

*Board Notes...from our MMS Board Member**Denise Van Pelt*

I have been serving on the MMS board for 4 years and am on the advocacy committee (MMEAN). I believe in bringing Montessori to the community through educating parents and other community members about Montessori philosophy. I am dedicated to helping both Montessorians and non-Montessorians learn more about Montessori.

Much of my time is divided between teaching in a lower elementary class at Grand Rapids Montessori School, serving on the MMS board and as a member of MMEAN. I have been involved in the Montessori community my whole life; I was a Montessori student and sent my own children to Montessori.

I obtained my AMI training at the primary level in 1996 at the Washington Montessori Institute and am currently obtaining my AMI elementary certification through the Montessori Center of Minnesota in St. Paul Minnesota.

When I am not studying, creating my albums or writing lesson plans, I enjoy spending time outside. Because Michigan offers something outdoors each season, I enjoy many activities. In the warmer months, I enjoy hiking, swimming, paddle boarding, and walking my two dogs. In winter, I enjoy skiing and snowshoeing. I also enjoy traveling and when I can, I go to the Upper Peninsula to hike and explore nature, especially the many waterfalls!

I have two children who are both seniors at Grand Valley State University. My son, Eliot, is in the rowing club the National Guard. My daughter, Maggie, is balancing working for ATI and school. Both my children want to pursue careers in the medical field.

My husband, Josh, and I have been married for 24 years and are both in education. We both enjoy traveling and are hoping to go to New Zealand in the future.

MMS
Fall
Conference
Nov. 16
Weber's Inn
in Ann Arbor
(see below)

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MMEAN Update By Denise Van Pelt

Michigan Montessori Education Advocacy Network is working for YOU!

This group of passionate volunteers has been busy working on behalf of all of you in the greater Michigan Montessori community to ensure that Montessori programs and teachers are included in and protected by any legislation and regulations that will impact them.

Montessori Public Policy Initiative (MPPI) is a joint collaboration between AMS and AMI/USA. As the experts on Montessori policy and advocacy, MPPI unites, supports, and equips the Montessori community, creating an effective advocacy voice for authentic Montessori education. MPPI drives education policy change so that all children have access to the gifts of a Montessori education.

Michigan Montessori Educators Advocacy Network (MMEAN) is working closely with MPPI in our efforts to secure equitable recognition for Montessori teachers. This work is being done in connection with LARA and MDE.

“All advocacy is, at its core, an exercise in empathy.” - Samantha Power

”It is from a state of utter unconsciousness that the child becomes a man with all his ideas and all his abilities. And because this is the origin of everything, it is here that we must seek understanding, seek inspiration and hope.”

- Maria Montessori From the 1946 London Lectures

When a child is successful with a work which has been a struggle, we, as guides, assistants, administration, and parents do a quiet celebration. This success is not the result of one person's efforts, but the work of many and of course, the child. We, as a part of the Michigan Montessori Advocacy Network (MMEAN), have the ability to have this quiet celebration now.

We have made good progress recently having our voices heard by those in the legislative branch. Much of this work has been behind the scenes. MMEAN members are working to allow those who are becoming Montessori certified to also obtain their state certification in Michigan.

Some of you may think that this is “old news” since this initiative has already been in the works. In part, this is true. However, like many other things, there is a process which demonstrates the truth of the old adage “two steps forward, one step back.” Because of this, our more recent steps forward are securely placed.

Members of MMEAN have been meeting with both state representatives and the Michigan Department of Education. We have analyzed the language required for legislation to provide more clarity. The second task is securing the backing of the education committee members. We have been talking to Representative Tsemoglou and her office to accomplish this.

While it sounds like we have it covered and are all set, that is not quite true! We need help... your help. As Montessorians, we are asking you to add your voice in support of our goal. If contributing your energies to MMEAN is something you can do, please join us. As a part of our group, you will allow you be part of the process. As a member of MMEAN, you will be aware of the progress, specific actions required and the timing.

We meet over zoom about four times a year and our meetings typically take about one hour. It is the behind the scenes where our time commitments vary. MMEAN is dedicated to getting our teachers the recognition they deserve. As a beneficiary of this work, please carve out some time to get involved and support this effort.

