

MONTESSORI PATHWAYS' NEWS



The First Week of School (August 24— August 31,2017)



Notes from Ms. Alena (Head of School)

Dear Parents,

Welcome to the new school year! We are excited to have you as a part of our Montessori Pathways family!

It seems that not too long ago we were “traveling from space to ocean”, discovering science, music, and literature, enjoying swimming, playing soccer, field hockey and the other sports at our Summer Camp, and suddenly the new school year is here!

Montessori Pathways Team —

our experienced and enthusiastic teachers who will be helping your children become strong and independent learners, as well as responsible, kind, and helpful individuals:

- Ms. Alena** – Director of Montessori Pathways School
- Ms. Amber** – Elementary I-II Teacher in the North Room.
- Ms. Christine** – Primary Teacher in the East Room
- Ms. Carole** – Primary Teacher in the East Room; Preschool Extended Day Teacher.
- Ms. Andrea** – Primary Teacher in the South Room; Pre-K Extended Day Teacher.
- Ms. Urana**– Primary Assistant Teacher in the South Room.
- Ms. Karen** – Kindergarten Extended Day Teacher.
- Ms. Donna** – Morning Arrival, Late Afternoon Teacher, Elementary Gym Teacher
- Ms. Linda** – Kindergarten and Elementary Art Teacher.
- Ms. Christina** – Music Teacher.
- Ms. Jennifer**—Substitute Teacher



And so we discovered that education is not something which the teacher does, but that it is a natural process which develops spontaneously in the human being. It is not acquired by listening to words, but in virtue of experiences in which the child acts on his environment.

The teacher's task is not to talk, but to prepare and arrange a series of motives for cultural activity in a special environment made for the child.

~ Maria Montessori,
The Absorbent Mind

AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

- ◆ Tuesday – 3:15 – 3:55pm – Yoga – Instructor Ms. Becky
- ◆ Wednesday – 3:15 – 4:15pm – Chess - Coaches Larri and Yury
- ◆ Thursday – 3:00 – 3:45pm – Dance – Teacher Ms. Vicky
- ◆ Friday – 3:15 - 4:15pm – Sticky Fingers Cooking Class – Chef Jennifer



Each month, we will be sending out a newsletter to let you know about everything that has happened at school, as well as to announce upcoming school events. We understand the parents' interest and curiosity about their child(ren)'s first few days at school, so we have prepared a short newsletter for the first week.

For most of our students, the beginning of the new school year was smooth and organized. Some of the children are returning students and are a great help for their new friends.

Many of our new students had also attended our summer camp, which helped them build a strong relationship with the school, as well as learn the rules and procedures of the classrooms.

I would like to thank the teachers, who spent a lot of time, energy, and creativity in preparing the classrooms and new materials for our students.

Our newsletters will contain information from each individual classroom, but we suggest that you take the time to read all of it. Oftentimes the teachers include helpful information, interesting recipes, and other tips to be used at home, as well as a greater picture of what is happening around the school. These newsletters also serve as a starting point for conversations about school with your child.

Have a wonderful Labor Day!

Ms. Alena

Coming School Events



- ◆ **September 8 (F) at 9:00 – 11:00am** – Elementary students' **Field Trip to Crystal Lake Library.**
- ◆ **September 8 (F) at 5:30—6:30pm** - **Ice Cream Social** (*Rain Day—September 15*)
- ◆ **September 21 (Th) at 11 a.m.**, children from Pathways School will sing "*Light a Candle for Peace*" in celebration of the **United Nation's Annual International Day of Peace.**

Beginning in New Zealand and finishing in the Hawaiian Islands, the song "Light a Candle for Peace" will be sung continuously for 24 hours by Montessori school children around the world.

Our school is excited about joining the many other Montessori schools to "Sing Peace around the World". It is a chance to connect our regular lessons of encouraging the children to treat each other with respect and dignity. To show compassion, patience, and kindness to others are values nurtured in the Montessori environment as the children work together each day for a peaceful classroom. In the words of Maria Montessori, "*The child is both the hope and promise for mankind.*"

- ◆ **September 25 at 10:30am—Fire Drill**
- ◆ **September 28 (Tu) - Mums Sale School Fundraiser.**
This year, the raised money will go toward to South Room renovation.
- ◆ **September 29 (F) - Elementary Parent / Teacher Conference Day (North Room)**
 - * *No School for School Day Elementary students*
 - * *Child Care is provided for 7:45am — 4:15pm and All Day (6:45am-6:00pm) Students*

As always, if you have any comments, questions, or concerns, feel free to contact us via e-mail at

montpathways@hotmail.com

NEWS FROM THE ELEMENTARY CLASS

Ms. Amber



What is the biggest indicator of a great start to the new school year? ALL of the elementary children playing a game together at recess! There are lots of smiles as they play together.



