

# MONTESSORI PATHWAYS' NEWS

September



*"Education is not what the teacher gives; education is a natural process spontaneously carried out by the human individual, and is acquired not by listening to words but by experiences upon the environment."*

— Maria Montessori, *Education For A New World*

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

Thank you for choosing to be a part of the Montessori Pathways School community. You're all Montessori parents now. And your children aren't the only ones who will be practicing their patience. You'll spend a significant amount of your time now waiting – waiting for your child to dress themselves, undress themselves, clean up after themselves. You'll fight the urge to feed them, dress them, speak for them, or correct them. You'll master the art of allowing your children to do for themselves, to learn from mistakes, and self-correct, to learn how they learn best. You'll survive the wait, the backwards clothes or shoes on the wrong feet, and the natural consequences, that at times inconvenience you the most. With the support of Montessori Pathways teachers, you'll master Montessori parenting.

In choosing to send your child to Montessori Pathways, you've truly given them a gift. A Montessori education at Pathways will offer your child independence, confidence, concentration, and persistence. Learning will bring them joy as they experience hands-on activities, collaboration, and leadership. They'll develop life skills, strategies and practices that will serve them well into the future. Skills that will lead them to be problem solvers, independent thinkers, caregivers, peacemakers, creators, innovators, and world changers. The investment you make now will not only support your child academically, but also socially and emotionally.

At Montessori Pathways, we strive to develop the whole child focusing on far more than the curriculum. This focus results in greater self-awareness, self-confidence and work ethic, a strong ability to adapt to change and problem solve and a desire to lead, teach and collaborate with others – critical skills that will support their future success, regardless of their path.

I am incredibly proud of our school and our community. By finding inspiration from those that led this school before us, while also looking to the future to prepare our students for what's to come, we've ensured our students will continue to receive an authentic Montessori education while adapting to the 21st century. We know you have many options for school choice in the area and I am grateful you've chosen to be a part of the Montessori Pathways School community. It truly is a very special community and an exceptional school.



## Back-to-School Picnic

*We enjoyed meeting old and new friends and spending a wonderful time together at our annual Back-to-School Picnic. The children had an amazing opportunity to enjoy nature and play games together while the parents had a chance to meet each other and talk to the teachers*







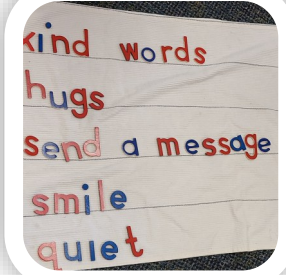
## International Peace Day Celebration



Once again, Montessori Pathways School was joining with people worldwide to celebrate the International Day of Peace on September 19th.



Montessori education, at its core, incorporates peace education across all areas of the curriculum. From the very beginning of her research and educational practice, Dr. Montessori sought ways to educate the 'whole child'. Every aspect of Montessori's work was geared toward helping children in order to help the world because she believed that children were the 'promise of the future.' Most of us would agree with that sentiment today, and thankfully, we have Dr. Montessori's guidance and time-honored traditions to know how we can work best with children to facilitate a more peaceful world.



And so, we celebrated both the International Day of Peace as well as the values of Montessori education this September. We have been talking about what peace in our world looks like, what peace means for everyone, and what each of us can do to be peaceful and create a more harmonious world.

We began our Peace Celebration with a Peace Poem by our Elementary students and "**Light a Candle for Peace**" song that was continuously sung for 24 hours by Montessori Schools' children around the world beginning in New Zealand and finishing in the Hawaiian Islands.



## ~Hardy Mums Sale Fundraiser~

On September 24 we spent another great time outside with our Elementary students in the morning while they were unloading a huge truck filled with 230 beautiful mum plants that our families ordered in support of our school.

The kids were so organized, demonstrating simply amazing teamwork, so it took only about 20 minutes to "create" a beautiful garden next to our school.



One of the best parts of the day was seeing so many parents with their kids, who were helping to choose the color of the mums and load the ordered plants into their cars.

