may also mean that some are developmentally not quite ready for the tasks but in six months they would be perfect. Others would be a lot happier in the next grade up.*

**Maria Montessori understood all these learning differences and created an environment for children where they come in each day and choose what they want to work on.** At the beginning of their first year in Montessori they might choose between doing a puzzle, stringing beads, or looking at a book. Each day the teacher shows them new lessons and soon they have a larger choice. Eventually the choices include writing and reading, addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division with concrete materials. It includes biology and geometry, art, and music.

The free will of each child is gradually being educated. Each choice they have is constructive, developmentally appropriate, and interesting. Montessori's biographer E.M. Standing suggests that **freedom to choose is not freedom to do anything you want, but freedom to do the right thing.** For a child the right thing is what he needs to fulfill the next step of his development at any given stage.

When a child chooses his work instead of doing what he is told to do, he often develops a more genuine interest and learns to follow the direction of what we call the "Inner Teacher." The child begins to value the inner satisfaction he gets from doing the work that corresponds to his inner developmental needs and he is calm and joyful in his learning.

Not every child chooses to do every lesson. But that is OK. Each child chooses what he needs. There are multiple ways to teach essential skills, so a child who does not want to do one lesson, may choose another that gets him to the same goal. But in Montessori, we realize that not every child reaches those goals in the same way or at the same time.

Montessori gave a series of lectures about freedom of choice. She makes a powerful argument that the roots of tyranny are in adults forcing children to obey their commands. When a child spends his entire day, year after year, following the instruction of adults and has no right to follow his own interests, he may come to believe that his own interests are unimportant. He may come to believe that his thoughts are not as important as the thoughts of the adults who are teaching him.



*Montessori believed in discipline. But she realized that the way to reach it was by creating environments where children found engaging materials to use. When they are fully engaged in the work that appeals to them at their particular level of development, they become self-disciplined. You see in Montessori classrooms a group of three-, four- and five-year-olds hard at work. No teacher could command such discipline, yet the children freely give it to their own self-chosen work.*

Freedom of choice becomes a habit of mind. Freedom to explore your own thoughts and interests can open the floodgates to creativity, as it has with such Montessori alumni as the co-founders of Google, Wikipedia and Amazon.com – all Montessori graduates.

<https://ageofmontessori.org/montessori-and-freedom-of-choice/>





## REGISTRATION FOR THE 2023-2024 SCHOOL YEAR IS WRAPPING UP!



It is that time of the year when we begin assembling the classes for the next year. We also begin to plan our staff and curriculum for the upcoming school year.

Thank you to all of the families who have returned the re-enrollment application for the Summer Camp and the next School Year.

Considering that the value of and interest to Montessori Education and to Montessori Pathways School particularly continues to rise, spots at our school are filling up pretty quickly this year. Therefore, we would like to remind you of the importance of **re-enrolling by April 15<sup>th</sup>** rather than waiting until the last minute.

*If you have decided to continue your child's education at Montessori Pathways, please*

- 1) *Complete the Registration Form for Summer Camp and / or Re-Enrollment Form for the 2023-2024 School Year*
- 2) *Attach the Summer Camp registration (\$30) and/or School Year Re-enrollment Fee (\$50)*
- 3) *Include the 10% of annual tuition security deposit.*
- 4) ***Return the paperwork along with payment no later than April 15, 2023.***

By submitting your 10% of the annual tuition deposit on time, you secure your child's spot at our school for the next school year, can lock in your child's current classroom, and any other special schedules and arrangements made with the school.

***Please note:*** All families enrolling and submitting 10% of the tuition after April 15<sup>th</sup> will be considered "newly enrolled" families, and will be subject to a new enrollment fee of \$50.00 for Summer camp and \$100.00 for 2023-2024 School Year.

*Spots in each age level are already limited and cannot be guaranteed - "newly enrolled" families will be enrolled on a first come, first serve basis. Classroom and any other preferences will also be up to administrative discretion based on availability.*

Please do not wait until the last minute and help us and your family be successfully prepared for the Summer Camp 2023 and 2023-2024 School Year on time.