New beginnings are a challenge for everyone. The new students are learning the routine, the rules, and all the expectations of being an elementary student. Returning students are working at getting back into the routine and helping to gently bring their new friends up to speed. It is a lot to manage, but they are doing great. There have been only a couple incidences of tears, which is also another great sign. There is a lot of helping going on and a lot of smiles being shared. The greatest obstacles at this point are definitely using quiet, inside (whisper) voices and following directions the first time.



What do your students need right now? A good breakfast and maybe more sleep at night or on weekends to help them manage the new level of mental and physical activity. They definitely need "down time" to process each day's events (which may be a lot more than what they were doing over the summer or last year.) For most students, this means quiet

time after school or in the evening that is free from screens such as TV, computer, tablets, etc, or for some students, extra physical activity.

Ms. Karen and I are assessing each new student's abilities, so a plan of action can be developed for every student. For all students, we are reviewing previous knowledge and slowly beginning presentations of new concepts. We are wading, as we build up endurance to voyage into the deeper end of our classroom studies.



Plus, time is needed to overcome the "summer slide" the loss of knowledge which happens over a prolonged absence from school. One step at a time...

Encourage your student to be patient, to listen, to control both their volume and their talking, and to help one another. We are off on an adventure together.



NEWS FROM THE EXTENDED DAY KINDERGARTEN CLASS

Ms. Karen



Welcome to both the kindergarten children and their families. It has already been a busy, interesting and productive week with your children. In the monthly newsletter, there will be a section relating the activities of Kindergarten Extended Day. But for now, a quick recap of what we have been doing.

There are many things to learn about the environment. We meet in the South room, but several children in Extended Day are from the East room and some are new to the school.

So, learning the environment is a good review for some of the children and necessary for the children new to the south room environment. That includes: learning where the supplies are (pencils, scissors, erasers, paper towels, glue, the cleanup tray, inset paper, aprons, etc. etc.) It also includes learning routines: how we line up, how we come in and take care of our belongings after recess, how we wait our turn, etc. As you can imagine, this is all a process. Additionally, the children learn where the curriculum materials are located.



When analyzed, "simple" activities are more complex than is first apparent. To do a cutting and gluing activity, which will come up often, the children need to be able to ORGANIZE their many materials so the materials themselves do



not become an impediment to carrying out the activity. So, for example, to do a simple cutting and gluing activity, they need: a glue bottle (how to open and close the bottle and control the amount of glue), a paper towel, scissors, materials for the pro-

ject and the background paper on which to glue the subject of their cutting. Following the activity, they learn how to put the materials back into their specific place and clean the surface of their work space with the clean up tray so it is ready for the next person (CLASSROOM GRACE AND COURTESY.)

Also, we focus on refining skills that the children will need this year: gluing, cutting with a scissors, folding, creasing, tying, writing. This too is a process.



Many days there will be a presentation/lesson given to the group. Usually these lessons revolved around geography, biology, botany, and science. Often, but not always, there is some kind of a product to illustrate the point of the lesson. We are just beginning this process.



There is a "work time" incorporated into each day. Sometimes this revolves around a group activity, sometimes it is individual activity. This is also a time for individual lessons, particularly in math and language. (Often there are observers when we give lessons. They too learn what is being presented to the individual child.)

Social relationships are increasingly important, so making new friends is a key aspect to being comfortable and really enjoying the Extended Day experience. This also grows over time.



NEWS FROM THE SOUTH ROOM

Ms. Andrea, Ms. Urana



Wow! It's quite amazing that the first week of school has already come and gone. We have been so busy in the South Room. Our main focus at the start of every school year is building a strong sense of community, and for us this starts with relationships: teacher to child, child to child, each individual being one part of a whole. At the beginning of each new school year, we always like to begin the day outside on the playground. This is a great way for the new children, and this year we have a LOT of them, to get to know their new classmates in a low pressure and fun setting.



It's also a way for the teachers to observe the children in a social setting, so that we can help encourage new friendships by partnering up more reserved children. Sometimes joining a play group that's already in progress is daunting, so the teachers are there to lead group activities like *Simon Says*, *Ring around the Rosie*, *London Bridge*, *Duck-Duck-Goose*, etc. to make sure that all the children feel welcome to join and have fun as "part of the group." It's so fascinating to watch these young children find friends outside in such a short amount of time, and then transition into the classroom with a new buddy to work with.



Our focus inside the classroom is on helping each child become comfortable and confident in their new environment and with their new daily routine. This begins with tours of the classroom so that all of the children know where to find things and can start to become more independent in their work choices. We have two line times: one as soon as we come in from the playground and one at the end of the morning work cycle.

The earlier line time is more of a morning meeting where we review our classroom rules and we present some of the more basic components, like how to carry, unroll, and re-roll a work rug, how to push in a chair, where to wash hands, how to carry a chair, etc. We also work on *grace and courtesy* and role-model how to: ask another child if you can work with them, how to say no in a kind way, what to do if you need help, how can you help another child. Then we end each early line time with a group snack to strengthen that sense of community.



