## **School Talk**

## **November 30, 2018**

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**PROGRAM NEWS**

**-Not receiving APS texts about closings/delays?** If so, there’s an easy fix. As long as your cell number is already in the school's database, just text the word YES to 67587. This will verify that you can receive text messages to that phone. (If you think the school does not have your cell number, please call the school to verify).

**-Honors Musicians Announced!** The final results are in! Congratulations to the following students!

* **Arlington County Junior Honors Band:** Rhys Harbour, Tony Madigan, Henry Gee, Owen Berger
* **Arlington County Junior Honors Orchestra:**  Henry DeNola
* **Arlington County Junior Honors Chorus:**  Charlotte Harold, Kayla Grant, Madeline Dean

Gift Card Drive through December 17th The Drew & Montessori counselors are collecting grocery store gift cards to help sustain our families at risk of food insecurity over the 2-week holiday break. If you are so inclined, drop off your gift card(s) to either Ms. Reeser or Ms. Grogan in the main office by December 17th. Visa/AmEx gift cards are fine. Please no cash/check donations. Please no restaurant gift cards. Gift cards from stores with a grocery store within, like Target or Walmart, are also welcome.

**-5th Grade Information.** The **5th grade overnight to the 4-H Center** in Front Royal is **Thursday, April 11** through **Friday, April 12**. The cost is currently $131, however, we are working on ways to possibly lower the cost. **5th Grade Graduation** has been scheduled for 6PM on Tuesday, **June 18th** at Wakefield High School.

**SAFETY PATROL CANNED FOOD DRIVE**

The **Drew Safety Patrols** are holding a canned food drive from now through December 20th. The food will be disbursed to families in need in our community. Drop off your canned goods and non-perishable items to the collection area in the lobby in front of the main office. This is a whole school effort. Any questions? E-mail Tenita Chapman or Leroy Dewitt or call 703-228-8135.

**TEACHERS CORNER**

The **Redskins Read Program** is a charitable foundation that offers one student from a randomly selected school with the opportunity to attend a Redskins home game as an honorary second half kick-off kid. This student will receive two tickets to the game, two pre-game field passes and a parking pass – after the second half kick-off, the student will then run onto the field to grab the kicking tee and be featured on the FedExField jumbotron!

Drew Model Elementary School has been randomly selected and **Kalin Lutz** (of Ms. Pappafotopoulos’ class) has been chosen to attend via a contest held by Ms. Black (librarian). She will be at the Redskins vs. Giants game on Sunday, December 9 at FedExField. Look for Kalin next week!

**MONTESSORI INFORMATION NIGHT**

**SAVE THE DATE!** Ever wonder what a Montessori child does at school? **Come find out more!** Families will have the opportunity to meet APS Montessori teachers, learn about the philosophy and ask questions. There will be informative teacher led panel discussions and volunteers from the Arlington Montessori Action Committee (AMAC) will be on hand to answer questions from a parents’ perspective. Plus you can tour Primary, Lower Elementary and Upper Elementary Montessori classrooms. All APS Montessori parents are encouraged to come. We also invite any Arlington families that are curious about the Montessori program to attend. **Wednesday, February 6th, 6PM at Drew.**

**PTA NEWS**

**-We are on Amazon Smile!** Just in time for your holiday shopping! Sign up for Amazon Smile and choose Arlington County Montessori PTA as your charity! To make it easier, direct your browser to <https://tinyurl.com/MontessoriSmile>. Every time you shop, we earn money, so please remember to sign up and ask your friends and family to sign up as well.

-We will see you this Sunday the 2nd for the **Montessori Movie Matinee**! Come watch the 1990s movie classic HOME ALONE with us! Bring your blankets and get cozy with complementary cookies and juice. Doors open at 2:15pm. Clarendon United Methodist Church, [606 N. Irving Street, Arlington, VA 22201](https://www.bing.com/local?lid=YN873x13947326219885667182&id=YN873x13947326219885667182&q=Clarendon+United+Methodist+Church&name=Clarendon+United+Methodist+Church&cp=38.8801879882812%7e-77.0971603393555&ppois=38.8801879882812_-77.0971603393555_Clarendon+United+Methodist+Church&FORM=SNAPST).