### IN APRIL:

- ◆ **April 3 (M) - School Resumes**
- ◆ **April 3 - 6 (M-Th) - Elementary Class 4-day Trip to Nature's Classroom in WI**
- ◆ **April 7 (F) - Virtual Elementary Parent / Teacher Conference Day (North Rooms)** 
- \* **No School** for all Elementary students **on Conference Day, April 7.**
- \* **The Zoom link** for your virtual conference will be sent to you **on Monday, April 3.**
- ◆ **April 13 (Th) - Montessori Family Night: "Come and Work Together!"** – Parent / Child Work Cycle in Primary Classes (East and South rooms)
- ◆ **April 17—21 – Earth Week**
- ◆ **April 19 (W) / Rain Day—April 21 (F) - Spruce It Up / Mulching! Doughnuts with Grownups!**
- ◆ **April 27 (Th) - Family Science Night** – Kindergarten and Elementary students will demonstrate simple science experiments. All families are invited to attend.

# NEWS FROM THE ELEMENTARY CLASS



Ms. Bridget

A very exciting part of our school year arrives when the kindergarten students are able to come into the elementary class to visit. It is a time for current students to introduce concepts to visiting friends and to do work with their friends from primary days. Students will write a note to visitors to inform them who the buddy for the day will be and to share some favorite parts of being an elementary student. The excitement can be seen in the huge smiles of the first graders in the elementary class. This was a great beginning to our March.



March is also Women's History Month so we learned about a different woman each day during our morning meeting. Thank you to all amazing women that we met this month.



Independence is also improving in each child's work. Students are working ahead on math, language and their reading.



I have observed more students completing the work needed to accomplish in order to move on to a new lesson. Writing has improved as well with both spelling, flow and punctuation.

We always sing songs and learn a bit about Ireland as St Patrick's Day approaches. I share a bit about the history, geography, storytelling, and culture of Ireland. Kids enjoyed a gold coin, Irish Soda bread and some Irish music. Dancing some Irish dancing steps is always a hit!

The students are now mostly independent from me at the library now. I love that they are able to navigate the library, use the computer to find books, locate call numbers with a little support and were able to find research books for their chosen topics for our research projects. They used these books to gather notes, have drawn pictures, put a board together and then present it to the class. It was great to have parents return in the class to see and hear the great kids' research presentations. And we LOVED teaching the Irish steps to you!



We are all excited to go to Nature's Classroom again after Spring Break.

# MARCH PHOTO GALLERY

## Elementary Class



# MARCH PHOTO GALLERY

## Pre-K and Kindergarten Extended Day Group



## NEWS FROM THE SOUTH ROOM

Ms. Kathy, Ms. Urana



Another month has come and gone! Hard to believe but with it comes Spring and renewed warmth. The children noticed a bird in the columns of our entry and watched it fly back and forth. They decided it was making a nest and are keeping an eye on it at dismissals. We also have seen green buds peeking through the mulch outside of our window. The snow has melted, and we are anxiously awaiting the blooms. One child even exclaimed the days are getting longer. We talked about the daylight being bleak in December some children remembered it was getting dark at 4:15 dismissals.

We began our month talking about and reading Dr. Seuss books in honor of his birthday on March 2. We read many Dr. Seuss books as a class, as many as we could fit in.



We had special snacks of Cat in the Hat fruit kabob, graphing goldfish and the all-time favorite "Pink Ink" (kefir) because that is what a "Yink" drinks.



We appreciate these donations which made our week even more special. Thank you to all our parent volunteers who took the time to read Dr. Seuss books with the class. The children loved having extra special visitors to bring giggles and fun to our days. We began with Daphne's dad Jay, reading "Oh, the Places You'll Go!". Tuesday brought Liviu's mom Veronica with "A Great Day for Pup". Wednesday we had two guests, Andrew's dad read "Mr. Brown can Moo" and Connors dad read "Fox in Socks" no easy feat there! He did an amazing tongue twisting job! On Thursday Andy's mom read us "Green Eggs and Ham". We wound up our week with "The Lorax" read by Elin's dad, Paul. It is always special to have parents join us during the day.

We also resumed our reading buddies. The elementary children come once a week and read with a buddy or two in the afternoons. It is nice to see the interactions and the children look forward to it.



