## **School Talk**

## **September 28, 2018**

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Hello Montessori Families!

What a beautiful day we had today! The weather was bright and sunny and began a wonderful segue into our last September weekend. The children were very happy to be able to play outside after so many days of being rained in.

Montessori has an exciting month upon us! First, next week we begin the process to officially name our program! The Montessori Naming Committee will meet on Tuesday, October 2nd here in the Montessori Cottage. At that meeting we will set our parameters for the search and discuss some options, but more importantly, we will be coming up with a plan to include you, our Montessori community, in this process. So keep your name suggestions ready as you will have opportunity to give us your input.

Next weekend, I have the pleasure of being seated on a panel about Montessori advocacy in Virginia at the Virginia Montessori Association’s 3rd annual Montessori conference. Mr. Evan Thomas, one of the long time Montessori parents in our program, will also be seated on the panel. I encourage those of you who can attend to do so. Information on how to register and pricing is below.

For those of you following APS happenings, this is a reporting year for the Early Childhood Advisory Committee (ECAC). The committee reviews the budget and non-budget needs of APS pre-K through 2nd grade children and presents them to the Advisory Council on Instruction (ACI) who then reports their recommendations to the School Board. I am happy to be the Principal representative for the Montessori community on that committee along with Ms. Anya Hughes, a Primary Montessori parent in our program, who has volunteered her time to participate.

As this first month of school comes to a close, I’d like to commend all of you – students, parents, teachers and staff – for being so cooperative with all the new changes in programming, policy and school functions. Transitions can be hard but your resiliency has made the effort less difficult than it could be. From Ms. Nashid and me, we’d like to say thank you for your support.

Here’s to a fabulous October in Montessori!

Sincerely,

Catharina Genove, Principal

**(More) MONTESSORI CONFERENCE NEWS**

The **Virginia Montessori Association**’s 3rd Annual conference will be on **Saturday, October 6, 2018** at the Stafford campus of the University of Mary Washington in Fredericksburg, VA. This year’s Keynote Speaker is John Hunter, founder and CEO of The World Peace Game Foundation. This year, our principal **Catharina Genove** and our Montessori PTA’s First Vice President, **Evan Thomas**, will be seated on a panel discussing Montessori advocacy in Virginia. It is a conference for both parents and educators alike. The cost is $50 for VMA members, $65 for non-VMA members, and just $45 for a group purchase of 5+ coming from a member school (which we are). The fee includes lunch. For more information, direct your browser to http://www.virginiamontessoriassociation.org/vma-annual-conference.html

**PROGRAM NEWS**

**ParentVue Access.** Many of you have mentioned that you could not access ParentVue. After July 4th of this year, APS made changes to ParentVue that required everyone to reset their passwords. Go to ParentVue and click on “Forgot Password” and follow the prompts to reset. We ask that all parents please do this and make sure that your information is correct and that you have been properly set up to receive School Talk notices. Any School Talk emergencies or notices, be it text, emails or phone calls, will go to the contact information you provide. For more information about School Talk and setting it up, please direct your browser to <https://www.apsva.us/family-access-center/>. Thank you.

**Introducing *Dreambox Learning Math*!** APS has introduced *Dreambox Learning* *Math* to our elementary students. Teachers have begun setting up students from 2nd through 5th grade with an online account so they can begin using the application. DreamBox Learning is an APS adopted online mathematics resource.  It is an interactive, adaptive, self-paced program that provides engaging activities for students to learn and practice skills in mathematics (grades K-8). It's available for both web-based and iPad platforms, and student progress is tracked across both.  From there, DreamBox selects a series of lessons and activities for the child to complete.

As the tasks are completed (or if they become too difficult), the program adapts with new activities. There are three versions: Primary (K-2), Intermediate (3-5), and Middle School (6-8). Each employs avatars that the players select for themselves and offers a game-like atmosphere to hold players' interest. DreamBox also provides the Insights Dashboard, which gives teachers, administrators, and parents access to reports on progress and mastery for each student (for skills and standards). Using real-time data, teachers can identify learning gaps to help them create differentiated long-term assignments for students. DreamBox creates a personalized learning pathway for students based on their demonstrated level of readiness. It is recommended that you send in earbuds/earphones with your child so they can work on Dreambox in class.

**SAVE THE DATE! Middle School Information Night, October 22nd, 7PM-9PM at Washington-Lee HS.** Parents and families of students entering middle school in the fall of 2019 will hear an overview about APS middle schools, school options, application deadlines and procedures, school information sessions, available resources, and more. Parents of students new to APS are encouraged to attend as well to learn more about APS middle schools. Immediately following the opening session, attendees will be able to meet the various middle school principals and program administrators to learn more information about each school and the programs they offer. In addition, families will have the opportunity to meet the principal of the New Middle School at the Stratford Site, learn more about its instructional program, and how to participate in the process to select the school colors, mascot, and more.

