ROOTS & WINGS MONTESSORI SCHOOL

Wingspread

Volume XXIV Issue 1, August 7, 2009

What a wonderful summer it's been – and of course it's not over yet. I hope the sun has shone on happy times for you and yours and that you've had many opportunities for new adventures and delight in your children. Perhaps, like us, you're now turning your thought to our upcoming school year and considering what it might bring for your youngsters. We know the Winter Olympics will feature big in the next few months, so we've aligned with them our theme for the year: ***Pursuit of Excellence***. We'll be considering, with you and the students, the wide variety of ways in which we can aim for excellence, in our social, academic, ethical, physical and spiritual progress. Read on to find out how we'll jump start the theme on September 8 – and to understand many more details that will contribute to a harmonious and rewarding beginning.

Our Theme for the 2009/10 Year:

Pursuit of Excellence

Design a logo for our theme for the year and submit it by email. We'll announce the chosen logo at our opening ceremony on September 8.

Opening Ceremony and Potluck Lunch
Tuesday, September 8, 10:30
Everyone welcome

School Family Union

This is your opportunity to kick off the year by reconnecting with families and meeting new ones. We'll begin as usual, with our opening ceremony, related activities and a potluck lunch together. No matter when your child normally starts school, all families (and friends and relatives) are welcome to come on September 8 at **10:30**. **NO SCHOOL BEFORE THEN**. Bring healthy finger food to share (sandwiches, samosas, etc.), and we'll eat and chat by the creek. We encourage you to bring your own picnic plates and cutlery to avoid excess garbage.

Primary Orientation

After lunch we will be gathering all primary parents for a brief orientation and discussion of expectations for the year, with time to address any questions/concerns you may have. Regular school classes for returning Primary children and all elementary students begin the next day, September 9. Once the returning children have had a few days to settle, they will be ready to welcome the new Primary children. Your child's directress will contact you for a pre-visit and to determine the exact time to start.

So come Tuesday Sept. 8, meet our new families, renew old friends and chatter up a storm of summer adventures. (Don't forget your favourite potluck dish.)

See you Tuesday, September 8
at 10:30

Class Times

Rhonda's Primary	8:45 – 11:45
	12:30 – 3:00
Chami's Primary	8:30 – 11:30
	12:30 – 3:00
Lauren's Primary	8:30 – 11:30
Extended Day	12:30 – 3:00
Jennifer's Intermediates	8:30 – 3:00
Kristin's Seniors	8:30 – 3:00
Reimo's Upper Class	9:00 – 4:00
Daycare/out-of-school care:	7:00 – 6:00

Parking Lot

We're working on the possibility of having someone in the parking lot to collect your children and sign them in as you arrive, so you don't always have to park and come in; more details to come. Please allow the flow in the parking lot, park only in designated spaces, and DRIVE SLOWLY. Also, in keeping with our pursuit of atmospheric excellence, note there is a "no idling" policy in effect. If you are stopping for more than ten seconds, ***turn your engine off.*** Better still, check out our carpooling map outside the office and save yourself half the trips this year!

School Supplies

For those of you who are new, please note that your school supplies are included in your fees, and will be provided at school, so you don't need to maneuver the crowds at Zellers! Primary children each have a cotton bag to hang at school, so please, *no backpacks*. Older students are also encouraged to use biodegradable cotton bags to fit into their lockers, rather than bulky backpacks.

Out of School Care

Parbhat will continue her great work with students from our school and from local schools from 3:00 to 5:30 daily. If you would like to take advantage of this program, talk to Jeff in the office. $12 per hour, $20 per day drop in or $300 per month.

School Earthwear (Uniform)

All primary and elementary students need to wear "earthwear" (a name we prefer over "uniform" with its elite connotations). As announced last month, we're really pleased to have been able to find a local source for our school clothing: Kiran Uniforms at 13030-76 Ave. (778-565-4726).This source is local, less expensive and more immediate. Go into the store to choose your clothing, after which the shirts and sweaters will be embroidered with the school logo. Khaki pants and "crocs" can be purchased there or anywhere else. You are welcome to continue wearing previous earthwear until it's outgrown. Remember to label everything!

Also very important is that each child have available outdoor clothing for whatever our weather. (Remember there's no such thing as bad weather, just improper clothing!) The elementary children undergo the "hose test" in September, to ensure their raingear is completely waterproof, including jacket, rainhat, rainpants (muddy buddies) and high boots. You may choose to leave this clothing at school or to bring it each day, as long as it is always there for a rainy day. Elementary children without raingear need to stand under the supervisor's umbrella during playtime.

Remaining Places

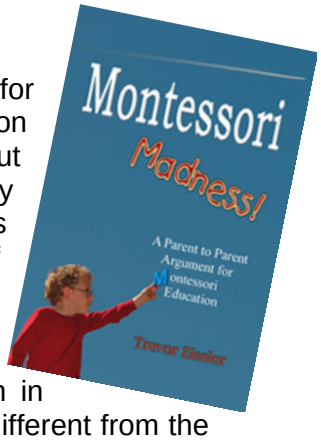
There are still a few afternoon primary places and elementary and upper school places available for September. Remember, because you are our best advertisers, you receive a $250 cash rebate in November for any full time students you bring in. There are Babycare spaces in Surrey Centre.

