



Montessori Pathways School News

March
2026

Notes from Head of School Ms. Alena

“Success in life depends in every case on self-confidence and the knowledge of one's own capacity.”

— Maria Montessori, *From Childhood to Adolescence*

Getting more confidence by this time of the year, our kids are exploring many new things, doing more wondering 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 kingdoms 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.



At this time of the year, we observe a lot of positive changes and satisfaction in our students. Way to go, our friends! Two more months of blooming!



Freedom of Choice in a Montessori Classroom

“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*

Ever wonder what the secret to the success of a Montessori classroom might be? There are many reasons why Montessori works, but one is especially crucial to the classroom. Freedom of choice. As Dr. Maria Montessori once said, the child “must have absolute freedom of choice, and then [they require] nothing but repeated experiences, which will become increasingly marked by interest and serious attention during [their] acquisition of some desired knowledge.”

Montessori teachers understand that the children in their classroom are all unique. People, no matter where they are from, have various strengths, weaknesses, and passions. By offering freedom of choice in a Montessori classroom, every child's learning experience is customized and optimized to suit them.

The Montessori classroom is built around the idea of a prepared environment, meaning that the room is organized in such a way that independent learning is possible. In short, freedom of choice means that the children choose which skill they would like to develop or which activity they wish to concentrate on. They aren't forced to sit and listen to a teacher. Rather, they are given the freedom to choose how they wish to learn.



Why is Freedom of Choice Important? Even identical twins are going to have interests unique to themselves. Imagine trying to get a classroom of children with varying interests, skills, and activity levels to all focus on the same thing for a set period of time. Yes, this is a traditional classroom setting, and those differences among the students is one the reasons so many get left behind.

Some children will do well in a traditional setting, but all children can succeed in a Montessori classroom. By creating an environment where children are free to explore and learn on their own time, you give each one a chance to develop at their own speed. To practice

what interests them most. When a child can choose their own activities and lessons, they become genuinely interested in gaining knowledge.

What does freedom of choice look like in a Montessori school? At any developmental level, freedom of choice is seen in the unregulated blocks of time where children determine for themselves how they would like to work. The children aren't confined to a desk but are free to roam the space, choose an activity, and either work with one another or alone.

In a primary classroom, self-discipline, grace and courtesy is taught. Here, freedom of choice given is limited. Children learn self-control when choosing a single activity and returning it to the shelf when they are done. Students learn how to function as a community and to give respect to their peers.

In an elementary Montessori classroom, the responsibility of learning is increased. Comprehension of various subjects is increased with lessons, but students are expected to utilize their time on their own and to balance subjects responsibly. Children are allowed to self-regulate their relationships, activities, and their interests.

Let's consider an example. There are two students. One student is reading a book while the other is using matching cards to learn vocabulary. The teacher isn't telling both students to work on the same thing, because the first reading the book has already mastered what the other is doing. Similarly, the teacher won't tell the student who is working on vocabulary to read a book that is too difficult for them.

You can observe any Montessori classroom and will see younger children studying their older peers; a child prepping a snack while another wipes down the table; one student at the 100 board while others practice counting 1 through 10. What you won't see is every child focused on the same activity. The child decides what they want to do. The teacher never decides for the students.

What happens when a child can't choose? Should the child approach a teacher and ask for help, it is important that they are still given options rather than being directed to a single task. This also shows a child that their decisions are important.

If you think this has no application in the real world, keep in mind how important it is for children to learn the power of yes and no. To learn how to make decisions and accept the consequences with grace. The freedom to explore your thoughts and interests is so important to the healthy growth of a young mind. Freedom of choice at a young age now supports their lifelong development.



Elementary Class Visit Days for Kindergarten Students

Our Kindergarten students had a wonderful opportunity to visit our elementary class and experience a structured transition. They spent mornings in the new environment to receive lessons in advanced language, math, and cultural studies.



This practice fosters familiarity, independence, and mentorship, allowing younger students to observe older peers and build confidence in a hands-on, prepared environment.



Our elementary students showed their leadership and supported their younger classmates through presentations and collaborative work, all while managing their own tasks. All kindergarteners enjoyed the visits, offering positive and enthusiastic feedback afterward.



~ Dr. Seuss Week ~

"Readers are leaders" is probably the phrase that people heard quite often. Reading is a great source of knowledge and learning new things.

However, raising children to be a reader in the era of technology has become challenging. Parents may need to build a habit of reading for their children since the beginning of their life. Several research suggests that reading in early ages could lead to better school performance and result in bigger or better success when the children grow up and become adults. Therefore, it is recommended to support children with reading from very young.



When parents have positive attitudes towards reading, they are prone to pass this attitude to their children toward literacy. Children will love and be reading if they see that YOU are reading. When parents share books and read out loud with children, they can enhance the understanding of the world for their children as well as their social skills and the ability to cope with different situations.

Dr. Seuss week was one of the great chances to read with children and to read for children.