MMEAN is gathering information to better represent your interests and invite you to our monthly meetings. Please let us learn more about you and your concerns by filling this [google form](#). Thank you for being a part of the Montessori community.

Field Trip Fun - In-School Opportunities *by Karen Lumsden*

Trips to the zoo, art museum or science center can stimulate new interests in children. Parents may have every intention of providing these enriching experiences for their little ones, but often “life” gets in the way. Excursions organized through schools are often the only opportunity children have to explore the cultural gems in their area. In the past, our school scheduled three off-campus field trips, one each season. One January, we left our school on a bright, sunny morning in a big yellow school bus, ready to enjoy a play at the theater. An hour and a half later, we began our journey back to school in the middle of a massive snow storm. The kids were thrilled at the lovely thick snow swirling around the bus while the teachers frantically searched their phones for alternate routes in an attempt to get a bus load of kids safely back to the school. As soon as we arrived (much later than planned), I made an executive decision...that would be our last winter off-campus field trip.

Because we were committed to bringing special events to the children, we began to investigate performers that would come to our school during the winter months. We were thrilled to discover that for the cost of one off-campus trip (including transportation), we could schedule three in-school events! Now our children enjoy special events in school in January, February, and March as well as our fall and spring off-campus field trips during our academic school year. These on-site events were so cost effective, we incorporated three into our summer program, when our student population is reduced.

In addition to logistics, cost is often a deciding factor when planning any event. I often felt that I was “nickel and diming” parents when I asked for them to pay for each field trip / event several times a year. We ultimately decided to bundle all the “extracurricular” expenses into one lump sum and charge one registration / activities fee. It has worked well for us, setting aside a sum to draw upon to give the children enriching experiences.



Sharing Navroz

However, there are a number of special events that won't cost anything! Fire departments and police often are able to visit your school and present educational experiences for your children. Fire trucks are always exciting, but often fire fighters will provide demonstrations of how they might look when they enter a burning building. Children in dangerous situations may be startled by the image of a large, masked form approaching them and try to hide from their rescuer. Giving the children an opportunity to see and touch a fire fighter in full protective gear may reduce their fears and possibly save their lives should they need rescuing. Police departments may also be willing to come to your school to present a friendly face and give the children an understanding that officers are a source of help when needed.

Another free source is your parent population. Parents may be willing to come in and share aspects of their jobs with your children. Engineers, architects, veterinarians, chefs, nurses, or any job utilizing tools or trucks might provide an enriching experience for your children. Not only can parents bring information about their jobs, parents from diverse cultures may be willing to introduce their holidays or traditions to the children. We have enjoyed parents sharing the Navroz tradition of the haft-seen table, Chinese New Year, Eid al-Fitr, and Autumn Moon Festival. In soliciting help from parents, it's a good idea to provide parameters so that the experience is positive for both the parent and your children.



Exploring China

Off-campus field trips are still an important element of our program. To make our off-campus field trips more manageable, we ordered bright red t-shirts for the children and chaperones to wear over their clothing. I found a local print shop that did a great job putting our logo, school name and phone number on the shirts. We've used the shirts for every field trip for the past 10 years and they are still in great shape. We have all phone calls rerouted to my cell phone while off-campus, but thus far, we've never lost a child! If you are interested in purchasing field trip shirts for your children, please reach out to Kathy at (313) or kathy@mmsoc.org and she will provide you with contact information.

Special events, holiday celebrations and field trips are valuable experiences for young children. They may take a bit more time to organize, a bit more effort to prepare, and a bit more money to fund, but the smiles they generate and joy they bring to your group make it all worth the effort. The following is a list of presenters able to bring their diverse offerings to your school. Liven up your school year with a visit from one of them! Contact them for particulars.



Exploring Greece



Autumn Moon Festival
Celebration

Animals



Chamberlin Pony Rides and Mobile Petting Zoo

Sally VanBuren

www.chamberlinponyrides.com

1-734-368-6582

Our programs include petting zoo animals - your choice of exotic or farm animals, pony rides, and pony cart rides (accommodating 3 children at a time). Children are encouraged to interact with the animals gently, whether observing from outside the pen or inside, where they can practice soft hands and brush the animals at their own pace. We bring the zoo to you!