**-Enrichment Session II Registration opens up tomorrow, December 1st.** The next session begins in February 2019. We are offering part 2 of the same sessions we have now, all new content promised. You can register on our website starting at midnight. https://acmpta.com/enrichment

**UPCOMING DATES:**

* Wednesday, December 12: EARLY RELEASE. Dismissal is at 1:26PM.
* Monday, December 24 – January 4th: Winter Break

**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/>.

**A MONTESSORI MOMENT**

**Do you ever wonder how your child’s Montessori education will translate in secondary school? This week’s article explores that. And while it does focus on the secondary years, many of the examples can apply to Montessori in Upper Elementary as well.**

**What Happens When Montessori Meets Teenagers?**

*Leah Fable*

[Camelback Montessori College Prep](http://camelbackmontessori.org/) in Phoenix is one of only about 25 public Montessori high schools in the nation, compared to about 500 elementary and middle schools. It opened in 2012 as a small “school within a school” at Camelback High, then amid a turnaround under the leadership of Chad Gestson, a Phoenix ’01 alumnus who is now the superintendent of [Phoenix Union High School District](http://www.phxhs.k12.az.us/).

The school serves 110 students within Camelback High’s 2,300-student body—“a small school feel with big school opportunities,” says Phoenix '08 alumna Danchi Nguyen (above), a founding teacher and now its leader. Students study core subjects, but in a setting that encourages creativity, collaboration, and self-pacing, Nguyen says. One Day spoke with her about what it looks like when a teaching philosophy often associated with preschoolers is adapted to teens.

**In a Montessori high school, what sets the academics apart from a traditional high school?**

We really focus on cross-curricular connections through our “cycle of study” themes. The current theme for freshmen and sophomores is “dystopia/utopia.” In biology, they’re studying evolution and different environmental pressures. In English, they’re reading dystopian novels and comparing that to the utopia they’re trying to create. In math, they’re looking at how statistics can be manipulated to create a sense of dystopia or utopia.

On a day-to-day level, the classroom is prepared for the student to come in and engage right away. The teacher sets the objective and supplies materials throughout the room, but each student has a unique work plan that requires them to plan and prioritize how they’ll meet the objective. Students work in uninterrupted, independent blocks, allowing them to engage with their work, collaborate with others, or participate in small group lessons and one-on-one instruction.

**What does a typical classroom look like?**

A “prepared environment” is a core component of Montessori. Teachers strive to have attractive lighting—something to soften the feel of the classroom. Kids sit down at group tables, which encourages collaboration. Every room has a rug in the middle, and maybe bean bag chairs or mats to allow for flexible seating and different forms of grouping. Another component of Montessori is the “exemplar” or “control of error.” In high school, that looks like folders throughout the room with answer keys, or an exemplar piece of writing, so kids can guide their own instruction.

**The vast majority of Montessori schools serve younger kids. What did Maria Montessori have to say about teens?**

One of her only writings on adolescence is an essay called [“Erdkinder,”](https://archive.org/stream/TheErdkinderAndTheFunctionsOfTheUniversity%22%20%5Cl%20%22page/n0/mode/2up) or Earth Child. She believed adolescents need to go out and have experiences where they learn to be self-sufficient. How we interpret that is to get our kids off campus and connecting with nature. Our sophomores recently returned from a camping trip to the Grand Canyon where they were each part of a different crew caring for themselves and each other--like cooking, or cleaning, or setting up the tents. She also believed that physically challenging experiences are really important to the development of the whole child. So on the last day of the trip, the kids picked their own challenging course to hike through the canyon.

**Is there a social justice component to your school?**

Montessori is known for peacemaking, and I’d say I’m on the more radical end of that. I believe it takes equity to achieve peace, and to achieve equity takes action.

As one example, we work really hard to recruit kids from Camelback’s traditional feeder schools, who are less likely to have been exposed to Montessori in elementary school. Between 65 and 80 percent of our students are of color, depending on the class. But at Camelback as a whole, 85 to 90 percent of students are of color. Compared to the community we’re in, we do look different. That’s one reason why it’s ever more important for our students to have conversations about power, privilege, and allyship.

**Do you have a favorite Montessori moment?**

There are some kooky Montessori things that I just love. I love that one of our tenets is about “cosmic education”—pondering yourself as a tiny being in this vast universe. When we take kids to Lowell Observatory [in Flagstaff, Arizona], we’re able to have conversations about our place in the universe, and that can connect to conversations about peace and sustainability. Kids are able to ask themselves, “Rather than waiting for a better world, how do we create the world we want to see?”