

Montessori Pathways' News

Montessori Pathways

The best way to discovery!



School

February

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

~ Maria Montessori, "From Childhood to Adolescence"

Notes from Ms. Alena (Head of School)

February is the month when "Montessori buds" begin opening and the "flowers" are ready to bloom. There are so many changes we observe in our kids starting this month. Our very young friends know all of the routines and are so capable of doing so many things by themselves – choosing a work from the shelf, working independently, putting work away and cleaning up after the work. They become more and more curious about new and more challenging work because they see how the older kids are working and what kind of projects they are doing.



At this time of the year, we can observe how our students gain their self-confidence. Kids who have faith in their self-confidence have the urge to try out new things and explore every bit of them. They are more likely to give their best in everything they do. Building up self-esteem allows the child to grow in a positive manner. It lets your child learn from their mistakes and even if they fall at first, they will find their way to stand back up.

Self-esteem fuels the confidence of kids and makes them proud of themselves. As a result, it helps them do their best at school, at home, and whenever they are with their friends. It boosts their personality.

If at the beginning of the school year we hear the kids saying: "It is hard, I cannot do it...", now we hear more and more: "Can I do this? I would like to try that. I want to do the same project as".

Kids have become so confident in many ways and our job as adults is to create the environment that will feed their curiosity and desire and allow them to flourish. The best enjoyment comes after, when kids come to me, show their projects and say: "Look, Ms. Alena, I did it! And I did it by myself!" And I love to see the kids' eyes at that moment, full of excitement and pride. Aren't these the feelings that should be sparked by education?



Another moment we, teachers, recently observed and were so impressed to see, is when our Elementary students decided to share *The Terra Cotta Warriors Clay Project* and brief research about the warriors with the Pre-K and Kindergarten students. Right after that, we noticed that most of the kids went to the art area and started to create their own warriors. No one asked them to do it, no one explained them how to do it. But one of the beauties of the Montessori multiage environment is that younger kids LOVE to learn from older ones and are always inspired by them.

We love those moments.

One day, Ms. Bridget came to my office with one of her first graders to share her excitement about this student's success in his first research project that he was doing with a help of his 6th-grade classmate. After explaining the details of his work, he pointed to the fountain sculpture ('kids are collecting water together') that is standing outside, next to my office window and said, "*This sculpture made teamwork my dream work*". It was such a blessing to see this kid's enjoyment that he had from the process and to hear that our 6-grader was able to support his younger friend and made his dream come true.



Unfortunately, the format of the newsletters does not allow us to share all of our cool stories about our students. But watching them grow every day is a blessing.



Parents' Corner



What is the next step for my child?

- ◇ Are a couple of years of Montessori good enough for my child to reap the benefits?
- ◇ Will Montessori prepare children for traditional school?
- ◇ Why should I pay tuition for one more year in Kindergarten if it is free in public school?
- ◇ How are Elementary years in Montessori beneficial for my child?
- ◇ Isn't it time for my child to join his/her friends from the neighborhood in going to public school together?

These and many others are questions parents ask every year when it is time to decide about the next step in their child's education and development.

Just like all of us do extensive research before buying a new car or a house, we recommend to our parents to do the same regarding their child's future - learn as much as possible about the different types of education and choose what is most beneficial for your child.

As a part of this research, we decided to share some of our resources with you regarding the benefits of Montessori Education in the different stages of the child's development.

Montessori Preschool Year is a time for planting...

Montessori Pre-K Year is a time for growing...

The Kindergarten Year in Montessori is a time for blooming!



Click here for videos:

[Montessori Kindergarten: Essential & Empowering](#)

[A Time To Blossom - Montessori For The Kindergarten Year](#)

[The Montessori Kindergarten Year - A Question for Parents](#)



Montessori Elementary Program Develops Unique, Sensitive Individuals.

Children of the Elementary age are striving for intellectual independence and trying to satisfy their curiosity and excitement for learning. The Montessori classroom allows them to do just that. Rather than taking a step back to the basics and waiting for their peers to catch up, students of the Montessori class are able to progress at their own pace, discovering the world around them and focusing their varying interests appropriately.

What sets Montessori apart in the Elementary years—ages 6 – 12—is the individually paced curriculum that challenges children academically and safeguards their well-being and sense of self.

Click here for videos:

[Montessori: The Elementary Years](#)

[Structure with Choice in the Montessori Elementary Classroom](#)

[Montessori Mixed-age Classrooms](#)

Click here to learn more about Montessori Pathways:

[Kindergarten and Elementary Years at Montessori Pathways](#)

Click here to find more answers for your questions:

[Frequently Asked Questions about Montessori Education](#)





REGISTRATION FOR THE 2023-2024 SCHOOL YEAR HAS BEGUN!