\$25 discount for MMS Affiliate & Member Schools

Also \$25 credit for referrals



Exotic Zoo

Farmington, MI 48335

www.1ExoticZoo.com

734-444-5266

Will travel to your school!

Exotic Wildlife Animal Show is an interactive, hands-on program. This is an opportunity to get up-close and personal to touch and learn about exotic animals such as a Kangaroo, Sloth, Owl, Ponies, Goats, Owl, Siberian Lynx, Monkey... Petting Zoo and more. We will bring our

zoo to you!

\$10/hour discount for MMS Affiliate & Member Schools.

Party Animals Petting Farm

Carol Weaver

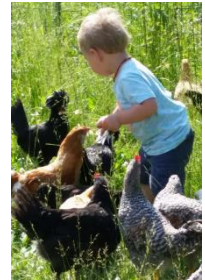
Goodrich MI 4843

www.partyanimalsmi.com

(810) 797-4111

Email: partyanimals.mi@gmail.com

Offers a variety of packages. The largest package included a turkey, chickens, ducks, lama, goats, sheep, & a donkey. Animals are well cared for and friendly. The children are given food and are shown how to feed the animals.



The Little Creatures Co.

Dan Briere

www.littlecreaturesco.com

1-248-544-2239

Email: danbriere@gmail.com

Featuring exotic animals from around the world! (Parrots, small mammals, reptiles and giant creepy crawlies) Presentation includes habitat information, diet, movement. Children have opportunity for hands on experience. Kid friendly, age appropriate.

Performers

ABC Magic Shop

Macomb

(586) 790-3700

Email: abcmagicstore@yahoo.com

Appropriate for 6+ Kids learn magic with house hold items and are given several magic tricks to take home.

10% discount for MMS Affiliate & Member Schools

Baffling Bill the Magician

Bill Schulert

Lake Orion, MI 48362

www.bafflingbillmagic.com

(248) 693-2420

Email: bill@bafflingmagic.com

Amazing magician provides entertaining feats of magic. Very kid friendly. He involves the children in several of his tricks. Performs approximately 45 minutes.

10% discount for MMS Affiliate & Member Schools





Karen Bonnici

<https://www.karenbonnici.com/>

(248) 766-4323

Email: Karen@karenbonnici.com

Storytelling & music - Engages the children with participation songs, props and enchanting stories.

Guy Louis – Worlds of Music

Shelby Twp.

www.worldsofmusic.online

(248) 495-0321

guysferlazza@mac.com

Fabulous instruments from around the world, hands-on for kids. long time presenter at Montessori schools. aligned with method, variety of cultural and educational themes, also presents Family Fun concerts.

10% discount for MMS Affiliate & Member Schools



Pippin Puppets

Robert Papineau

Livonia, Mi 48154

[734-427-7404](tel:734-427-7404)

Email: pippinpuppets@sbcglobal.net

A live puppet-show! The children share in the puppets' adventures, join in the action, and help reach the happy ending. Original stories and characters bring children both

imagination and wisdom. The productions are fresh and original, filled with bright colors, funny characters, lots of action and surprises.

\$50 discount for MMS Affiliate & Member Schools

Puppet Adventures

Greg Lester

Oxford, MI 48362

<https://puppetadventures.info>

248-318-6066

Email: puppetadventure@hotmail.com

Our fantastic puppet shows take audience members on an epic puppet adventure! Our tales teach self-belief, nurture imagination, and share fun!

\$10 discount for MMS Affiliate & Member Schools



Timeless Tales Theatre

Tina Tomasik

Pinckney, MI

www.timelesstalestheatre.com

(810) 775-8639

Email: timelesstales@hotmail.com

Timeless Tales Theatre's live theater performances bring stories with a message to your school. The children enjoy the simple story lines and respond eagerly to the energetic performers. The portable scenery adds to the feeling of being in a theater. The performers understand their audience and provide enough action and humor to keep young children engaged.

10% discount for MMS Affiliate & Member Schools

Science / Nature

Dynamic West School Assemblies

Don Newman

www.dynamicwest.com

(248) 682-6115

Email: dynamicwest@sbcglobal.net



Portable Planetarium

Offers a great variety of educational and entertaining school assembly programs. They provide a wonderful array of in-house field trips to MMS Affiliates. Science, reading, music, and live animal programs are available. Please visit web site or call for further information.