The kids are very eager to be a part of school events because they bring to the kids the important feeling of community.

**We would like to thank everyone who contributed to our Fall Mums Sale Fundraiser and those who included their surrounding community to help our school to raise a fund. We were able to collect \$2,273.00 and already used this fund to renew and update some areas at school.**



**Thank you, Countryside Flower Shop for providing such beautiful mums for our school's fundraiser every year!**

## COMING SCHOOL'S EVENTS

### in October

- ◆ **October 2 (Th) at 5:30pm – Montessori Educational Night: “The Case for Responsibility”**- All parents are welcome; childcare is available per parents' request
- ◆ **October 3 (F) - “Handwashing as a Prevention of Spreading Germs”** - Morning presentation for each class by McHenry Health Department
- ◆ **October 3 (F) at 1:00-2:30pm– Trip to All Seasons Orchard**—Elementary, Pre-K and Kindergarten Afternoon Group
- ◆ **October 13 (M) – No School (Columbus Day)**
- ◆ **October 15 (W) at 8:00—11:00am – Picture Day.**
- ◆ **October 16 (Th) at 5:30pm – Elementary Parent Curriculum Night.**

Current **Kindergarten parents** are also invited to attend and learn about our elementary program to aid in making their decision in the future. Please RSVP by October 6th.

- ◆ **October 23-24 (Th-F) - Primary Parent / Teacher Conference Days (East and South Rooms)**
  - \* **No School** for all Primary students **on Conference Day, October 25.** Regular Schedule on October 24.
  - \* The link to schedule your 15-min conference with your teachers will be sent to you on October 1st.
- ◆ **October 31 (Th) – Costume Halloween Party at Montessori Pathways**

To learn more about our school's life—[Follow us on Facebook](#)

## CELEBRATING HALLOWEEN AT MONTESSORI PATHWAYS

The children are invited to come to school dressed in a Halloween costume on October 31st. Each classroom will have a simple celebration which will allow time for each child to show off their costume and tell a little bit about who or what their costume represents. Afterward, each class will participate in Halloween activities and have a holiday snack.

If this day is not your child's day of attendance, you are welcome to bring your child for morning celebration at 9:30am and pick up your child right after celebration, at 11:45am.

Parents will receive a detailed email from their teachers about Halloween celebration in each class and link to sign up for volunteering opportunity soon.

### Costume Guidelines:

We highly encourage you to choose an age-appropriate costume with your child. As a Montessori school, we aim to operate within our philosophy of providing the children with real experiences that are beautiful and natural and encourage you to choose a costume that is based upon a person, thing or animal.

Some costume ideas include animals, community helpers, athletes and storybook characters. The most important feature of your child's costume should be comfort. Please make sure they can still independently use the bathroom and can sit and move with ease.

Please note the following guidelines for costumes:

- ~ No scary or offensive costumes
- ~ No mask or headwear that covers full face
- ~ No weapons or “fighting” props (swords, light sabers, pistols, knives, etc.)
- ~ Please do not send any costume accessories that may be lost or damaged.





## NEWS FROM THE ELEMENTARY CLASS

Ms. Bridget, Ms. Carole



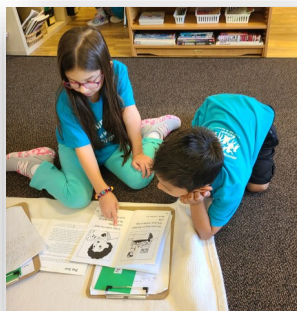
September is a time for firsts: first walk to the library, first birthday celebration, first week of home journals and math Simple Solutions, first work plans AND for some, first work plan completed, first music with Ms Lily and first art with Ms Suzy. It is a brand new world for our new members of our community.



My goal for the beginning of the year is to show all students that learning can be at your own pace. You can choose which work to complete first. You can design the follow up work after a lesson to be completed in a way that you find most appealing. You can work alone or with a friend and who is the best work partner. The way you work matters. Oh, I also want all students to LOVE being in the elementary class.



