



WIMBERLEY
Montessori
SCHOOL

September Newsletter 2019

Primary Classroom:

In a few short weeks our Primary children have beautifully learned many routines and procedures vital to creating a peaceful classroom. Watching as each child walks through the front door, hangs their belongings on their hook, changes to indoor shoes, and then proceeds to walk into their classroom with water bottle & lunch in hand to be greeted by friends & Guides is something that continues to fill my heart with joy each year.

Once in their classroom they know how to carefully place their lunch box on the shelf so their friends' lunches have room too. Once water bottles are put away they choose a work in their classroom or help Miss Olivia prepare the classroom snack. We work together to create a peaceful classroom and share ideas about how to do this. Using walking feet, quieter voices, polite interrupting, respectful watching of others while they work and restoring works on the shelf beautifully for the next person has been the focus of our first several weeks.

Our returning children have been busy using our moveable alphabets for word building and our golden beads for math work. Our new and/or younger children love to be "respectful watchers" of these works and absorb the lessons too.

Each year we begin learning about our Earth and its' major components of land, air and water. This leads us naturally to learning about states of matter: solids, liquids, gases. The children have particularly loved our Land & Water forms this September and are learning

about lakes, islands, capes, bays, archipelagos, chain of lakes, isthmus' and straights. We have begun making our own models of these using salt dough.

We also begin our year with a presentation on Living & Non-Living. The children reflect on and come to the answers themselves about what makes something living or non-living. And then the category of "once was living" occurs naturally.

Throughout the year we learn about Invertebrates & Vertebrates and the Classification of Animals. The children are currently learning about reptiles. We had the pleasure of Rowan's mom, Frankie, coming to garden with us this past Friday. The children weeded, sowed seeds and planted their pea plants that they have been growing in their classroom.

On Wednesday mornings we have a thirty- minute music class with Miss Sarah. The children learn the names and shapes of notes, learn complex songs, and have a time of music appreciation where they listen to a piece of classical music and identify the instruments used. We love Miss Sarah and are thankful for her beautiful work with our Primary children.

Our classroom is truly magical. The Montessori classroom is full of complexity that builds on itself from the first day. As the children progress & find the joy in ownership of their classroom & a love of learning within the guidelines set before them they find the peace and thriving that comes from true self-esteem.

~Vera & Olivia



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Lower Elementary Classroom

Lower Elementary is off to a great start!

The class has bonded quickly starting the very first day. Also on the first day, I was already being asked, “When can we do some work?” So much for them breaking me in slowly...

In Geography we are finishing up our study on the universe and our solar system. We also started exploring rocks, gems and minerals, including the rock cycle (igneous, sedimentary, metamorphic). This will prepare us for our upcoming field trip to the Austin Gem & Mineral Society’s Gem Capers exhibit on October 18th, where we will be participating in their Quest for Knowledge using the questionnaire created by AGMS.

In Science we’ve started our year-long botany lessons and will use them to help with our Nature Journaling. We will be using our sense of sight, touch, hearing and smelling when we journal on our trip to Blue Hole on October 11th.

We’ve read through two books on the history of our alphabet beginning with pictographs, and eventually learning how the word, “alphabet” came to be (from the Greek letters alpha and beta). We’ve also finished reading *Punished* by David Lubar, giving kids the opportunity to learn about (and practice) puns, oxymorons, anagrams and palindromes.

The kids have all made placemats to use at snack and lunch using their choice of mediums including colored pencils, markers, crayons and/or pencils. They were all very unique! In addition, when we use our placemats, we are practicing what we’ve been learning from the Table



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Manners chapter of the book 365
Manners Kids Should Know.

Lastly, we just finished our first trip to help with the Fig Tree project. The kids unloaded three PACKED vehicles and unboxed food that was then placed into individual bags by the volunteer group that came in after us. We have two more trips planned for January and April and the children are already looking forward to those! <http://wimberleyfigtree.org/>
~Michelle





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Upper Elementary Classroom:

We are off to a great start. After the first few days of teambuilding and ice breaker activities, the children were happy to begin working on lessons and projects. Our core math curriculum includes: Saxon Math, Spectrum Math,

Hands on Equations (pre-algebra) and Geometry. Our language curriculum covers word study with Wordly Wise,



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grammar lessons, and daily creative writing opportunities. Students keep track of their progress with individualized learning lists.

Melanie and Catherine gave presentations in Physical Geography beginning with the layers of the atmosphere, followed by a review of land and water forms, and layers of the earth. The unit on climate and weather patterns was sparked by interest in hurricane activity in the Atlantic.

The children learned about tectonic plates and made their own puzzles demonstrating how the plates move and create faults resulting in volcanoes, mountains and valleys. Following a lesson on Earth's biomes, each child completed a research project on a biome to present to the group.