Local Nature Centers

Many areas have nature centers that provide in school experiences. This link lists nature centers in Michigan. Contact one near you to see if school visits are part of their program.

<https://www.michigan.gov/dnr/education/educators/field-trips/michigan-nature-centers>



Participation

Cirque Amongus

Livonia, MI 48154

734-525-4335

[877-938-2324](tel:877-938-2324)

Enrichment program that is circus arts based. They are equipped to teach 10 circus arts: trapeze, tight wire walking, rolling globe balancing, equilibristics, acrobatics, juggling (manipulation and toss), jump rope, hula hoops and stilts, unicycling and other fun cycles, and magic. Preschool programs available are adapted for the audience. Available state wide, but over 50 from Detroit area requires mileage charge.

10% discount for MMS Affiliate & Member Schools



Mad Science

Stephanie London

Novi, MI 48375

www.detroit.madscience.org

(248) 773-8570

Email: info@madsciencedetroit.com

Mad Science delivers unique, hands-on science experiences for students that are as entertaining as they are educational. We have a variety of programs available for students as young as preschool ages on up.

Mobile Ed Productions

Detroit, MI

www.mobileedproductions.com

(800) 433-7459

Email: info@mobileedproductions.com

We bring the field trip to your school! Our assemblies teach various curriculum requirements to students K-8 in relevant and engaging ways. Programs include the SkyDome Planetarium, STEAM Museum, Young Authors Day, Animals and the Environment, Quest for Kindness, Earth Dome, and Magic of Science.



Painted Pot

Rochester, MI 48307

[1-248-652-8255](tel:1-248-652-8255)

Email: paintedpot@gmail.com

The Painted Pot provides age-appropriate projects for children of all ages, from infant footprints to treasure boxes the older children create themselves. They have a studio in Rochester, but frequently go to schools. They work well with all aged children from very young, (18 months) through 4th or 5th graders with projects designed according to the age/ability of the children

The Maria Montessori Center in Farmington Hills



We opened our doors in 1981 and have been providing high quality education to families in the tri-county area ever since. Over the past 40 years, our school has nurtured academic, socio-emotional, cultural, and personal development of our children, setting them up for success in the future. We



teach toddlers (19 months) to 8th grade. The students receive academic instruction based on the AMI Association of Montessori International curriculum, driven by the Montessori philosophy of focusing on the whole child.

At the MMC, the students gain concrete knowledge in physical sciences, mathematics, world studies, including topics such as grammar, geography,

history, and social studies, to name a few. We pride ourselves in offering cursive handwriting as one of our main disciplines. Some benefits of cursive writing are training the brain to learn functional specialization, improving memory and fine motors skills. Cursive writing is a critical component of Montessori education and has been since its inception. In fact, students in Montessori schools learn to write in script before they learn print.



The students often outperform their peers on standardized tests and go on to attend International Baccalaureate and Ivy League preparatory high schools. Our staff is Montessori trained and highly qualified to provide top notch education and meet each child's individual needs in a nurturing environment.



Our students enjoy music classes (strings, woodwinds, vocal, and recorders), Spanish, Physical Education, and yoga. We participate in a variety of programs giving back to the community, including food drives and nursing home visits, as it is paramount for the children to grow into successful global citizens.

We believe that families play an integral role in the development and education of children and offer numerous opportunities for parental involvement. We are very proud to have generations of families come through our program as this provides a true testament to the work we do at the Maria Montessori Center of Farmington Hills. We also hold information sessions for parents and students when required, in turn helping us work together towards the education of our future Montessorians and citizens.



As we are a 10-month school-based program, we offer summer camps in the summertime, and they can be picked based on your summer schedule. The summer-themed sessions are taught by our wonderful staff and include a variety of intellectual and enjoyable activities. It is during our summer program that we include and welcome prospective students or siblings of MMC students who partake in the summer program only.



MMS Board of Directors Election Slate – 2024

MMS members will soon be receiving a ballot for the upcoming election of the board of directors. Four three-year terms are open. The bios of the five candidates are below.