We DO have an amazing group of kids this year, as I conveyed to my parents at our goal setting conference at the end of September. Montessori kids have compassion. They can easily see when a friend needs a hand. They can give a hug to someone who is crying and laugh along to a good joke. I love observing the students navigate THEIR class through their relationships and roles in our class to have a productive environment.



Now that all have settled in, the class will feel more normalized. I will be less needed for help. I often think of Maria Montessori's quote at this time of year: *"The greatest sign of success for a teacher is to be able to say, 'The children*

*are now working as if I did not exist.*" THIS is what independence is. Can my students set the table, prepare class snack, choose a work, ask for help from another student, peacefully facilitate a disagreement with friends, tie their own shoes, problem solve their own questions about the work that they are working on and can they be a leader and role model for others?



Upper EI is excited to be finishing their first unit on Early Humans and will be creating skulls. Lower EI is exploring our universe and what is surrounding our Earth. We are also looking at how time is arranged.

Botany has begun with lessons on roots. We explore magnets, mass and atoms. We have had our literature circles and have had fun with writing and word studies. Upper EI is diving deep in nouns. All are reviewing math operations to show knowledge.



Ms Carole has taught how to make bead buddies and the parts of a terrarium. Now they are hammering and will be sanding to make a math board for geometry.

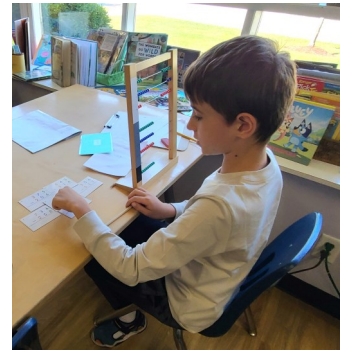
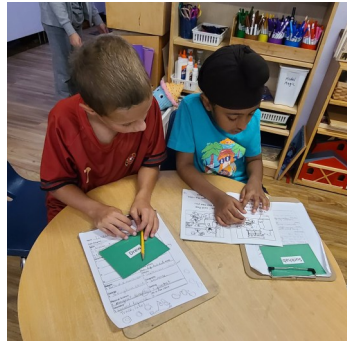


EI-

elementary is a busy space. We invite you to come to Curriculum Night on Thursday, October 16, to learn even more about our day and our cycles of learning.



## ELEMENTARY CLASS PHOTO GALLERY





## NEWS FROM THE SOUTH ROOM

Ms. Kathy, Ms. Ellen



It's truly amazing to realize the month is coming to an end. It went by seamlessly and quickly. The returning students, both Pre-K and Kindergarten children are excited in their new roles as "teachers" to the new students. Not only to help them enter the building and help with coats and jackets, but to present different lessons/ or "works" as they are called in the Montessori classroom; to show children where to put things and get supplies; to be an example of how to carry oneself in the classroom. There is now a new heightened sense of achievement and confidence within this group. We now hear cries of "I can help!" A revelation of the pride and confidence they take in their own knowledge and abilities.



We need your help! The skills related to self-care are vital for each child to learn. Encourage your child to dress and undress independently daily. It is frustrating for a child to struggle with a simple task, pulling up pants, putting on shoes, socks, and putting on a jacket or coat on.

At school the children hang coats on hangers and are asked to zip by themselves. They are independent, in the classroom, washing dishes, setting tables and caring for all aspects of the room. Set your child up for success! Begin small, with one item at a time until they can fully dress independently. Then add new items slowly and step by step. Allow more time so there is no rush and don't worry about backward shirts or pants. Teachers will be excited to see each child becoming more independent. We show the children how to lay their coat on the floor, spread the sleeves out, put the tag or hood by their toes, insert arms into sleeves and flip the coat over their head. It is a very effective way to put a coat on. Once the child has mastered these simple tasks they are empowered and have more time for all the other things in the classroom.