~ Thank you, Parents and Elementary students, for escorting our little friends to the World of Reading this week. ~

Coming School Events

➤ March 30 (M) – Class Resumes after the Spring Break

➤ April 6 – 9 (M – Th) – Elementary 4-Day Trip to Nature's Classroom Institute in Hartland, WI

This is a national program for Montessori schools that offers an overnight adventure through nature exploration and environmental education. Students participate in team-building, night hikes, scientific explorations (like animal dissections or water rockets), and historical simulations (e.g., "Oregon Trail").

➤ April 10 (F) – Elementary Parent / Teacher Conference Day via Zoom

- ✓ NO SCHOOL for all Elementary students on Conference Day, April 10.
- ✓ The link to sign up for P/T Conference was sent to all families in March.
- ✓ The Zoom link for your virtual conference will be sent to you on Friday, April 3.

➤ April 15 – Early Summer Camp registration and 10% of annual tuition security deposit for 2026-2027 school year are due.

➤ April 16 (Th) at 5:30-7:00pm – Montessori Family Night "Come and Work Together!" – Parent / Child Work Cycle in Primary Classes (East and South rooms)

Don't miss this very enjoyable evening working with your child in their special environment. When you arrive, you'll go to your child's classroom and experience with them a little of what their day is like. See what's changed in their day since the first Parent/Child Night!

➤ April 20 – 23 (M - Th) - Earth Week

Parents are welcome to organize morning activities or presentations in the classroom

➤ April 22 (W); Rain Day – April 23 (Th) at 9:00am– Spruce It Up! Goodies with Grownups!

Let's do spring cleaning and mulching together and conclude our morning with circle time and goodies!

➤ April 24 (F) – No School / Teachers Institute Day (Staff in service)

➤ May 4 – May 8 (M – F) – National Teacher Appreciation Week (It is a great chance for families to recognize and appreciate your child(ren)'s teachers who take care of your child(ren) daily, share their love and heart with your child(ren), and help them grow.

➤ May 13 (W); Rain Day – May 15 (F) at 9:00am – Planting Day! Pastries with Parents!

It would be great if every child could bring at least one plant on Monday, May 11 or Tuesday, May 12 to have a chance to participate in the creation of the Pathways' Garden. We will conclude our morning with circle time and pastries together.



News from the Elementary Class (North Room)

Ms. Bridget, Ms. Carole

"The child, who may seem troublesome in his curiosity over the why, what and wherefore of everything he sees, is building up his mind by this mental activity".

~ Dr. Maria Montessori

Research, Research, Research! Elementary kids love to research anything. Students enjoy finding fun facts that adults do not know. They wow us with unbelievable topics and love to see how much they can discover. I love this part of elementary students. This thirst for knowledge is part of who they are. Because of this, we have a day where they can showcase their hard work.



Presentation Afternoon is the culmination of a few months of hard work. They first choose subjects and then see if the library has books at their reading level for gathering information. Next, they look at the table of contents to select 3-5 topics to research. Then they write down information about each of these areas. Finally, they make notecards, visuals and practice their delivery.



Parents being a part of this event makes it important and meaningful to the students. They love to feel that they know more than they used to know about this topic. Every year, I love to see the growth of each child as they become more competent researchers.



The kindergarten students completed their visits to our class, and we are excited to welcome registered for next year students back for their second visit which is a full day visit in April. All students were confident and engaged, a tribute to their strong work in their primary classes. We are all looking forward to all 9 kindergarteners to be with us next year.



March is also Women's History Month, so we learned about a different woman each day during our morning meeting. I also played a woman musical artist in the morning as students were arriving to school.

We always sing songs and learn a bit about Ireland as St Patrick's Day is in March. 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. They learned some Irish words. We also did some Irish dancing moves.



The children continued working on different academic concepts and enjoyed very unstable March weather.



We are getting excited and preparing for our yearly trip to Nature's Classroom Institute. The students gain so much independence and love of learning through nature on this trip. Ms Alena and I are so excited to share this adventure with the elementary students.



News from the South Room

Ms. Kathy, Ms. Ellen

“Our care of the child should be governed, not by the desire to make him learn things, but by the endeavor always to keep burning within him that light which is called intelligence.”

— Maria Montessori

March started off with Dr. Suess week. It is a very special week children look forward to every year. Parents volunteered to come in and read to the children, elementary students also joined in to read books in small groups and a few of our very own Kindergarten children did a brilliant job reading aloud to the class. The stories read by parents were great. Thank you to all who volunteered.

The kindergarten children read with intonation and did a spectacular job of showing pictures. They then took questions from their audience. The children this year all seemed to know what a question was. It set in motion more reading aloud throughout the month.



During indoor recess the children paired into groups to read to each other. Those who couldn't read were voluntarily assisted by very patient and helpful peers, who isolated sounds and gave hints to make sure everyone was included in reading. “But I can't read.” was met with “It's ok, we will help you!” Dreary and cold indoor recess times were transformed into very touching and beautiful afternoons.

St Patrick's Day filled our art shelves with shamrocks and rainbows. The children are utilizing multi-step art projects. They traced shamrocks and used rulers to make a pattern, trace the lines made by the ruler, and paint their individual spaces. The rainbow art project is also multi step. The children paint the rainbow with glue, add salt, paint the salt in the colors of a rainbow, wait for it to dry, cut it out and add clouds, pots of gold and gold to then glue all on a separate sheet of paper.

