



April Newsletter

Montessori Day Schools

Mountainside Campus

April 9, 2010

Montessori Terms (adapted from *montessorianswers.com*)

Preparation of the Environment *Part of a Montessori teacher's job is preparing a classroom environment that has all the materials for every lesson that a child in that classroom will need for that day. The lessons, (Which are often called "jobs" or "works" because we teach our students that everybody has a job, and at this moment in their lives their most important job is to learn.), with all the materials that they will need for that lesson neatly organized in a box, basket or tray and placed so that the children can easily access and work with them.*

Sensitive Period - *A special time in a child's life when he easily learns a particular skill. If he is allowed, he will often want to practice it exhaustively during this time. Dr. Montessori referred to it as, ". . . a passing...potency." Her theory of sensitive periods is now confirmed by scientists and even the popular culture, with Time magazine calling it "Windows of Opportunity".*

Individual Liberty- *Children have the ability to move around and make choices about which materials they will use, where they will use the material, and when they will do a job. **Individual Liberty is not to be confused with "license" which is the ability to behave anyway they please, or to choose to not work.***

Fantasy- *This is one of the most misunderstood terms there is. In today's society we use the word "fantasy" almost as a synonym for the word "imagination" and so when Montessorians refer to fantasy as a problem, the average person rightfully has problems with the concept. A better definition for the word as used by Montessorians would be "day dreaming" or "not focusing".*

Observation- *Montessorians watch their students and say to themselves, "What does she know?" "What is she having problems with?" "What is the next logical step that I need to set up to help this student master this concept?" "How is this child learning?" Scientific observation of students, and recording of observations, is an important part of Montessori teacher training and of a Montessori teacher's record-keeping and lesson-planning.*

LOOKING BACK!

March 12th —“Child As Teacher”—Thank you “teachers” for demonstrating many fun and interesting Montessori work activities. There’s so much to learn!

LOOKING AHEAD!

April 12-23 **TESTING**—Check with your teacher to help out with breakfast on testing days. Look for sign-up sheets.

April 16 **Junior Elementary FIELD DAY** 1:00-3:00pm
(contact your teacher or homeroom parent to volunteer)

April 23 **Senior Elementary FIELD DAY** 1:00-3:00pm
(contact your teacher or homeroom parent to volunteer)

April 21 & 22 **EARTH DAY UNIFORM EXCHANGE AND SUMMER CLOTHING SWAP**
(watch for the take-home flyer—see below for more information)

April 29 & 30 **Parent Teacher Conferences—EARLY RELEASE (11:30)**

May 4 Tuesday @6:00pm – Step Up to Senior Elementary & Merge to Middle School Program and Goals for Parents—Watch for Invitations!



EARTH DAY UNIFORM EXCHANGE AND SUMMER CLOTHING SWAP

April 21st & 22nd @ 3:00pm

DONATE & TRADE
clean and washed Uniform Tops,
Shorts, Pants, Jumpers, Skirts,
Dresses and your Gently Used
Summer Clothing!

**Donate one get one back!
Or \$1.00 per piece!**

Collection starting April 12th



Our Ice Cream Social & Talent Show
is Friday, **May 7th** at 6pm

We are having a
MidFirst Bank fundraiser –
COLLECTING COINS!

Bring your coins into each class.
MidFirst Bank will be there with
a fundraiser van and coin counter.
The bank will match whatever we collect
up to \$1000 for our school!

There will be a prize for the class that
collects the most –
announced at the event!!!!

This is a great community bank
partnering with a great
community school!

Around the School...

BREAKING NEWS!

Note that “Craven” in *Craven v. the State of Arizona* is MDS parent Jeff Craven. Go, Jeff!!!!

