## **School Talk**

## **May 17, 2019**

**Inside this edition:**

* **The Big Pack Up**
* **MPSA Now on Twitter**
* **Black Parent Academy**
* **Rising K-1 Google Group**
* **2nd Henry Tour/Transportation Meeting**
* **Program News**
* **PTA News**
* **Upcoming Dates**
* **Links**
* **A Montessori Moment**

**THE BIG PACK UP**

APS has given the order! All Montessori classes need to be packed up for storage by June 17th so that the refresh construction on Drew can begin as soon as school lets out. This means teachers, who normally are allowed a week past the end of school to pack, are in a time crunch!

**If you are able to help with any packing, please sign up!**

<https://tinyurl.com/BigPackUp>

This sign up lists the packing times teachers would like some help. Not all teachers are listed but check often as they may get added. While some teachers want help with actual packing, several have stated that what they’d really like are parents to come in and keep students occupied with pre-planned activities while they pack, so be aware that this is what you may be asked to do.

There is a packing day on Saturday, June 8th, when the PTA will be providing childcare. See details in the sign up.

**MPSA NOW ON TWITTER**

**The Montessori Public School of Arlington** now has a social media presence! Follow us on Twitter @MPSArlington (<https://twitter.com/MPSArlington>)

A Facebook page will be established soon.

**BLACK PARENT ACADEMY**

Join the [APS Office of Equity & Excellence](http://track.spe.schoolmessenger.com/f/a/M7F3QtUd-HPPar8qnuHxvg~~/AAAAAQA~/RgRetv9fP0QraHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuYXBzdmEudXMvZXF1aXR5LWFuZC1leGNlbGxlbmNlL1cHc2Nob29sbUIKAADfy9VcJAgWa1ITS2hheW5lczc0QGdtYWlsLmNvbVgEAAAAAQ~~) for the **Black Parent Academy Meeting** at the Arlington Career Center on **Tuesday, May 21** from **6:30 - 8:30 p.m**. The Black Parent Academy (formerly titled Black Parent Alliance) is a group of parents coming together to discuss relevant topics, gain information, and make decisions to improve the education of their children. At this meeting, a variety of workshops and resources will be available to meet the needs of students in all grade levels. Childcare will not be available at this meeting, but families are encouraged to bring their children if needed. All are welcome to attend.

The following workshops and resources will be offered for families at this meeting:

* Intro to Elementary Math Workshop
* Elementary Math Workshop Part 2
* Middle School Mathematics
* High School Mathematics
* Elementary Special Education IEP Bootcamp
* Secondary Special Education IEP Bootcamp
* Power of My Rap
* APL Summer Reading Program and APS Library Services
* Annual Online Verification Process & Family Communications

If you are interested in attending, please register to attend by visiting the following link: [https://bit.ly/2H6AV1V](http://track.spe.schoolmessenger.com/f/a/XJ0p0zivZZcgjZfSFr8WMg~~/AAAAAQA~/RgRetv9fP0QWaHR0cHM6Ly9iaXQubHkvMkg2QVYxVlcHc2Nob29sbUIKAADfy9VcJAgWa1ITS2hheW5lczc0QGdtYWlsLmNvbVgEAAAAAQ~~).

For additional information or questions about this event, please contact Jennifer Gross at 703-228-8628 or [jennifer.gross@apsva.us](mailto:jennifer.gross@apsva.us).

**RISING K-1 GOOGLE GROUP**

**A Google group for parents of rising Kindergartners & 1st Graders has been created.** This group is to help families of rising Ks/1s get in touch and establish a network. If you are interested in joining the group, or know someone who may be, e-mail Mrinal Oberoi at mrinalprabhu@gmail.com.

A Google group for parents of newly enrolled Primary Montessori students will hopefully be established soon.

**2ND HENRY TOUR & TRANSPORTATION MEETING**

On **Wednesday, May 29th**, we will be holding a 2nd tour of Patrick Henry, at then go right into a meeting with Kristin Haldeman, Director of Multimodal Transportation for APS, as she shows us the plans for the hub locations in store for the bus riders in the Montessori program. We will convene in the Patrick Henry library at **6**, where we will hold a brief PTA meeting *(and the elections for next year’s EC).* The tour will start around **6:15-6:20** and then Ms. Haldeman will begin her presentation at 7PM.

**All Montessori families who are currently on a bus and will not be within the 1.5 mile walk zone for Patrick Henry should come.** If you know families whose children were just accepted into the lottery, encourage them to come, as this is the only time they will get to tour Patrick Henry as they, too, will have to begin packing and get prepared for summer construction. Parents in Gunston Montessori whose children ride a bus should also consider attending as their cross-county Montessori students will also have bus hubs in their future.

**PROGRAM NEWS**

-Lower Elementary Montessori teacher, **Angela Morgan**, was honored this week for her nomination as Teacher of the Year for Drew Model School. See her video interview here: https://vimeopro.com/aetvaps/2019-celebration-of-excellence-videos/video/336645724

-**5th Grade Promotion** will be **Tuesday, June 18** at Wakefield High School. Doors open at 5:45PM, ceremony starts at 6PM. A call for help from 4th grade parents will be sent out in early June. 4th grade parents who help will receive priority seating at their child’s own 5th grade promotion. Volunteers from last year will be notified of their preferential seating about 2 weeks prior to the event.