Mona Ahuja is a graduate in Child Psychology and has been a certified AMI primary teacher since 1995. She began her Montessori journey teaching in California. As her career and her family grew, she became an assistant principal. She enjoys free time with her husband, two children and dog. She continued her education as a director and obtained much knowledge during the AMI conferences, broadening her horizons on Montessori education. She recently completed a Master's in Whole School Leadership. She is the owner and Head of School for The Maria Montessori Center in Farmington Hills, since 2017. She is on the board of MMS, AMI Satellite Training Center, and the Michigan Optimist Club. She is thrilled to spread Montessori philosophy and loves to stay active through social media.



Catharine Calder is the founder and Head of School at Meadow Montessori School in Monroe, Michigan. Over her 40 years of experience with Montessori education, Catharine has been a teacher-trainer for the Houston Montessori Center, the Michigan Montessori Teacher Education Center, and the Seton Institute. Catharine has also presented numerous workshops, most recently at the AMS Event 2024 in Orlando, Florida. Catharine served on the Board of Directors of the Michigan Montessori Society (MMS) from 1994 – 2014. She returned, filling an open Board position in 2022. Catharine holds a BA from Oakland University, MA University of Michigan, and an AMI 6 – 12 certification from Bergamo, Italy.



Kerri Graham has been in Montessori education for 30 years this September! She has worked as a lead teacher in schools in Midland, Southgate, and Indianapolis, Indiana. She returned to Michigan to take Montessori training and attended Delta College and Central Michigan University for Early Childhood Education. She received a Montessori 3-6 credential in 2007 and interned at the Montessori Center of Downriver, where she remained as a lead teacher for 10 years. She is now running a non-profit Montessori school in Mt. Pleasant, MI that just opened 2 years ago. Montessori and children have been her life's passion, and she is now experiencing the administrative side of child care. She still enjoys mornings in the classroom with the children.



Sue Szczesny is the owner of Birmingham Community Montessori. Sue attended Wayne State University. She came to Montessori education first as a parent. She became more involved with Birmingham Community Montessori first as a sub, then as an assistant, a directress and finally as a business owner in 2006. She hopes to bring her perspective as a small business owner, Montessori directress and former parent to help MMS support Montessori education. Sue has been an MMS board member for many years and is currently the chairperson of the Membership committee.



Theresa Weber has been an educator for 39 years. She has a degree in education and her pre-primary certificate in Montessori. Theresa taught in a traditional school for 7 years and then started exploring Montessori when her children were reaching the preschool age. After observing Montessori through her children, she started working as an assistant in the classroom and the next year began her Montessori training at Adrian Dominican Montessori Teacher Education Institute. She spent over 20 years teaching and assisting at Brighton Montessori School and has been the language educator for ADMTEI for 15 years. Although Theresa no longer teaches in the classroom, she continues to teach adults and promote the Montessori philosophy. Theresa currently serves on the Board of MMS as Secretary.



Save the Date

FALL CONFERENCE: SATURDAY NOV. 16, 2024

Keynote by Jesse McCarthy **Reigniting Passion in Our Work**



- Located at Weber's Inn, Ann Arbor, Michigan
- 6 hours of professional development
- Lunch included in registration price
- Built in time to network with your peers
- Find support and learn new strategies

MMS Spring Gathering – Coffee, Tea & Montessori

by Karen Lumsden

MMS revamped our spring workshop event and the new model apparently was just what our membership wanted! Over fifty members (and non-members!) gathered in Farmington Hills on Saturday, April 27 to enjoy chatting with each other over coffee, tea and home-made baked goods! The schedule included three discussion “round tables” that gave attendees an opportunity to hear some information on “Discipline with Grace & Courtesy,” “Inclusion Ideas/Resources for Children with Special Needs,” and “Parent Involvement and Community



Parent Involvement & Community Building

Building.” The discussion topics were guided by MMS board members who are also MiRegistry trainers (MMS is working to have our events listed on MiRegistry). Concerns, ideas and suggestions were shared by those in attendance. This gathering also gave many an opportunity to “pick the brains” of colleagues to help address specific concerns not addressed in the discussion groups.

A Zoom presentation provided by Larry Shanker of Brookview Montessori gave the audience an opportunity to learn how to become a presenter themselves. This unique opportunity gave those in attendance encouragement to stretch themselves and discover how they can share their particular passion with colleagues.