**Low Cost Options for Broadband Internet at Home** If you are a family with at least 1 student on free or reduced lunch; receive HUD housing assistance and/or are a low-income Veteran in our area, you are eligible to apply for the Internet Essentials program from Comcast. It includes low-cost high speed internet for just $9.95 a month and the option to purchase a home computer for just $150. For more information please follow the link: https://www.xfinity.com/support/articles/comcast-broadband-opportunity-program

**Don’t forget!** Our new main number is 703-228-8871. Our Attendance Hotline is now 703-228-2037, with an outgoing message so that you will know you have reached the right number! And **all** checks and money orders written to the school (for classroom/snack fees, fieldtrips, etc…) should be made out to Arlington County Montessori unless otherwise specified. Do NOT make them out to Drew Model School any longer. **Please remember to write your child’s name and teacher in the memo section.**

**TEACHERS CORNER**

**Band and orchestra have started!** The schedule for **ORCHESTRA** is as follows:

Classes meet every Thursday.

* Bach Group (Model Beginners): 11:30AM
* Beethoven Group (Model Advanced): 1:30PM
* Mozart Group (Montessori Advanced): 2:05PM
* Haydn Group (Montessori Beginners) 2:45PM

Students should make sure to bring their instruments to school on the day of their practice.

**After School Choir** practice begins on Wednesday, October 17th, 3:45PM to 4:45PM. There is no late bus so please plan on picking your child up, on time, at 4:45PM. More information to come soon.

**LIBRARIAN’S CORNER**

Ms. Black, our school librarian, would like parents to note their child’s “Library Day”. These are the days they should also return their books so that they may check out more.

* Mondays:  Alcorn, Bruno, Kalkus, Oakes, Ross, & Wilmore
* Tuesday: Habuki, O’Donnell, Pirro, & Stork
* Wednesday:  Arnal, Kozakhova, Lawot, Lopatkiewicz, & Rubilotta
* Thurs:  Hernandez, Mendolia, Morgan, Yamashita
* Fri:  Maheshwari

**PTA NEWS**

Enrichment is here! We have a full course of offerings for you!

* Mondays: Coding with Silver Knights Enrichment (2nd-5th), $186 for 8 weeks
* Tuesdays: Chess with Silver Knights Enrichment (K-5th), $126 for 8 weeks; and Decorating Sweets/Spanish Immersion (2nd-5th), $160 for 8 weeks
* Wednesdays: Robotics LEGO Club with Silver Knights Enrichment (1st-5th), $164 for 7 weeks
* Thursdays: Youth Karate with Kaizen Karate (K-5th), $115 for 7 weeks
* Fridays: Decorating Sweets/Spanish Immersion (4 years – Kindergarten), $142 for 7 weeks

All prices include a $10 fundraising free. All materials provided by the vendor. There is no late bus so all children are expected to be picked up on time, at 4:45PM. For more information about the course, follow this link: <https://acmpta.com/enrichment>

**UPCOMING DATES:**

* Tuesday, October 2: Montessori Naming Committee Meeting #1 – 6:30PM in the Montessori Cottage
* Wednesday, October 3: STEAM Under the Stars - 6PM at Drew Model School

**LINKS**

* Arlington Montessori Program on APS: <https://drew.apsva.us/the-montessori-program/>
* Principal Genove on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/CSGenove>
* Engage with APS https://www.apsva.us/engage/
* Lunch Menus: https://apsva.nutrislice.com/menus-eula-splash
* Arlington Montessori PTA: <https://acmpta.com/>.

**\*\*NEW FEATURE\*\* A MONTESSORI MOMENT**

**This week’s feature focuses on kindness and how to interact outside of the classroom.** While **c**hildren usually do a great job of understanding how the community works within the classroom, applying that thinking outside of the classroom is challenging. For instance, in class, they have jobs and learn to work collaboratively to solve problems and complete assignments. But outdoors, during the unstructured play at recess, it’s hard for them to see the parallels of both scenarios. That’s why teaching children the keys to kindness and empathy is one of the primary lessons in Montessori.

**Teaching Kindness**

*Published by Caitlyn Solomon on alldaymontessori.org*

With everything that had been going on in our society recently I have been really thinking about what I can do to try to help. The conclusion that I came to, with the help of a lot of article reading, was that I need to not only be kind but also teach kindness. In my classroom we have talked a significant amount about being a community and supporting each other. We talk about how, when you hurt someone, you can’t just say “sorry” and expect it to be fixed; you have to actually find a way to fix it.

Here is an example:

Two children are kicking a ball back and forth to each other outside at recess. Child A accidentally kicks the ball too hard and hits the other child in the head. Child B, who is obviously hurt, starts to cry. Child A goes over to Child B and asks “are you all right? I didn’t mean to kick the ball that hard.”

“No I am not ok; you hurt my head.”

“Oh no, what can I do to make you feel better?”

By simply teaching my students to ask one another what needs to be done to make the situation better we are setting them up to not only solve their own problem but also mend the bond of friendship that has been broken.

So many times children are expected to say “I’m sorry” and move on. But if you smashed my Lego tower saying “sorry” is not going to fix my tower that I worked so hard to build. Now my tower is ruined and even though you said “sorry” (this magical cure-all), I am still pretty mad about it. However, if you took the time to help me re-build my tower and talk to me about why you knocked it down in the first place, I am much more willing to forgive you and move on in our friendship.

In my opinion, teaching our children how to be kind to one another and fix the problems they are having in a productive manner sets them up to succeed. We are teaching them that even if they do the wrong thing and hurt another person’s feelings, we can work together to solve the problem and strengthen the friendship that was damaged.

For more way on how to teach your Montessori child more about empathy, please visit this link: http://ageofmontessori.org/5-awesome-ways-teach-empathy/