Montessori Pathways School has been serving the community for thirty years, building a better future for our children and our world—one child at a time. Innovative Montessori education is our trademark. Our unique Montessori Pathways Team are delighted that your child and your family have been a part of this vision.

The Montessori approach to child development and education encompasses a wide range of experiences. Montessori works best when the child has maximum attendance and stays with us for the entirety of the developmental stage, which includes the Kindergarten Year in Primary class and Elementary education.

The completion of the 3-year cycle in every stage is the key of Montessori Education.

We look forward to having you and your child(ren) continue with us in the coming 2023-2024 school year!

The demand of enrolling children in the program is rapidly growing. Therefore, we would like to make sure that we accommodate our current families first and would like to remind you that registration for the 2023-2024 school year is in full swing!

The Tuition Schedule 2023-2024, Re-Enrollment Application Form for the 2023-2024 school year and Registration Form for Summer Camp 2023 were sent to all families. Please let us know if you have missed it.

⇒ If you have decided to continue your child's education at Montessori Pathways, please complete the **Re-Enrollment Form for the 2023-2024 school year** and return it to school along with the **\$50.00 re-enrolment fee (\$25.00 for the second child)** no later than **March 1st, 2023**.

Check or QuickPay via Zelle are acceptable.

⇒ **The 10% annual tuition security deposit is due April 15th.** *This will ensure a place for your child at our school and allow your child to continue in the same class with the same teachers. Contact Ms. Alena if you need a payment plan for security deposit.*

⇒ The tuition contract will reflect a 10% discount for the second child's tuition and 15% for the third one's.

⇒ **The Summer Camp registration begins March 1st. The application and \$30.00 early registration fee are due April 15th.**

Please note: If the registration forms will be returned after April 15, your child will be considered as a new student with a \$100.00 registration fee for the next School Year and \$50.00 registration fee for Summer Camp requirement.

~ It is important that we know who is enrolled in Summer Camp and the School Year as soon as possible so that we can make the appropriate plans for hiring staff. Students who are enrolled just prior to the start of Summer Camp or School Year cannot be guaranteed a spot in the same class or at school at all. ~ We look forward to another great year with your family!

IN MARCH:

- ◆ **March 1 (Tu) – Summer Camp enrollment begins**
- ◆ **February 27 — March 3 – Dr. Seuss Week**
- ◆ **March 17 (F) at 2:00pm - Elementary Students' Research Projects Presentations.**
Parents are welcome to attend.
- ◆ **March 17(F) - Spring Primary Parent / Teacher Conference Day (East and South Rooms)**
 - * **No School** for all Primary students **on Conference Day, March 17**
 - * **The link to schedule** your in-person conference was already sent to all families. Please sign up for your conference.
- ◆ **March 27—March 31 – Spring Break (No School)**
The school will be operating for All Day (6:45am—6:00pm) students during Spring Break.



NEWS FROM THE ELEMENTARY CLASS



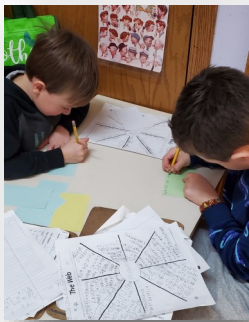
Ms. Bridget

*"Equality consists in the same treatment of similar persons."
~Aristotle*

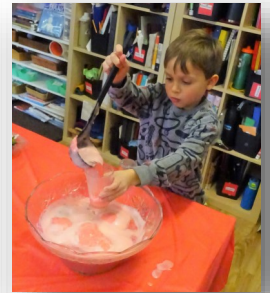
Throughout the year, we study all people and their contributions to our world. However, in February, the Black History Month, we focus on the contributions of Black people to our world. This month, most of the older students picked the person for whom they wanted to learn more. The younger kids picked a field and then I found a person in this field for them to discover facts. I always learn so much about the people chosen. Thanks for helping them do the research.



This month, for writing, each child in the 1st - 5th grade chose an invertebrate to research. I checked the library for available resources at the child's reading level. We also found books at the Crystal Lake Library. We weeded out books due to the reading level. Then they read and looked at the information in the books. They took notes, made the animal chosen and will make the biome to decorate. On March 17th at 2:00pm, we will present the research. Sixth grade students have been studying body systems and will present this knowledge as well. Parents are welcome to attend.