March is an amazing time of academic growth and personal success for children in the Montessori classroom. In addition to reading skills, many others dove deeper into Math and all its interesting components from simple linear counting, diving into the 100 board and its lessons.

The children love reading the numerals from cards and placing a translucent disc on the corresponding number on the 100 board. This activity requires the children to track from left to right and then transfer a colored disc to the board to form a pattern: an arrow, a square, a diagonal to the right and left. They also use the 100 board to skip count and record the answers for each.



Skip counting or multiplication of numbers is evident in the use of the chains. There is a chain out nearly every day! All operations in the math area have been used daily with different materials.



The Elementary students joined us again to practice their research presentations to the group. Every year this presentation inspires the kindergarten group to research on their own. We have in depth studies of continents the flags, animals, landmarks and plants. The study of each state in the U.S. the nicknames, flowers and birds for each.



They explore science as well, beginning to write about the parts of things. For instance, the parts of a plant. What are the roots, trunks, leaves and branches of a tree for?

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 to 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.

News from the East Room

Ms. Masha, Ms. Laxmi

"A child who has become master of his acts through long and repeated exercises, and who has been encouraged by the pleasant and interesting activities in which he has been engaged, is a child filled with health and joy and remarkable for his calmness and discipline."

~Maria Montessori

March has been a month of inspiration. From the (sometimes) warmer days to the return of the bird songs, there has been a lot of excitement and anticipation to finally shed the layers and spend more time in our outdoor classroom!

Dr. Seuss week started off with simply inspiration for more themed art – cutting and gluing a Cat in the Hat, crafting a Truffula tree, or making a "Thing 1 / Thing 2" headband. The children waited with great anticipation to see who the day's new reader will be and what book we will dive into.

But it quickly turned into a greater inspiration of literacy. We invited the many reading Kindergarteners to also choose a Dr. Seuss book to read aloud for the afternoon Pre-K/Kindergarten group, if they would like. And they rose to the challenge. Each day, a new Kindergartener read aloud a Dr. Seuss book for their peers. Their friends, in turn, displayed beautiful patience in listening to their friends reading, supporting them with questions about the story and applause. It was a lovely and exciting opportunity that lead to even more inspiration.

The Pre-K students of course took note of this excitement and started picking up the Dr. Seuss books themselves, eager to apply their early reading skills. And so many more of the Pre-K students have dived deeper into their own word building, reading, and writing in hopes to also achieve this new goal! And as you can guess, the youngest of students, seeing this buzz, have been reaching for their own sound books more and more, taking sandpaper letters off the shelf themselves, imitating their older friends. Thank you, parents, for coming in to read during Dr. Seuss week and for continuing to keep the love of reading alive at home!



But the inspiration did not stop there. After one student took great care and pride in sewing a purse, our sewing shelf has seen a new surge of interest. Some students have just started learning basic stitch and sewing a button while others have progressed to adorning

their sewing with pompoms, bells, and fabric markers and, others still, have learned how to sew designs like their name or tulips. Aside from the very practical application of knowing how to sew or mend clothes, sewing for a young child is a phenomenal practice in fine motor skills, concentration, and penmanship. Yes, great sewers make great writers!

Others have become inspired to make maps. We have touched on how wonderfully intriguing map making is in the Montessori environment in previous newsletters, but the most beautiful aspect comes from a child taking such immense pride in their completed map or research on a continent that the rest of the room, from the youngest to the oldest, become inspired to do the same. The youngest children are coming in asking to "make a big map like the big kids" while the oldest are trying out (and discovering) the amount of time, dedication, and energy needed to put together an entire research project.



The same spirit of inspiration has carried into math. Young children are enthusiastic to show each other presentations in geometry, 0-9 colored beads (so important for color coding and mental math down the line!) and teen numbers, excited to uncover new concepts and share them with their friends. Older children are seeing new operations played out with the Bank Game and Stamp Game, seeing the division and subtraction of large numbers, and asking to join in on the fun. We are having to invite children into lessons less and less – they are approaching us excitedly asking to learn these new concepts!

And of course, we cannot discuss inspiration without one of the greatest inspirations in the school for our 3-6 community – the Elementary students. They are a daily inspiration for our children in being kind, enthusiastic, passionate, responsible, and inquisitive. We are so lucky to have an Elementary mentor visit us each Tuesday. This month, we were fortunate to spend additional time with them. They came to read to small groups during Dr. Seuss week. The genuine care, compassion, and most important **respect** these older students have for our young group is unmatched in any other environment. In preparation for their Science Presentation Day, many of the Elementary students also took turns coming in to share about their own research project. Not only were we impressed to see the progress of our older friends, we were blown away to witness the patience and attentiveness with which the young friends listened to the presentations and, perhaps most importantly, the genuine thoughtful questions they had for them.

We hope as we (finally) enter the season of Spring, we can all take inspiration from our children in their passion, joy, and respect for themselves and the world around them. They inspire us everyday