We began our exploration of history with the Clock of Eras. This is a classic Montessori lesson that graphically presents the length of time from the Big Bang to the appearance of humans. (Ask your son or daughter about the Long Black Line). We looked at the Timeline of Life and next we will visit the Timeline of Humans.

In October, the children will be researching a person who has made a positive contribution to the world, write a biography, and create a nicho (an assemblage inspired by traditional Mexican folk art). We will present these projects to the younger children on November 1st.

Melanie and Catherine take turns reading aloud for 20 minutes in the afternoon. We choose primarily Newberry Award winners and alternate male/female protagonists and historical/contemporary

story lines. Students respond to this reading with book reports. They may choose between a traditional report, a graphic novel, alternate ending, sequel, and interview of a character or letter to the author.

On Fridays the children attend "Simple Gifts", music and art lessons, and pursue projects relating to their individual interests, making for a fun and well-rounded curriculum.

~Catherine & Melanie





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From the Office

I just wanted to let everyone know that we have new, lower, credit card processing rates as we decided to use QuickBooks as our credit card merchant. The school is paying a monthly fee to obtain the lowest possible credit card processing rates. As those of you that have used our credit card payment service know, the school passes on the processing fee to the credit card holders. We just simply couldn't afford to allow payment by credit cards if we had to absorb the fees, but want to provide as flexible a payment system as possible. Our previous rates were 1.99% plus 25 cents per transaction. The new QuickBooks rates are 1.5% plus 25 cents for cards that are swiped. We haven't offered keyed card services in the past because the rates are so much higher but

some families have indicated that they do not mind the higher rates (2.9% plus 25 cents) to be able to have the convenience of paying online using a credit card. Although your contracts state that we will not provide invoices, if you prefer to pay online using a credit card, I can set that up on an as needed basis and will send an invoice that will allow you to pay by credit card online. Please email me at anne.wimberleymontessori@gmail.com if this is an option that you would like to set up.

Another option that some families are using to make the payment process simple is to set up a bill pay system with your bank. These services are free to account holders and you just simply enter the school's name and address as Payee and



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then set up the amounts and frequency. The bank then sends a check to us each month through the regular mail service.

As we move forward with the new credit card merchant, I appreciate all your patience with me as I learn the new system. As always, we appreciate your timely payment of all tuition and fees and please understand that we will be enforcing the \$20 late fee policy established in your contracts because our accounting fees increase when we have to

track delinquent payments. Please also remember that if circumstances arise that compromise your ability to pay in a timely manner we are always open to discussion of alternative payments. Please contact Vera if a situation arises that will delay a payment. Happy Trails.
~ Anne Dobbs, Office Manager

Director News:

I know we were all excited about the rain we got this weekend. It is amazing how quickly the grasses and flowers perk up and begin to grow again with the rain!

Our Parents' Night Out on Friday was a fun evening for some of our Primary and Lower Elementary children. We played outside building sandcastles, water play, creating a pulley, drawing and using a parachute. We even did a bit of gardening. If you could not take advantage of Parents' Night Out this time there will be another one next semester.

Our Upper Elementary children had a fantastic time at EVO in Kyle, bonding and playing games. Thank you to Catherine and Melanie for your late night out!

Last school year we renovated the Primary & Lower Elementary playground. We had the most amazing parent volunteers who donated time and resources to make the playground a magical place for the children. This year we would very much love to have help building a pergola around the deck on the Upper Elementary playground. There is little to no shade on their playground and this would be a welcome improvement. We have a few designs in mind that include creating more garden containers so the children can design and develop a garden of their own. We would love help in any form possible.



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Please email me if you'd like to be a part of improving our Upper Elementary playground. Thank you.

Thank you to all of our families for your continued support and for helping all of us make Wimberley Montessori School a school where each child is loved, valued and seen as the special person they truly are.

Kindly,
Vera

Upcoming Events:

Friday, October 4th:

Bake Sale 2:45-3:30pm

Friday, October 11th:

*Blue Hole Nature&Science
Journal Walk. Lower& Upper
Elementary only.*

Monday October 14th:

*Staff Development Day
(Student Holiday)*

Friday, October 18th:

*Gem& Mineral Show, Palmer
Events Center in Austin. Lower&
Upper Elementary only.*

Friday, October 25th:

*Parent Conferences
(No school)*

***Let the children be free; encourage
them; let them run outside when it is
raining; let them remove their shoes***

***when they find a puddle of water; and
when the grass of the meadows is
wet with dew, let them run on it and
trample it with their bare feet; let
them rest peacefully when a tree
invites them to sleep beneath its
shade; let them shout and laugh
when the sun wakes them in the
morning. – Maria Montessori***

