



MCH News

September
2019

WELCOME!

Dear Families,

Congratulations on a wonderful first month of school! The new children are already moving through the routines with greater ease, and the returning students have such great enthusiasm and are excellent role models. It is a joy to watch the older children mentor their new friends as they adjust to the routines in the Montessori classroom. The children are becoming purposeful in their work with the materials and seem happy to be socializing on a regular basis.

Thank you, for your attendance at the Parent Orientation Evening on September 12. It was wonderful to formally welcome everyone to our school community. Your decision to give your child an early childhood experience like Montessori is an

important one. We are very happy you have chosen MCH. We appreciate your support of our work at school – by volunteering, chaperoning, observing, attending conferences and visit nights. We also appreciate your work in preparing your children for school -- meeting their needs for rest, nourishing breakfasts, health, and good-natured support. Our goals are to offer a quality Montessori education to the young child, a beautiful and enriching indoor and outdoor environment, and a community with successful social interactions. All our goals strive to "educate the human potential".

This newsletter will come out at the end of every month. It will include information from each class about what has been happening in the classrooms and what is coming up on the calendar. We will include a few pictures, but more can be found

on our Facebook posts and on the website community page, www.mchnorthfield.com. The photos can provide a perfect opportunity to discuss what your child does at school. Parents are always welcome to visit and observe during class time and we extend this invitation to you now. If you let us know when you would like to come, we can let you know what is on the schedule for that day. Volunteer cards were distributed at the Orientation Night to provide a way for you to let us know what and when you might like to volunteer. If you would like to volunteer in your child's classroom and did not get a card, just let us know! We will happily get one to you.

Later in October our Reading Buddies from the Middle School will begin visiting in the afternoons. We look forward to including this lovely program in the day for both of our schools.

Routines of the Day

Everything seems to be going well with the drop off and pick up routine. If you or your child are having problems with these structures, please let us know. Pretty soon it will all seem routine and easy, but we know the adjustment can be challenging at times. The routines in the classroom (bathroom, snack, recess, etc.) have been absorbed by the children very well already. They are quite independent and very responsible and aware of where they are supposed to be and what the ground rules are. These are the "big works" of the first few weeks of school and

they have done extremely well with them.



The many activities in a Montessori classroom are difficult to describe in a newsletter. We have tried to capture some moments with the camera.

We celebrated the world of fruit with a field trip to Fireside Apple Orchard last week where we had a full tour of the orchards, the sorting room, cool storage facility, pie making and the donut machine. Thanks for sending in those permission slips and thanks to those who chaperoned our very first field trip!

Thanks!

Some of you have already begun to help provide our Monday snack. It is

a nice way for your child to participate in the practical life of the school in a generous and helpful way. We certainly appreciate the contribution on Mondays. You will have a turn once or twice during the school year. When your child brings home the "Snack Box" it will be your turn to provide snack for the next Monday (the box will come home on Friday). The rest of the week's snack will be provided by the school. Please check our Family Handbook for ideas and further information about this.



Upstairs News

First of all, we are thrilled to welcome Lisa Wade as the assistant in our classroom! We had been looking around for a replacement after Pat retired, but the perfect candidate was right under our nose!

She is the mom of Elle, a student in the classroom and comes to us both with professional experience working with children and as a former Montessori student herself. She will be working mornings in the upstairs classroom and helping with lunch, as well as 1-2 afternoons a week downstairs in the afternoon. Welcome Lisa!

Yes, summer has officially come to an end, but our year is just getting started! What a wonderful start it has been! The children have begun the year with enthusiasm and curiosity.

Along with the Montessori materials in the classroom, we have begun the year with science and language materials concerning Colors, Fruits and Vegetables. These are appropriate subjects with which to begin the year because they are so familiar to the children and fit naturally into the cycle of the season, harvesting vegetables from our garden and enjoying the bounty of the end of summer.

The children have discovered how much our animals also enjoy the fruits of the garden and they are eager to pick leafy greens or cucumbers for the chickens, rabbit, or guinea pig to eat. This year we have welcomed a new pet bearded dragon to our room. Thank you to Ben and LuElla Wills for the generous donation! The children made suggestions for a name that went into a basket and the name we pulled out was "Blaze". We are learning how to care for and feed Blaze and he is very popular already. Care of the classroom environment includes many jobs

that the children take great pride in doing and their contributions are helpful and meaningful.

We have had a lot of fun singing "Pass the Apple" as a way for us to learn each other's names and learning the movements for old favorites like "Ole Brass Wagon". Our line time is energetic and fun, but we have also been practicing the art of making silence. This is a beautiful opportunity for the children to experience stillness in their bodies and discover the joy of listening to the quiet. This is also something you can try at home to help your child learn self-control and practice listening to their own thoughts.