Valentine's Day is always exciting. This year each child picked how they would like to contribute to the party- food, game or decorations. It was awesome that the decorating committee was first grade! They did a great job making the class look festive. The games were so fun and the kids loved the diversity of food for the party.



Kindergarten visits have begun. This is always a fun time for the class to host their friends from kindergarten. We will continue in March.



Finally, a very exciting part of February was the paperwork that was sent home regarding our trip to Nature's Classroom (NCI). The kids are very excited to return to one of their favorite places. If you have any questions regarding this trip, please let me know and either Ms Alena or I will answer your questions.

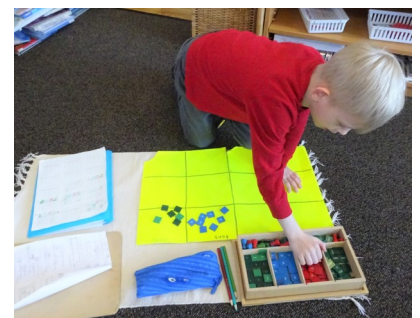
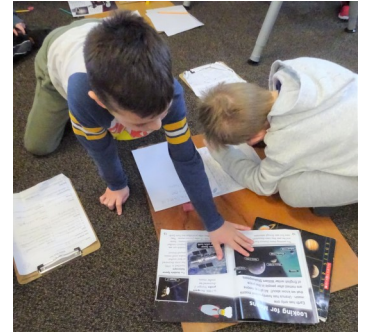


It was a short month, but we have been working hard on accomplishing more challenging work, becoming better readers and writers and looking with critical eyes at math.



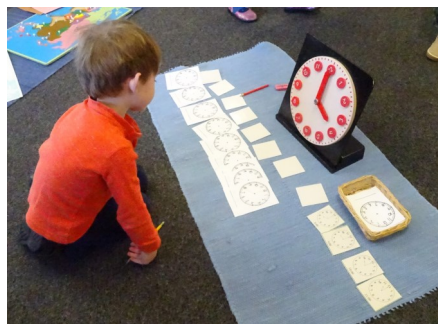
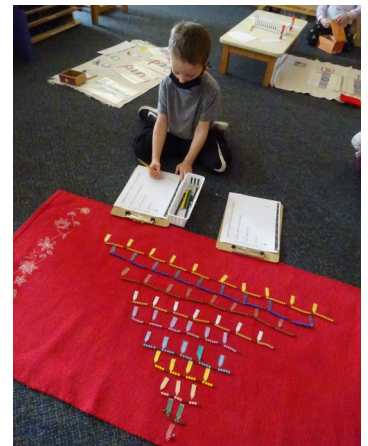
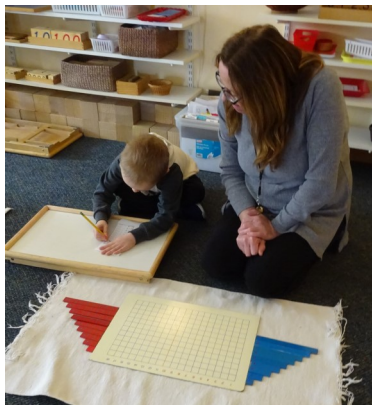
FEBRUARY PHOTO GALLERY

Elementary Class



FEBRUARY PHOTO GALLERY

Pre-K and Kindergarten Afternoon Group



NEWS FROM THE SOUTH ROOM



Ms. Kathy, Ms. Urana

We are moving to the bright side of the year with the sunset arriving at 5:35 pm! January was dreary and set a record for the number of cloudy days in one month. We are all excited to see and feel the sunshine. The children and teachers in the South Room decided we don't believe the groundhog! Spring is on the way! Well, that was before the ice storm! Spring is still on the way!

February was a month focused on friendships and kindness. The children enjoyed making Valentines and all the wonderful Holiday heart crafts Ms. Urana set up in the room. We sang "Skid a ma rink a dink", "We are Friends", and "A Ring is Round". A huge Thank You to everyone for the donations of both time and items to make our Valentines celebration a huge success.

We finished our month with Dr. Seuss week. The rhymes in the Dr. Seuss books are fun filled and full of colorful characters, repetition, silly words, rhythm, rhymes, and a whole lot of alliteration. They facilitate counting skills, rhyming, and decoding. Both the teachers and children loved having parents come and read to them, not to mention the fun crafts and daily themes. Thanks to all who helped make it a fun filled week.

Language is all around us in our world and is used in many ways within the Montessori classroom. The unseen works (which never go home) learning, pre-reading skills such as patterning, opposites, rhyming words and things that go together such as a chicken and an egg, a baby and a crib or a toothbrush and toothpaste. All have a part in classification of our world and language development. Naming the various geometric shapes and geometric solids. Children develop vocabulary through the many "parts of" works, building vocabulary development in sciences, math, and geometry, everywhere in the classroom.