This gathering gave some of our discussion leaders their first opportunity to lead and Larry’s suggestions will be most helpful when we (hopefully) gather again to reprise this successful event next year.



Larry Shanker provided a Zoom presentation

In addition to the discussion and collaborating, the host school provided several make & take options for the attendees. The materials taken will hopefully provide the many schools the were represented with new activities for the children that will enrich their school experiences and bring excitement into the classrooms as the school year winds down.



Inclusion of Special Needs Children

the shelves and activities these well-equipped classrooms displayed. It was a very welcoming environment.

As this was our first “Gathering,” the MMS Spring Workshop committee was unsure if this new event would be something the membership would support and find worthy of devoting their Saturday morning to. The response from the attendees was a resounding “YES!” Many suggestions (longer discussion time, bring the event to the west side of the state, lamination for make & take is not necessary) were gathered and hopefully the committee will revamp the schedule to further meet the needs of our community.

And how about those World Peace Cookies?



Make & Take options and home-made treats



Discipline w/ Grace & Courtesy

"Silent Journey" & Discovery - A Parent Education Experience

by Colette Toquigne

Our school, Roots Montessori, implemented a new layer of parent education called *The Path of Progress, a Montessori Journey*. The author recently completed an *Emerging Leader Fellowship Action Research* project and discovered the benefits of providing a "journey" type parent education program. The program helps to clearly and concisely explain Montessori education to our parent body.

What is the Silent Journey?



The "Silent Journey" (Copyright, 2007) parent education method was originally developed by Barbara Gordon, founder of the Barbara Gordon Montessori School (Colleyville, TX)- (NAMTA Journal 32:1, 2007). She and her staff developed a program that allowed parents to *experience* Montessori, as their children do, in order to deepen their understanding and appreciation for Montessori education. Her method involves immersing parents in the Montessori environment firsthand, akin to how their children do, but in a shortened form. Rather than merely observing their children in the classroom or hearing about the Montessori practices from teachers, parents actively engage in classroom work and lessons, from practical life to sensorial and academic explorations. Ultimately, Gordon's objective was to enable participants to discover answers to their questions about a Montessori program by co-creating their own personal experience.

Gordon modeled The Silent Journey around the Three Period Lesson: Journey (Presentation of a Concept)

The first aspect, or period, of the workshop is called the Journey because it is a silent *observation and walk through of the learning environments*. Parents make internalized observations regarding the atmosphere and materials prepared in each classroom, considering the differences and similarities. During the first session, parents walk silently through the classrooms beginning at the youngest level and ending in middle school. It is important that the experience be silent in order for the adults to fully immerse and observe the classroom materials without distractions. There is no discussion or questions during the Journey segment to avoid jumping to quick conclusions. Roots provided a working reflection page per level for parents to document their observations during the first period. This part of the program took about 30 minutes total, where parents spent 8 minutes observing in each classroom. The reflection and observation page may be used to guide discussions at the end of the event. A chime was used to indicate transitions between classrooms.



Discovery (Internalization through Practice)

The Discovery is the second period of the workshop. Parents actively work in each environment, manipulating the Montessori materials set out by teachers. Rugs and instruction cards are placed with the materials to allow for practice through various self-guided lessons.

Teachers are available to answer questions regarding the materials placed out during this time,

however the goal is not for teachers to give the lessons, but rather to guide and allow for self-discovery. During this session, parents were given 10 minutes for independent exploration in each classroom.



Sample work rug with lesson card

Journey's End (Abstraction & Understanding)

The conclusion, the Third Period, is an in-depth discussion. It provides an opportunity for parents to share their observations and discoveries from the hands-on classroom experience. It is a culminating event that helps foster a deeper understanding of their child's education. It provides parents with an opportunity to examine ideas and insights from their personal educational experiences and share them with others. Some parents may even have an "ah ha" moment.



Exploring equivalent fractions.

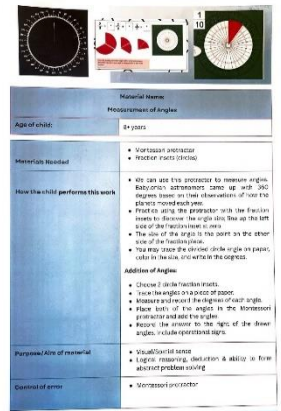
Preparing for a Journey Event

Preparing for a "Silent Journey" event at your Montessori school involves careful planning and organization to ensure an immersive and enlightening experience for your parents. Keep in mind the following key steps in preparing for such an event:

Understand the Purpose: Choose one academic area of focus for your event. For our first Journey and Discovery, Roots chose materials that showed the connectedness of Sensorial, in the Early Childhood, and Mathematics across all levels.