One of the first topics we cover at line time at the beginning of the year is Grace and Courtesy. This comes in the form of brief lessons that help us practice kind and helpful ways of being together at school. We have practiced moving carefully in the classroom, asking polite questions, handling materials gently, and greeting one another. We have also practiced learning how to share something special from home at line time on Mondays. If your child has something special that they would like to share with classmates (a treasure found on a walk, an item that pertains to something we are studying, a souvenir from a special trip) they are welcome to bring it on Mondays and we will make time for them to show it at line time. I suggest that toys are best for sharing on a play date but if they have something that fits one of the above categories we look forward to hearing about it!

Thank you for sending in a piece of fruit with your child for our first cooking class! Making fruit salad together with fruit that each child has contributed is a lovely way to begin what will be a weekly activity for the rest of the year as we explore food preparation skills and sample foods together.



In the geography area we have been learning the names of the continents and the elements that make up the earth - land, air, and water. Soon we will start learning about the globe continent by continent, including language and cultural aspects of the people who live around the world.

One last reminder: now that cooler temperatures are upon us, we have lots of sweaters, jackets, and coats hanging on the hooks. Please label

your children's things so that we can more easily keep track of where they belong. We often end up with doubles of things and it's not always easy to know who brought what!

The year is off to a great start and we look forward to all the good things it will bring!

Downstairs News

Congratulations on a great start to the school year! Everyone has been busy exploring the classroom during this first month. We have been getting comfortable in our classroom and absorbing the class routines and ground rules. It is an adjustment to enter a classroom after the summer for both returning and new students. The new students have already made tremendous progress and the returning students are already taking on their roles as leaders in the classroom.

A special focus has been on Grace and Courtesy lessons this month. These lessons are for social scenarios as well as ground rules. They give the children an opportunity to practice using manners by acting out possible situations that we encounter in and out of the classroom. This month we have practiced how to walk around a working mat, how to carry one material with two hands, how to use a classroom voice, how to politely get someone's attention, how to raise your hand at Line Time, how to keep an activity on our workspace, how to put an activity away before choosing something new, how to ask for personal space, and how to cough or sneeze into your arm. Grace and Courtesy

lessons are something we will continue to work on throughout the school year.

This month we have been studying fruits and vegetables as well as the world. The children have also been exploring colors by making their own color wheels and painting with primary colors. There has been a lot of creative exploration this first month. The children have been busy in the Practical Life area with pouring, scooping, squeezing sponges, tearing paper, stringing beads, rolling napkins, sweeping, dusting, window washing, and now apple cutting as well. This area of the classroom works on developing fine motor skills, confidence, coordination, concentration, independence, and order, which is the foundation for all areas in a Montessori classroom. In our Sensorial area the children are busy exploring and developing their senses. We are also busy in the Math area developing our counting skills and our ability to identify numerals. The Math area uses concrete materials to learn abstract concepts. Many children have also been very busy in the Language area tracing our metal inset shapes in order to prepare their hand for writing. We have also been working on our expanding our vocabulary and learning the sounds of letters. At Line Time, we have been learning how to be in a group, singing songs, and reading lots of books. We look forward to studying trees, leaves, seeds, and North America throughout October. ***Please let us know if you have special knowledge about these topics of study that you would like to share with the children through**

volunteer opportunities (e.g. a presentation during Line Time, an art project, a cooking project, etc.).

The children are doing very well with the snack routine and many of them look forward to it every day. Thank you to those who have already received and returned our Friday snack box. We love the healthy choices that have been sent.



Extended Day has had a fabulous beginning to the school year! News for this group will be posted in the all school newsletter so that families can follow the activities of the third-year students/leaders in our school community. Thus far, they have been involved in welcoming our new students, demonstrating and modeling our classroom ground rules, and even giving lessons on materials with which they are familiar. This is such a thrill for them, and really serves to bolster their self-esteem and reinforce their own knowledge. The Extended Day

friends also help in a big way to bring in the harvest at MCH. The older students are so capable of seeing this kind of activity through to the culmination of a cooking class or a deposit in the composting pile.



BIRTHDAYS we celebrated in September

**Elle
Jude
Vince
Ms. Shana**

**August 28
September 16
September 19
September 21**



To take advantage of the beautiful fall weather we have had a **photo day** at school on Wednesday 10/9. You will receive a group photo of your child's class. Extended Day/K students will have photos taken on that day, as well. This year we will be distributing digital versions of the individual pictures and you can print off whatever size and amount you choose.

We have certainly been enjoying our time on the playground

together at recess. We appreciate the help you offer your children in practicing their independence with shoes and coats. Soon enough it will be boots, hats, mittens, snowsuits...but for now-- Happy Fall!

Dates to remember:

*October 17 and 18 No School-
MEA*

*October 24--Parent Visit Night
(your child brings you to school to*

*show you what we do at MCH)
5:30-7:30*

*October 31—Halloween Party at
school*

*November 4—No School—
Parent/Teacher Conferences*

*November 28 and 29--No
School—Thanksgiving Break*