All of the students have been working with sounds at different independent levels. A few are still learning basic sounds with the sandpaper letters and sand tray. The sandpaper letters are unique, they help the child form "muscle memory" of the shape of an individual letter while reciting the sound. The sand tray then allows the child to recreate the letter and erase/shake the tray if it is not exactly to their liking. The sand tray works much like a chalkboard but on a more tactile level, again reinforcing the feel of making each individual letter to be associated with a given sound/letter. It is on the sandpaper letters that formation of a letter is introduced. Where to start each letter and whether a continuous movement is used or do you pick up your hand, to cross a "t" or dot an "i". Think of learning a foreign alphabet. Each letter must be remembered both visually, sounded out for its unique sound and then reproduced to create individual words.

We teach **the sound** and **NOT the name** of the letter as a basis for beginning phonetic awareness which will lead to building words. If the child is using the letter names, the letters c-a-t, never blend to form the word cat, only the isolated sound for each letter will. It is very important that children know **the sounds** are more difficult, the letter names (which many children already know) will follow on their own. The names of the letters don't teach reading skills! They hinder them! When the children use the

letter name, we remind them yes, that's its name but, but it says For example, "C", its name is "cee" and "cee" says "c" (as in cat). The vowels are first taught as the short sounds, "a" as in apple, "e" as in elephant, "i" as in insect, "o" as in octopus, and "u" as in umbrella. It is also extremely important to focus on **lower case letters!** Many children begin writing their own names with all **CAPITAL** letters when only the first letter should be capitalized. **We cannot stress this enough;** most of the print in books is lower case letters. Writing in Capital letters creates problems in the future and is a habit which is very hard to break.

Still another group of children know a few sounds and are working on isolating the initial sound for 2 and then 3 different sounds at once and sorting objects and later the pictures to the corresponding letters. It is at this step it gets tricky, they must practice over and over and over, to hear the initial sound of each object and most importantly to match it to the sound or sandpaper letter, to gain the confidence to sort them without assistance. Some children repeat the same sorting of the same, multiple objects many times, until each individual sound is mastered. You may be seeing the same practice papers over and over more than 10 times! It will come. Every child is different.

Many of you have probably noticed the "incorrect" spelling of many words recently, the focus with word building with the moveable alphabet is on isolating and identifying each of the single sounds of a word. The children are then able to bring each individual sound from the alphabet and build a word without writing it. This builds confidence in writing and sounding out words. The spelling rules will be introduced later. Many sounds in English are not phonetic, rather various combinations of letters which make different sounds. We do introduce phonograms as blends where two sound form to combine and you can hear both, such as "sl, bl, cl" these are the blends and diagraphs which form when two sounds make a new sound for example "sh, ch, wh, wr, ar, er, ou, oo, has two sounds", etc. Each Montessori classroom also has sandpaper letters, and other works to help teach the phonograms.

When children bring papers and books home ask them to read them back to you. **Don't correct the spelling.** Children learn spelling rules through concrete experience and spelling tests will come at the Elementary level. In the primary classrooms, each child reaches a moment when they become aware of phonetic spelling rules, those which they have seen through experience. When, the two don't match (phonetic and actual spelling). The child makes the change! One such example of many we experienced this month, was the word 'window'. The child-built window with the moveable alphabet, initially as "w-i-n-d-o" as is the phonetic spelling. Then he mused over it a bit and added "w" from his previous experience. He was also building "witch", again not phonetic unless you know the diagraphs. But he solved the problem, O.K. his brother is **Charlie**. Discovering rules and patterns by themselves comes with experience and exposure to words, vocabulary, and a solid foundation with initial lower-case sounds. Discovering on their own, children build confidence and self-esteem. Be patient and encourage this phonetic stage, it is quite fun to observe the growth! And READ, READ, READ to your child!

If you read this newsletter please email, "I read it" to montpaths@hotmail.com, attention South room.

FEBRUARY PHOTO GALLERY

South Room



NEWS FROM THE EAST ROOM



Ms. Joey, Ms. Carole

February brought a focus on love, friendship, giving and being kind. The art area was a favorite spot for making Valentines and heart crafts of all kinds - the children enjoyed poking, cutting, and decorating hearts for their families and friends.



A fun activity for our older children was counting colored hearts, we then learned that we could collect that data and show the results with a visual picture called a graph.