Student Equity Lawsuits

Superior Court Judge Rules in Favor of Arizona's Public School Children - Denies State of Arizona's Motions to Dismiss Student Equity Lawsuits Filed by Charter and District Students

The high school student and parents of 20 public school children (charter and district) who are suing the state because of gross funding inequities in Arizona's current system of K-12 education finance achieved a significant court win on Friday, April 2. Plaintiffs were successful when the defendants (State of Arizona, Superintendent of Education in his official capacity, State Board of Education, Arizona School Boards Association and Creighton Elementary School District No. 14) in *Craven v. the State of Arizona* and *Hobday v. the State of Arizona* filed Motions to Dismiss, and the Honorable Judge Rayes denied three of the four motions.

For further details, [see the Court Order](#) and [visit the website](#) dedicated to equitable funding for all K-12 public school students.

Notes on funding \$\$

U.S. Census forms were mailed to all households last month. It is *most important* to complete and return them by the middle of this month, in part because census data determines the amount of federal funding that comes our way. The form is easy to complete (only 10 questions) and responses are confidential (they cannot be shared with anyone, including other federal agencies or law enforcement groups).

Each person counted is “worth” an average of \$1000 in federal funding to their community.

The Governor has proposed a temporary **sales tax increase** to help reduce the current budget shortfall. It is an effort to raise state revenue for primary and secondary education, health and human services and public safety. Two-thirds of the monies raised will be appropriated for K-12 education.

If the measure does not pass, we will lose approximately \$270 more per student.

This will be in addition to what we have already lost for the upcoming school year: funding for full-day kindergarten, Early Childhood Block Grant funds, etc. - approximately **\$760, or \$1030 total per charter student**. With approximately 225 charter students, this would be a significant amount of lost revenue. More information is available on the Arizona Charter School Association website:

<http://www.azcharters.org/legislativeupdates>

*****Let your voice be heard: **vote by May 18th*******

In spite of all the challenges, let us remember how fortunate we are. We have a strong school community, with a dedicated, talented and highly qualified staff who are committed to Montessori education, and to working with parents to develop each child's personal potential.

Yearbook Sales are Booming!

Our Montessori Day School Yearbook 2009-2010 is being published *Hurrrray!*
They will be distributed during the last few weeks of May.

We have 50 books Left!

Reserve your copy for \$14.00.

Thank you all who purchased a book!

What a great way to support your school—and have a keepsake.

TEACHER APPRECIATION WEEK



All ears listening SOON (very soon). We have a great opportunity to show our gratitude, our thanks, and our gratefulness to our **wonderful staff – teachers, assistants, maintenance and office team** at MDS. During the 1st week of May, let's show our appreciation by bringing treats, flowers and sending notes of appreciation to our children's marvelous role-models. Our MDS staff is such a powerful influence on our children five days of every week.

--Let's all let them know how wonderful they are.

On **Monday** the parent committee will serve coffee & bagels, on **Tuesday** please send flowers and notes to school with your children. On **Wednesday** we would like parent volunteers to help at recess & lunch to give the staff an extra break time. On **Thursday** we have a special treat in store for each one of them. Please let the office know if you can assist on Wednesday mid-day for your child's recess time.

--We know they love our kids—let's show them we love them back!



American Idol - Montessori Style -

Everyone a Winner!

Students, parents and staff
who would like to share a talent
please **sign up in the office.**

Come to the MDS
Ice Cream Social & Talent Show
Friday May 7th 6 - 8 p.m.



It is getting close to that time of year for **MDS summer program** sign-up. Summer enrollment forms will be e-mailed to all parents soon, or you can obtain one in the office.

We are pleased to tell you Juli Wahlers will be running that program for us and the theme will be **Arizona.**

She will be presenting some fun activities and challenges for the students. Please sign up early. Spots are limited.

Special Services:

As a Charter School, we are required to provide many of the special services offered at a regular public school. Each year at our Parent Orientation Night we review these services. However, at various times during the year we like to restate these services for your benefit. Listed below are some of the programs we provide and what they mean to you:

FERPA: The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). This is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records, including the right to inspect and review their child's school record. Every year, during the first six weeks of school, we send out a letter describing these rights in detail. If you would like another copy, let me know and I will be glad to resend.