We encourage you to attend our Parent meeting "The Case for Responsibility" on Thursday October 2nd at 5:30. It will help you better understand what all the fuss regarding independence and responsibility is about but also shed insight into how you can foster these goals at home.

The children are also enjoying preparing bananas and juicing oranges to serve to friends. The children prepare the bananas by slicing them and adding a toothpick to each slice, the chef then becomes a server and asks the others, "Would you like a banana?". This brought a lesson on how to respond. "Yes, please" or "No, thank you". The child then washes all the dishes used for the preparation.

Lessons on Grace and Courtesy are most important to a harmonious classroom. In the first week's news we mentioned lessons on: How to ask for help, wait, and watch another work.

These lessons are ongoing. At school the children are asked to walk over to and wait for a teacher silently while the teacher gives another a lesson or is tending to someone's needs. The children are shown how to watch silently with their hands at their sides or wait with no words while a teacher is presenting a lesson to another child. We role play this repeatedly. Often the child who watches the presentation given to another child while waiting, will then be able to choose, replicate and master the material on their own. As a parent you should encourage your child to wait patiently and silently while you finish a task. We ask you to reinforce this important skill at home. These lessons build self-confidence and a sense of security in knowing what to do.



We prepared for International Day of Peace by talking about what Peace means to everyone. The suggestions ranged anywhere from being silent, picking up trash, hugs, planting flowers etc. We made peace doves and adorned the tail feathers with each child's thoughts for peace. On the 19, we came together as a school hung our doves on the fence, the Elementary students read a poem, and we all sang "Light a Candle for Peace" by Shelley Murley.



In September the focus was on apples. We sang songs about apples and the parts of an apple. (Flesh, skin, stems and leaves, stems, and leaves... To the tune of Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes.) We all enjoyed apple tasting the different varieties and the favorite quality of each apple. The older children chose the apple they would like to present to the class, cut it and served it to the others. "Would you like to try a Granny Smith apple? It is crisp and slightly sour." Thank you to the Rassmussen and Lavigne families for searching for and donating amazing apples. Apple themed works are everywhere on the art shelves, practical life, math, and science shelves. A few of the favorites are making parts of the apple with paper, sorting apples by type and matching an actual apple to the picture cards and of course apple counting.

As fall began, we discussed the change of seasons and read a few books and learned a song "This is the day of the Equinox". See if your child will sing it to you! It's a classic!



## SOUTH ROOM PHOTO GALLERY





## NEWS FROM THE EAST ROOM

**Ms. Masha, Ms. Laxmi**



September is one of our favorite months – the enthusiasm of the children is all-engulfing. They're excited to see their returning friends, ecstatic to help the new ones settle in, thirsty for new and familiar lessons, and still full of stamina from the summer refresh!

We "ease back" into many of the routine Practical Life lessons – flower arranging, sweeping, table scrubbing, table setting, hand washing, window washing, food preparation, and sewing, just to name a few. The children are responsible for their own environment and take great care of it, with returning students helping the new ones learn the importance of these responsibilities. This is always most memorable when one day a child exclaims "Ew, look at all these messy rugs in the basket!" or another sadly says "Aw, there's no flowers at our lunch table" because nobody has done flower arranging. In that moment, they truly understand the "why" behind caring for their environment.



Please join us for our Parent Evening on October 2nd to learn more about how we work as a team to foster this independence and responsibility in our children!

If a child can learn to care for his environment, he can learn to care for another person. And if he can learn to care for another person, he can learn empathy. Through empathy, we can know peace.

In preparation for our Peace Day celebration this year, we asked our students what peace means to them. "Quiet, kindness, helping, saying nice things, silence, and relaxation." If only we could shout it from the rooftops for the rest of the world! Well, we try, with our annual celebration! This year, the children prepared doves carrying ribbons, recording three words that mean peace to them. As we discussed Peace, the children were baffled that there are still people who don't have peace.