For our Valentine's Day celebration, we had fun playing games like Hearts and Hugs tic-tac-toe, Cupids arrow toss, Valentine freeze dance, we sang songs, made crafts and had a very special snack. After decorating their own collection bags, the children placed them in our Valentines Post Office where we practiced our grace and courtesy skills, by taking turns delivering the cards they brought in to share with their friends. Thank you to all of our families for donating all the items and your time for our Valentine's Day Party. It was a huge success, and we could not have done it without you!



In our language area the younger children have been enjoying working with the matching, categorizing, and sequencing cards. These works help the child learn to describe an item to others. It provides connections between ideas for similarities and differences and gives a way to group our thoughts. It allows children to recognize patterns that make the world more understandable and predictable, an important skill in pre-reading, comprehension, and writing.

The older children have been working with phonograms, with that, two different colored Moveable Alphabets are used. One to isolate the phonogram, the other to finish the remainder of the word. The child then prints the word using two different colors, making a small booklet to read. They are so excited when they finish their books, it takes a lot of focus and concentration, quite often taking the whole morning work time. So please remember to ask your child to read their work to you.



Land and Water forms have been popular, using our land form trays the children pour water around the island, on three sides of the peninsula, and on both sides of the isthmus. Then using the opposite trays, water is poured into a lake, a gulf and a strait to form these bodies of water. We often use miniature animals with this work and ask, where does a fish live? In a gulf. Where does a horse live? On a peninsula. We can also locate similar bodies of land and water on a large map. The child can then trace and cut out the land and water forms or choose to paint them.

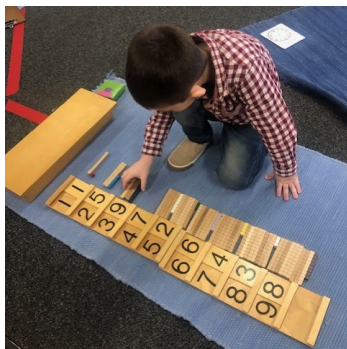
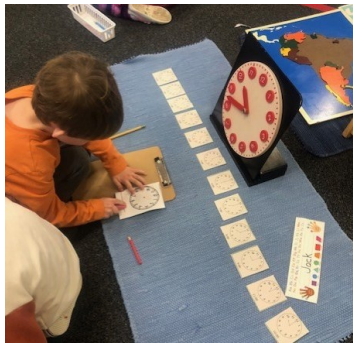
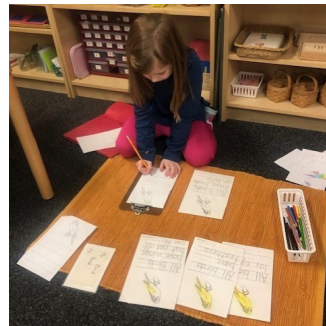


The Spindle Boxes represent a parallel exercise in associating the numerals with proper quantities. The numerals are in fixed order, 0-9. Starting with zero, we learn zero means none or nothing. Then we count one spindle and hold that in our hand and place it in the compartment, as we continue to count the number grows in our hand, by the time we reach 9 we can barely hold the amount in our hand! All the children seem to love that moment:)

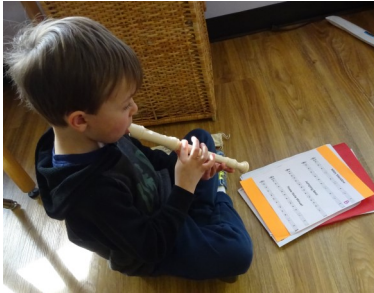
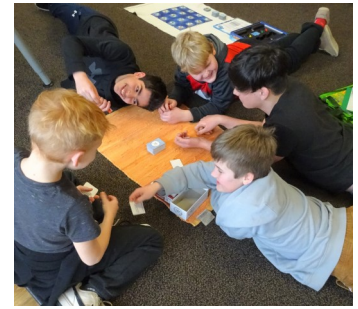
This is a wonderful time of year, our older students are feeling confident and comfortable with our routine and open to helping/teaching our younger students to navigate, as well. One of the most beautiful features of the multi-age classroom is that every child, no matter where they are developmentally will explore work that is right for their skill set. Once they master that work, they then become a "teacher" to another friend who would like to try it too.

FEBRUARY PHOTO GALLERY

East Room



MORE WONDERFUL MOMENTS AT MONTESSORI PATHWAYS



“There is a great sense of community within the Montessori classroom, where children of differing ages work together in an atmosphere of cooperation rather than competitiveness. There is respect for the environment and for the individuals within it, which comes through experience of freedom within the community.”
~ Maria Montessori