**PTA NEWS**

**Saturday Pack Up**

On Saturday, June 8th, several teachers will be coming in to do some packing. If you are free, do come on out! To make it easier for parents to help, the PTA will provide childcare from 10AM to 12PM.  
  
Please use this link to sign up to help your teacher.   
[https://tinyurl.com/BigPackUp](https://tinyurl.com/BigPackUp?fbclid=IwAR2pMhPPBssO7VDEV3E5DmhZkvGLqGcll-dDB5isu3E_Wyn3XqyB3TuDVGo)  
  
If you sign up to help that day and you need childcare, please leave us the number of children and their ages in the "comment" slot. *\*Children must be at least 3 years old and potty trained.*

**UPCOMING DATES**

* May 21st & 22nd: 4th Grade Reading
* May 21: Parent Academy Meeting, 6:30PM at the Career Center
* May 23rd: 3rd Grade Math SOL
* May 23: Honored Citizen Award Ceremony, 6:30PM in the School Board Room, Syphax
* May 23rd & 24th: 5th Grade Reading SOL

**LINKS**

* Arlington Montessori Program on APS: <https://drew.apsva.us/the-montessori-program/>
* Montessori Public School of Arlington on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/MPSArlington>
* 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/>.
* Arlington Montessori Action Committee (AMAC): <http://www.arlingtonmontessori.org/>

**A MONTESSORI MOMENT**

**Montessori Vocabulary 101**

**Psychic Embryo**: The first three years of life is a period of mental creation, just as the 9 months in utero is a period of physical creation. The brain awaits experience in the environment to flesh out the genetic blueprint. Since so much mental development occurs after birth, Montessori called the human infant a psychic embryo.

**How Montessori Education is Helping to Build Community in Englewood**

Excerpted from a report written by Rita Nolan, *Executive Director, The Montessori School of Englewood*

*The Montessori School of Englewood, one of the first public schools in Chicago to offer a free Montessori education in an underserved community, is hoping to become a model for other ambitious education and community-building initiatives.*

Montessori practice is based on the premise that children are deeply invested in their own development and are therefore capable of fulfilling their potential through self-directed efforts. The Montessori approach evolved at the same time that Chicago’s own rich tradition of modern education was taking hold in the city and across the nation in the early years of the 20th century. The core strategies of what is now known as progressive education were developed and passed on by education giants John Dewey, Francis W. Parker, Carlton Washburne, and social reformer Jane Addams – all of whom called Chicago home.

Our work at The Montessori School of Englewood is important because in these times of overtesting and obsessive quantification of student achievement, teachers working in challenging Chicago settings like ours are rarely given the chance to practice teaching methods that nurture “unquantifiable”   but utterly essential learning attributes such as curiosity, enthusiasm, cooperation, respect for difference, sticktoitiveness, and reflection. These are qualities that all serious educators recognize as fundamental building blocks for lifelong learning.

Regrettably, the cultural opposite of child-centered, Montessori education -- known as “zero tolerance”  -- is too often the norm in urban schools. Examples of these non-progressive practices currently in vogue include so-called “rigor”   translating into public student rankings and chastisement of children not meeting expectations. None of these practices develop the whole child, and generally produce adverse results.

While fear-based practices like these cannot be good for any child, they are especially counterproductive for vulnerable children who enter school with a myriad of external challenges to overcome. We want to serve as a model for other schools with demographics similar to ours that wish to infuse trauma-sensitive practice with culturally responsive curriculum and child-centered teaching and learning.

The Montessori School of Englewood is one of the first public schools in Chicago to offer a free Montessori education in an underserved community. Because nearly 100 percent of our School’s students are considered “at risk”— due to poverty, exposure to familial or neighborhood trauma, and/or beginning school with inadequate school readiness — the program infuses an holistic intervention philosophy into daily classroom and school practice—one that attends to the social emotional needs of its children, their families, and communities.

The School’s mission is to create a learning community where members trust one another to use their heads, hearts, and hands to commit to a life of growth and fulfillment. We intentionally involve and support families in the life of the school. We aim to offer positive experiences that foster children’s academic growth while facilitating individual and community-wide healing. We seek to free the potential of each and every one of our students by giving them what they need to develop, progress, and become fully realized individuals.

Our new location, a spacious and historic building surrounded by open space, enables students to cultivate a vegetable garden and sell produce to our neighbors. The vast majority of our students experience food insecurity on a daily basis, which is why we make food the source of experiential learning and collaborative enterprise. We focus on the delights of cooking and sharing a meal, the physical pleasures of sowing and reaping, and the peace that comes with dwelling in nature. Our aim is to nourish students’ minds as well as their spirits. We feel that our success is Chicago’s success.

In the years to come, we will provide children and families with education stability – something that more affluent. With continued support and partnership, we hope to become a model for other such ambitious education and community-building initiatives.