Once the children are invited to choose a work, we then have an opportunity for more specific presentations of Montessori work to individual children and to small groups. We have already shown some great practical life works such as table scrubbing, handwashing, washing a window, and carrot peeling and cutting. At the later line time we have been playing lots of name games and singing many name songs so that all the children, both returning and new, can learn each other's names.

We have such an incredible group of children: we have already seen so many leaders emerge and embrace their role as helper to new children. We are very excited for what this school year will bring!



NEWS FROM THE PRE-K EXTENDED DAY



Ms. Andrea

Our Pre-kindergarten friends are the children who are not yet kindergarteners and are no longer nappers. After lunch and playground time, these children go to the South classroom and continue their work cycle with an extended enrichment period. This is a great opportunity for these older children to observe the kindergarteners and their advanced work, as well as have the chance to navigate and work in the classroom as the “older” children. This is a highly productive time of day, and all the children are very busy working during this time. It also seems to give them a sense of pride that they are the “big kids” and adds to their growing maturity. I have a lot of fun lessons planned for the pre-k group and am looking forward to the school year with them.



NEWS FROM THE EAST ROOM

Ms. Christine, Ms. Carole



Our beginning of the 2017-2018 school year is off to a promising and encouraging start. Your children are so eager to learn and share their knowledge with new friends. We have had very few hiccups with transitioning from summer camp into the school year. We are getting to know each other, our daily routine, and environment - it is a lot to learn and we are amazed at how quickly the children have caught on!



The first week's routine looks like this:

-Arrival time spent outdoors, playing and observing the environment and our friends (we are observant and mindful of sensitive/shy students and encourage returning students to help them feel welcome).

-We then come into the school to change shoes/hang up coats/ wash hands.

-Group snack on the line (lessons in Grace and Courtesy such as "yes, please" or "no thank you")

-We initiate line time activities such as name game songs, how to listen and raise your hand when you want to share.



-Teachers give whole class lessons and presentations for an understanding of the classroom dynamics - where the bathroom is, using a rug or table to place our work, how to clean up a spill, pouring water; basically, introducing all areas as appropriate to each individual child.

-Individual/small group work time with materials/observation as to your child's interests and academic level.

-We end our morning with ringing a bell to signify it's time to put our work away and say goodbye to our morning friends.

-Lunch children assist in setting tables and we sing our Community Song before enjoying lunch around 11:30.

- We wash dishes, straighten our classroom materials, and prepare for additional outside time after lunch.

-We then transition into Kindergarten, Pre-K and naptime.

We are so happy and thankful to have our returning students as role models and our new students as part of our Montessori family! We are looking forward to a fun and interesting year ahead!



We believe that communication is "key" and encourage an ongoing relationship between home and school - please share any questions/concerns so we can always be on the same page in making this year a success!



NEWS FROM THE LATE AFTERNOON CLASS



Ms. Donna

We spent a wonderful time together doing the large group activities.

Games: *Little mouse hiding under the little house which one did you choose?* (One child hides the mouse under a felt house the children take turns guessing which house he is hiding under. The child that finds the mouse gets to hide the mouse and we play again.

Hopping frogs: we tried to race large frogs by pushing on them. Some of them went forward, some went backwards and some flipped over. We all laughed and had fun.



Story time: "Little Blue Truck Leads the Way" by Alice Schertle; "Piglet is Surrounded" by Water by A.A. Milne. This had a puzzle that we put together; "Brave Mouse" by Jill Eggleton

Big Book "Thanks to Cows" by Allan Fowler. We learned that cows live in barns, graze on grass, eat corn and drink lots of water. They eat their food twice. The second time they eat is called chewing her cud. A dairy cow gives about 80 glasses of milk a day. A cow is an adult female. There are different types of cattle, Holstein, Jersey, Guernsey, Brown Swiss to name a few. The Holstein cows are black and white and give the most milk. Cows are milked 2 times a day. The farmers used to milk the cows by hand but now use milking machines to milk their cows. Some of the milk is used to make butter, cheese, sour cream, cottage cheese and ice cream.



Team work: With a partner we each were at a table for two, each partner had 10 small paper cups and 5 index cards. They were not given any instruction as to what they should do. So they began stacking their cups on top of each other in various ways. One of the groups asked for more cups and cards. They built a large structure out of the cups and index cards. Then everyone wanted more cups and cards.



Science: "Floating Spiders" using aluminum foil, a black dry eraser marker, water and a straw. We drew black spiders on the foil and then blew at them with our straw. Several of the spiders made it of the foil and floated in the water going all over the foil by blowing at them. We will be trying this again to see if we can get everyone's to move.

After the group activity, the children can work with blocks, trains, puzzles, visit the art area and pick out something to do, flannel board, books, magnets etc.



Outside time: We were very lucky to have a surprise visitor one day. It was a rabbit who had been on the playground looking for food. When it saw us the rabbit went looking for his exit in the fence. The children were very quiet and watched the rabbit find his exit in the fence. We hope that he will visit us again soon.

AUGUST PHOTO GALLERY