1. **Select the Date and Time:** Choose a date and time that maximizes the availability of parents and staff.
2. **Prepare the Environment:** Choose lessons and prepare instruction cards in advance. For your first Journey, this process will take hours of typing and formatting the lessons into steps that the parent will be able to follow. Roots used Canva to create the instruction cards (see photo).
3. **Plan the Journey:** Plan how participants will move through the phases of the journey, considering the timing, group sizes (smaller is better), and transitions between classrooms. Will your program take place over one day or two? Will you offer snacks and refreshments? It may take on many forms.
4. **Invite Participants:** Send out invitations well in advance, request RSVP's. Our invitation and RSVP was shared in our monthly newsletter, one month prior to the program. *Keep your numbers small, under 20 is ideal.*
5. **Facilitator Preparation:** Choose a staff member to facilitate the discussion in between period one and two and also at the conclusion of the event.
6. **Reflection and Discussion:** Plan for a reflection and discussion session at the end of the journey. This is an opportunity for participants to share their observations, feelings, and insights. Prepare a few guiding questions to encourage discussion.



[Sample Lesson - 6-9 Classroom](#)

Feedback and Follow-Up:

After the event, consider sending out a participant survey to gather impressions and suggestions for future events. In our post-journey survey, 100% of Roots Montessori attendees said they would love to see another journey event next year. The majority of parent participants also said that the journey event was most “impactful” in understanding their child’s Montessori classroom and education.

Conclusion

The “Silent Journey” program can take many forms. At Roots Montessori, our “journey” program occurred on a single evening, after school for a three-hour period. Gordon’s original design spread the event over a two-day period, with the “silent” piece on a Friday evening and the immersive work session the following morning. From my personal observations during our program, I would recommend following the original design as intended over a two-day session. This would allow for more time during the second period, or Discovery segment. I observed some fatigue by parents as the evening progressed and they became less engaged with the materials and preferred more interaction and instruction from teachers.

Main Take-aways:

1. The Journey event showcases the Montessori curriculum's breadth and depth by bringing to light the connectedness of learning opportunities across all levels. Parents are able to see how the curriculum and materials are weaved through all the levels of Montessori, Toddlers to Middle School.
2. Participants in the Journey/Discovery event come away with a deeper understanding of Montessori education and their child’s work.
3. Through their own experiences, parents gain an overview of Montessori’s developmental levels and classroom orientation in a way that no lecture or presentation can provide.

With careful planning and organization, your Montessori school can create a powerful and transformative Journey event that deepens understanding, fosters community, and celebrates the unique principles of Montessori education. At Roots Montessori, our journey event proved to be an eye-opening experience for all who attended!

Enjoy some enlightening quotes from our Post-Journey survey:

I thought the event was great! It was very insightful as I really had no idea about how the Montessori materials were used prior. I knew they used a lot of wood in their material but that was all. Really appreciated the experience.

I really enjoyed this event. I wasn't sure what to expect at first. I wasn't entirely certain what I was going to take away from the silent tour, but after the fact, I appreciated the slow pace and the opportunity to observe before jumping in. I especially liked the opportunity to interact with the materials and learn on my own!

Very impressive how math problems are made visible through the material. Excited for my child to learn and work more with that in the future!

After I left the Journey event I was full of appreciation for Montessori and feel so blessed and fortunate this type of learning (and Roots especially with their integrity to the model) exists and we are able to give our daughter this opportunity. I'm so excited to see where she will go given this base and knowledge. Additionally, it confirmed that we would like for our son to attend Montessori as well.

WORKS CITED

Gordon, B. (2007) “The Original Principles of the Silent Journey”, The NAMTA Journal, Volume 32:1, pp.331-346.

Many thanks to the Roots Montessori School staff and my Emerging Leader mentor, Kaleigh Richards, for their support during this project. Special note of appreciation to my friend Carey Wendell for her guidance during this process.