As many of the children have dived into our Asia unit study, we have learned that some countries had been ruled by other

countries or were divided into two, as with North and South Korea. "That's so mean and sad and not peaceful!" As we listened to Arirang, a Korean traditional song for peace, many of the kids could pick out the bittersweet mix of joy and sadness in the song's for peace with great empathy in their eyes. One of the greatest goals of Montessori education is peace education and we see great hope in our future with our East Room friends!

The children were also looking forward to our annual apple tasting. Huge thank you to the MacInnes and Evans families for finding 10 unique varieties for us to try! We had 10 "Apple Masters" this year, who each chose an apple, learned its name, cut it up and tasted it first to describe it to their peers. They took turns introducing their apple by name, taste, and texture in a small public speaking experience. As the rest of the children walked around the stations, both practiced graciously offering and accepting "Would you like to try a Pink Lady apple?" "Yes please" or "No, thank you." Don't worry, we swapped with the Apple Masters to ensure they had a chance to participate in the tasting journey as well! This year's group was quite split on which apple is their favorite, though quite a few greatly enjoyed the Pink Lady!



While every child picks up where they left off in their academic lessons in a Montessori environment, there are some specific areas of focus in September. We progress from the whole to the part, or the known to the unknown. We take a deeper look at parts of a plant, before diving into parts of a leaf, for example. And work to fully understand Living vs Non-Living, Plant vs Animal and Vertebrate vs Invertebrate before we move into animal classification and study.

We study the human body and needs like the food pyramid before we study other animals. We look at land/air/water in geography before moving to planets, landforms, and continents later in the year, and work on seasons before we can understand an abstract calendar. Maps start with a concrete 3-D clay mapping of an area of the classroom that we then trace to show that maps are flat representations of real places!

The older children often return to these lessons with a new lens and interest – drawing a connection between land/air/water of the Earth and solid/gas/liquid or choosing the word build different vertebrate and invertebrate examples. The entire curriculum is intertwined and helps develop the whole child – we cannot wait to see where their interests take them this year!



## EAST ROOM PHOTO GALLERY





## KINDERGARTEN AND PRE-K EXTENDED DAY

Ms. Kathy, Ms. Masha



Our afternoon group has a very busy curriculum each month! We start each afternoon with a group story-time that either ties into our exploration that day like "Hokusai's Daughter" or "How Did That Get in My Lunch Box?" or has a social emotional lesson like "The Sour Grape" or "How to Spot a Best Friend?".

Some days, we are continuing the work cycle they began in the morning, as the older children often love to choose lengthy and complex works that take them longer than one morning to complete. This is also when we practice handwriting in small groups, working on pencil grip, staying in the lines, and proper letter and number formation. However, we also use this time to delve deeper into various topics and skills through small group lessons, art, group cooking, sewing, science, and hiking, which are best experienced through the linked pictures!



Art lessons: Collage print making with primary colors based on study of Katsushika Hokusai (maker of The Great Wave) and Element of Art Study of Line with warm and cool colors.



Group Cooking (a true lesson in patience, turn taking, teamwork, and problem solving!): Apple Crumble for our apple study unit and Corn Bread with freshly churned butter by the kids as our North America representative dish. This is the best time to understand the hard work that goes into making food (and why we don't waste it) and the most enticing way to try a new food.



Sewing: Button adorned snakes – a refresher of the basic lessons like threading the needle, making knots, and the basic motions of "up from the bottom, down from the top" before we progress into more complex projects.



Science: Autumnal Equinox study. Day and Night are equal! We made a poster equally divided into day and night.



Hiking and Science: It's the best when our hikes allow for a science lesson! We experimented with inertia and, unexpectedly, friction! Some of our objects started to get stuck earlier than expected and the children quickly caught on – the tall grass is making the smaller objects stop. Ask your child about "the little tape that could" – it was their favorite!



Group Lesson: Writing on the Baseline—understanding how letters sit on the line on the paper and which are descenders or ascenders.





## MORE WONDERFUL MOMENTS AT PATHWAYS IN SEPTEMBER



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