SPED: Special Education Services: Montessori Day Schools provides special education services to all its students who qualify for these services. Should it be determined that Special Education services are needed by your child, you, along with your child's teacher and the Special Education team members determine what services are needed to support your child's progress in the regular curriculum.

CHILD FIND: The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires all states to have a "comprehensive Child Find system" to assure that all children from birth through age 12 with delays or disabilities are located, identified, and referred to appropriate services through the Arizona Department of Education.

ELL: English Language Learners: During enrollment, all parents are asked to fill out a form known as a PHLOTE (Primary Home Language Other Than English). This form asks "What is the primary language of the student?" If a child's primary language is not English, they must take the AZELLA test for English proficiency. Children who do not test out as fluent in English (this includes reading, writing and speaking) are considered English Language Learners, or ELLs. In alignment with Arizona State law, MDS closely monitors all ELL students to assure they progress in accordance with the latest guidelines.

Title I: Title I is a federal program that is designed to ensure that all children have a "fair, equal and significant opportunity to obtain a high quality education." Title I is meant to serve higher poverty areas, but English Language Learners, children with disabilities, and any other students who are at academic risk - any child who is academically challenged, regardless of any other status, is eligible to receive Title I services. At MDS, these services are offered "School wide", with extra instructional support given by highly qualified assistants in each classroom to support the students' academic progress toward reaching stated goals.

If you have questions about any of these services please contact the office.

More News....

What's going on in Senior Elementary II ?

Senior Elementary 2 went to the **Desert Botanical Garden** on March 24th. We learned how plants can help you live. The Saguaro cactus helps build shelters and it has fruit on it, the Devil's Claw is soaked and woven into baskets to make designs and gourds can be made into cups, toys and even bowls. Mesquite tree bark can be used for paint, shelter food and medicine. Then the next week when we got back to the classroom, we researched about the plants we learned about and drew pictures of the plants. Next, we presented them to the classroom and pasted them on a poster to show all of the habitats in "Our Desert Home."

We also visited the Butterfly Pavilion and saw lots of different kinds of butterflies up close. We were asked not to touch them because their wings are very fragile. There are tiny little feathers that allow them to fly, it can hurt them and not allow them to glide through the air as easily. If you wore light colored clothing the butterflies would land on you, because they were attracted to the warm sunlight on those colors. Some landed on our students white hat and some on Mrs. Downing's shirt hood!

After our visit we went to the nearby Papago Park, ate our sack lunches and played on a fun small playground! We had a great time!

By Kylie Dunn, Jocelyn Mendez and Mrs. Downing



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More news...

What do MDS students have to say?

Hello, my name is **Lisa Bowman**. You will probably remember me from the previous article from **Middle School**. I am going to discuss the issues with our air. As many of you know air is becoming very dirty with fumes. But, what many people do not know is how dirty the air is that we are breathing. Dirty air can give you a small disease, such as a cough, but it will sometimes grow into a disease much bigger. Such as lung cancer. Scary, is it not? But there is a way you can help the Earth and your health. The number one thing to help both is once a week take a bike instead of a car. If everyone who is reading did that we could reduce about one-eighth of the pollution.

Want to try?



When asked about their recent field trip to see *Beauty and the Beast*, **Junior Elementary** students replied, "That was so much fun!"



More news...

FIELD DAY PHOTOS from last year. MDS students have fun!

Field Day 2010 is coming up---Parents please contact your teacher if you would like to participate!





Blue Moon Studios and Montessori Day School

**Present
Family Portraits 2010**

**Support Montessori and get great
family portraits at the same time**



**Schedule your session with
Blue Moon Studios before May 15
and 20% of the proceeds go to benefit
Montessori Day School.**

**Call Marilyn at 623.826.4569 for more
information.**

Offer does not include weddings.