



dubuque **montessori** school

The Sandpaper Letter

March 2010

Dubuque Montessori School
A Not-For-Profit,
Parent-Run Organization

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We're on the Web!
See us at:
www.dubuquemontessori.org

DMS Mission Statement

The mission of Dubuque Montessori School is to bring together children of all social, economic and cultural backgrounds in an atmosphere that encourages children to develop to their fullest potential, using proven, child-directed Montessori methods and materials in a warm, nurturing, safe and loving environment.

Message from Our Director

Dear Families,

In a study published and reported worldwide in **Science** (September 2006), researcher Dr. Stoll Lillard discovered that among five-year olds, Montessori students proved to be significantly better prepared for primary school in reading and math skills than non Montessori children. They also tested better on "executive function," the ability to adapt to change and more complex problems, an indicator of future school and life success.

Montessori children also displayed better results in the social and behavioral tests, demonstrating a greater sense of justice and fairness. On the playground, children were much more likely to engage in emotionally positive play with peers and were less likely to engage in rough play. As a mother of now four children, three of which are Dubuque

Montessori School graduates and one who has studied and believes whole-heartedly in the Montessori Method and philosophy, this study does not surprise me. It reaffirms everything that I believe to be true with regard to the child's development and how they learn.

While it has been proven that children who have the opportunity to attend a Montessori preschool generally excel in areas of academics, it is also important to note that **this is not the primary focus**. Montessori schools are very different from traditional schools not only because of the materials and daily lessons in areas of Geography, Science, Mathematics and Language but because of the skills that are taught in the areas of Practical Life, skills that the children master which they will carry with them throughout their life. If you look beyond the

maps, sandpaper letters and geometric solids what you will find is a place where children really want to be, a place where they feel loved, respected and safe. **Respect of the child** is a fundamental aspect of the Montessori philosophy.

Learning how to work and play together with others in a peaceful and caring community is perhaps the most critical life skill that Montessori teaches. Everyday kindness is a vital Practical Life skill. Lessons in grace and courtesy teach everyday social skills such as how not to disturb another's work, how to ask if you may join in an activity, how to graciously decline an invitation and how to offer an apology. As a staff, we strive to model a peaceful and caring behavior on a daily basis.

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Montessori children come to understand and accept that we all have responsibilities to others and we are all connected. Children learn how to handle situations which they will face as they become increasingly more independent.

When you hear that Montessori preschool is not only an exceptional preparation for formal education, but for life, it is not an exaggeration. Lessons of the heart which the children learn at Montessori last a lifetime. Lessons of the heart

which we as the staff, also learn from your children carry us through day to day and keeps us committed.

As always, thank you for giving us the opportunity to do what we love.

Most sincerely,
Beth S. Gilbreath
Director

2010 Dubuque Montessori School Classic

Get your team together for the 2010 Dubuque Montessori School Classic!

Our 4 person best-shot golf outing fundraiser will be held at The Meadows on May 22. This is a fun event to meet other DMS parents, have a great time golfing, and raise money for the DMS Operating Budget. If you are not a golfer, you are welcome to join us for a steak or chicken dinner catered by Kalmes's. We'll have a huge silent auction and a raffle with prizes from local businesses. Winning golf scores win cash prizes!

We need your support! The planning committee has started soliciting monetary/silent auction/raffle donations from local businesses. DMS families can also put together a silent auction package to donate or be a hole sponsor.

If your family would like to donate or if you know of a business that could donate please contact Amy Van Otterloo (557-1375) or Trisha Hearn (582-2241). Thank you in advance for your support.



GREEN Vision: Make a Waste Free Lunch or Picnic

Each school-age child who packs a disposable lunch generates 67 pounds of waste per school year. Instead of wrapping sandwiches in aluminum foil or plastic bags, use a reusable container that can hold the sandwich as well as fresh veggies and other treats. Substitute cloth napkins and reusable silverware for disposables. Replace juice boxes and water bottles with reusable drink containers. And use a lunchbox or cooler instead of paper bags.

Fall Registration

If you have registered your child for next fall, THANK YOU. You will receive a packet with the school calendar as well as all necessary forms, late in April. If you have any questions before that time, do not hesitate to give us a call at 556-5101.

March Calendar of Events

- 7 & 21 **SCRIP** Order Due
- 9 Father's Night 6-7:30 pm
- 12 All Staff Inservice – School Closed
- 15 Board Meeting at 6:45 pm at DMS.
All parents are welcome.

April Calendar of Events

- 2 & 5 School Closed – Holiday
- 6 & 7 To clarify, DMS will have classes and extended-day will be open.
- 11 & 25 **SCRIP** Order Due
- 20 Kindergarten conferences
- 26 Parent Board Meeting at 6:45 pm at DMS. Please join us.

Volunteer Thank Yous and Donations...

- ❖ Thank you so much to Molly Schreiber and family for donating cleaning services to DMS to prepare for Open House.
- ❖ Thank you to Mitch Kelly and family for donating a much needed stove for the kitchen.
- ❖ Thank you to all who donated items so generously to the Haiti Relief project coordinated by Kids Care Club.

105 books every child should have read to them

The Youth Services Staff at the Dubuque Carnegie-Stout Public Library has selected 105 books they believe every child should have read to them before they enter kindergarten and we would like to share this list with you. "These books were selected for their content, illustrations, writing quality, and treatment of early childhood concepts and themes."

Look for some of these titles each month in the *Sandpaper Letter*.

- 1) Potter, Beatrix – *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*
- 2) Rey, H.A. – Any *Curious George* title
- 3) Sendak, Maurice – *Where the Wild Things Are*
- 4) Seuss, Dr. – *The Cat in the Hat, Green Eggs and Ham, The Lorax*
- 5) Shannon, David – *A Bad Case of Stripes, Duck on a Bike*
- 6) Shaw, Nancy – *Sheep in a Jeep*
- 7) Slobodkin, Esphyr – *Caps for Sale*

Board Meeting Notes -

February

- ❖ Teachers presented the following:

Ms. Judy showed one of the ways her classroom is incorporating the Year of the Arts into her classroom. The students are studying portrait, landscape, and still-life paintings. The children then match pictures of art to its type.

Mr. James demonstrated metal insets; this is a frame with metal shape insets. This work helps to train your hand and shows children how to work slowly like an artist. This work encourages proper pencil holding which preps children for writing.

Ms. Beth showed how the children are learning to gently care for plants by cleaning leaves and proper watering. This practical life activity fosters respect for living things and a connection to the earth.

Ms. Lisa demonstrated table setting. Children match the correct utensil to their proper place on a mat. This practical life skill works on concentration and matching skills.

As always, the teacher presentations offered wonderful insight into the Montessori method and had extensions and benefits too lengthy to describe here. The board encourages everyone to attend board meetings and take advantage of the opportunity to learn more about what happens in DMS classrooms every day.

- ❖ The Strategic Plan for the 2010-2013 school years has been completed and was approved by the board at the February meeting.
- ❖ The Continuity and Disaster Preparedness Plan has been finalized and was approved by the board at the February meeting.