Summer Program July 2009

What a blast!

In times of change, learners inherit the earth, while the learned find themselves beautifully equipped to deal with a world that no longer exists."
~ Eric Hoffer

Summer Reading



Not for your children, but for you! A new book on Montessori has come out that we would like every one of our student's parents to read. One of the areas we see a need to improve at our school is helping parents understand what goes on in the classroom, as it's so different from the conventional school experience. We communicate through parent evening meetings, newsletters, emails and one-on-one discussion, but like many other Montessori schools, we feel we're still falling short of our goals. Enter Trevor Eissler with Montessori Madness! Eissler is a parent who discovered Montessori when considering home-schooling his three children and feels it's crazy madness that everyone isn't educated this way! The book is an easy read with excellent analogies that make the philosophy so clear. We're excited at the increased possibilities for communication of our goals for your children. We're making the book available for just $15 so that everyone can have one at home for reference, or you can borrow it from the parent library (first come first served). Parent meetings will likely shift from teacher lecture style to group discussion style, following everyone's reading of a particular topic in this book. There are a few copies available at the school already, and more on order. Follow this link to read an excerpt: http://www.montessorimadness.com/documents/Excerpt.pdf

Camping Trips

On Monday, September 14, all Seniors and Intermediates will leave for their annual camping trip. They will be given a list of necessary supplies and equipment during the first week of school.

Parent Handbook

Our website is currently undergoing some exciting renovations. As soon as possible, we will post the parent handbook, which contains plenty of information on a variety of topics. To emphasize a couple of important comments in advance:

Please ensure you arrive on time with your child. Punctuality is an important life skill in our society. When a child arrives late, (s)he may feel uncomfortable and isolated. It's important for social and academic development that (s(he is able to participate in cohesive group activities, community discussions and sharing. Punctuality contributes to social connections and comfort and provides your child the freedom of a full work cycle to achieve greatest learning potential.

Licensing procedure now requires that you sign your child in and out of daycare AND primary.

We will be giving strong focus to the tranquility of each classroom in September. The students will learn to use "inside" voices, to wait patiently if someone to whom they wish to speak is not available, and to speak respectfully. Parents can contribute by ensuring they also use quiet voices in the hallways, by not entering the classroom during class times and by listening well to the children.

This year's school calendar is attached, and will also be posted on the website. September dates to note:

Tuesday Sept. 8	Opening ceremony
Mon, Sept. 14	Camping trip starts
Tues, Sept. 15	Intermediates return
Fri, Sept. 18	Seniors and Upper Class return Earthquake kits due
Weds. Sept 23	Shoreline cleanup, elementary
Thurs. Sept. 24	Parent meeting
Fri. Sept 25	Professional Day

Recycling and Nutrition

As you shop for lunches once again, perhaps you'd like to consider with us our goals in teaching the students to be ecologically responsible and to eat healthy. An article we reprinted last year pointed out that children need only half a glass of juice per day, so we very much prefer that they not bring juice to school. We have excellent cold, filtered water available in every classroom and in the lunch room – much healthier than flavoured, sugared drinks and requiring no juice boxes or other garbage. While juice boxes are recyclable, they have to be transported to recycling plants; they also have to be thoroughly washed, or else they attract fruit flies in the lunch room. Let's aim for no drinks from home this year please. The students will also learn that prepackaged instant snacks are less healthy and have more packaging than food they could wrap themselves, in reusable containers. Allowing your children to make their own lunches helps increase their self-confidence and will probably result in more of it being eaten! Thanks for working together with us towards these goals.

Staff and Board Members

Our staff are introduced in detail in the Parent Handbook, which will soon be posted on our website. You will also find the full line-up on our bulletin board when you return!

Parent Library

Attached is a copy of our parent library bibliography, with "must-reads" in bold. Particularly notable is the new Free-Range Kids Giving Our children the Freedom We had Without Going Nuts with Worry and Montessori Madness. Feel free to borrow them now ahead of the rush!

Piano Lessons

Call Daryn if you're interested in piano lessons for the coming year – flyer attached.

Volunteer Parents

This year our volunteer system will be highly organized under the capable direction of Pam. Watch for a sign-up sheet during the first week of school

Building Update

We're making really good progress and hope to have the farmhouse renovated and ready for use by October and the new building begun in the early new year. (I so look forward to the day we can say this is done!)

Wireless Free School

Because of the huge concerns around the possible dire effects of radio waves on our children, our school will become a "wireless free zone" while children are present. That means all our computers will be connected directly to cable and no cell phones will be used in the school. Just as some need to go outside to smoke, now one goes outside to talk on a cell phone! Please turn your phones off or leave them in the car when picking up your children.

A rubber band pistol was confiscated from algebra class because it was a weapon of math disruption.

Children's Letters

Your children will each receive a letter in the mail from their teachers near the end of August. New children's parents will receive a phone call to arrange an introductory visit and learn when their little ones will begin their gradual entry.

NB Jeff returns from holidays on Aug. 19.

A great big warm welcome to all our new families.
We look forward to getting to know each other better on September 8!

Down to Earth Inspirational Academics