MMS Members Only*

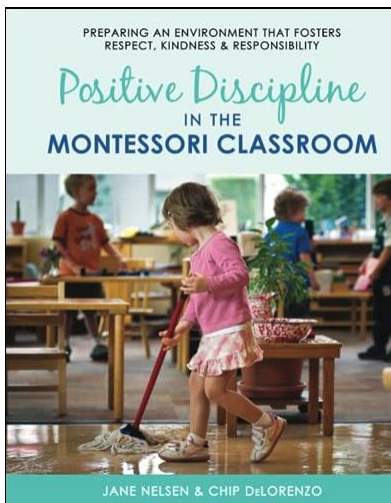
Summer Raffle

MMS's 4th Annual Summer Raffle - Join and Win!

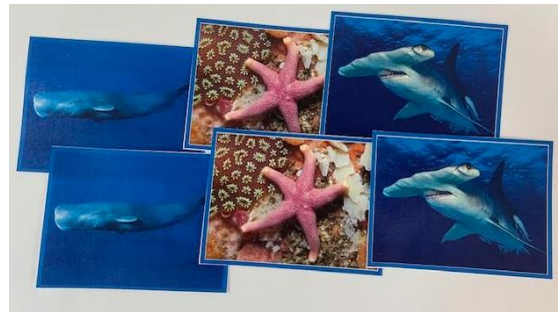
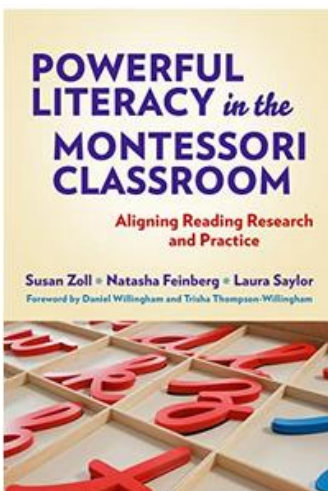
Win a book for your summer reading!

Or

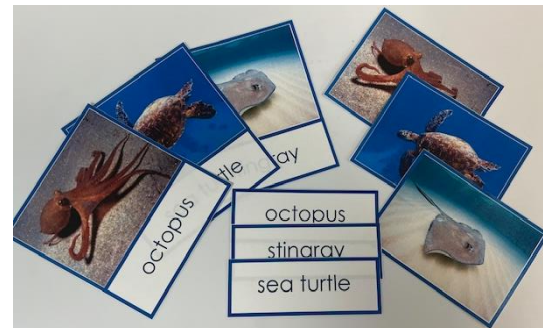
Ocean Creatures work for your classroom!



Or



A matching work for the younger children...



... And a 3 part card work for the older ones!



This work coordinates with the Ocean Toob available through Safari Ltd. (not included)

*Membership for the 2024-25 school year begins July 1, 2024.

Only members that renew their membership for the 2024-25 school year prior to the drawing on **August 30, 2024** are eligible to win in the 2024 MMS Summer Raffle.

MMS - What's In It For Me?



Individual, Member School and Affiliate School membership in the Michigan Montessori Society help you keep in touch with other active Montessorians! Networking with others committed to promoting authentic Montessori programs is vital to your professional growth. Don't miss the opportunity to join our vibrant organization.

- MMS presents two professional development seminars every year. Members enjoy a significant reduction in seminar fees.
- A newly designed website has launched! We continue to work on ways to make your experience as an MMS member timelier and more exciting!
- You can register for seminars and become a member online using your credit card.
- MMS publishes a newsletter online, posts job openings, promotes educational opportunities and disseminates other helpful information.
- You will receive at least two activities you can reprint and use in your classroom.
- We have also assumed the important task of advocating for Montessori education at the State level. There is power in numbers; your membership supports our efforts.
- You will be notified when affiliated schools offer mini workshops that may interest your staff.

The Michigan Montessori Society's objectives are to:

- Broaden understanding of the Montessori method
- Encourage the growth of Montessori education
- Act as an information center
- Support existing schools
- Provide professional development

In order to continue to receive these benefits and more, join MMS today! *



*Because most MMS communication will be sent electronically, it is imperative that you provide us with your email address. Please be assured that we do not sell or share our electronic list with anyone.