The room is full of green, shamrock crafts, counting, rainbows and pots of gold and of course a favorite of all time, parts of a leprechaun is rarely on the shelf as it is in use daily all month. We may have to extend its cycle so all have a turn to try it.



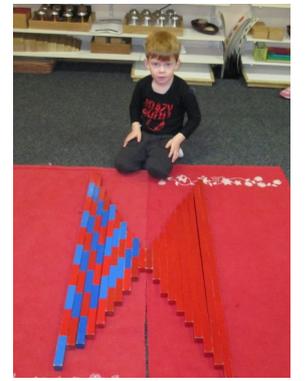
It was nice to see all of you at parent-teacher conferences and tell you all the wonderful things the children are doing. Thanks to everyone who took time and came share goals and expectations for their child. Although formal parent teacher conferences are twice a year, we are always happy to meet with you if there is ever a need.



We hope everyone has fun and relaxing spring break and look forward to the growth and excitement of the last few months of the school year.

# MARCH PHOTO GALLERY

## South Room



## NEWS FROM THE EAST ROOM

Ms. Joey, Ms. Carole



This Month was full of celebrations, beginning with Dr. Seuss's birthday! Thank you to all of the families who were able to participate throughout the week. The children had so much fun listening to their favorite Dr. Seuss books, and then creating a special craft or snack to go with, such as drinking pink ink (Strawberry Kefir yogurt drink) for "There's a Wocket in my Pocket!" Rainbow goldfish for "One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish"

After reading "The Cat in the Hat" we created our own (Cat in the Hat) by placing a grape and then sliced strawberries and bananas on a skewer, delicious!



"The Lorax" the children made paper tissue Truffle trees. Painting with a mini car and making crazy fun party hats for "Go Dog Go!"



We loved hearing all the well-known classics as well as some brand-new stories. In the sensorial area, we had a Cat in the Hat STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) challenge using red solo cups and small squares of poster board: the idea was to build the tallest "hat" and in language, match the *Cat in the Hat* hats.



For St. Patrick's Day we discovered where Ireland is, and story of St. Patrick. In the math area the children counted gold coins 1-10, practiced pin poking and cutting out shamrocks, strengthening fine motor skills.

They created rainbows, pots of gold, and marble painting three leaf clovers.

Social-emotional growth is also a priority for us and we enjoy telling you all about their friendships and relaying anecdotal stories of their interactions within the classroom and among their classmates. This is the time of the school year in which all the community building begins to show in the kind ways in which the children take care of one another and help their friends whenever possible.

The other day I observed one such moment when one child was having difficulty zipping his new coat and another child passed by on the way to the bathroom. The first child simply asked for help and the second child didn't even hesitate, she just stopped and helped. It was so natural to both of them, and it was so nice to witness this simple yet heartwarming exchange of kindness and caring.

Academically, this month there has not been a trend as far as a lot of the children wanting to work on the same thing. Basically, the children are getting to all the areas of the classroom and exploring with new works as well as returning to familiar works and trying them in new ways. A lot of our older children are very interested in the math chains and skip counting. While the younger children have been beginning to show interest in maps. There has also been a shift to more partner and cooperative work, and this is the time of year where the children are more successful working together because they have had several months to get to know each other well in addition to feeling confident in their choices.

We have introduced several new works in the science area, focusing on the Food Pyramid. The children have begun learning about the different food groups and why it is so important to eat the right foods to keep our body happy and healthy.



This month we also celebrated Maverick's 4th Birthday, Thank you for sharing your story with us, we loved getting to know you even more! Happy Birthday!

Thank you all for making the time to attend spring parent teacher conferences. It's always nice to have the opportunity to explain all the wonderful things your children are working on in the classroom. Since we focus more on process and not product, we realize you do not always get a clear picture of what your child does at school all day, so it's nice to have that time to go into further detail with you and to elaborate on exactly where your child is at in their learning process, it was pleasure meeting with you. We hope everyone has a relaxing and fun spring break. We look forward to the last two months of this school year and have a lot of exciting things planned.

# MARCH PHOTO GALLERY

## East Room



# MORE WONDERFUL MOMENTS AT MONTESSORI PATHWAYS



*"The greatest gifts we can give our children are the roots of responsibility and the wings of independence."  
~ Maria Montessori*

