



ABC-Stewart School

Founded 1969

Mission: We seek to educate and prepare each child to make life's journey as an independent responsible citizen of the world.

MONTESSORI MESSENGER

Welcome to the First Year Classroom!

Our first-year classroom provides a compassionate, thoughtful, and unique environment during the tender years a child transitions from kindergarten to elementary. The self-contained classroom is taught by team teachers for the last 23 years: Miss Lynn, an Indiana University graduate, and Miss Lane, a University of Southern Indiana graduate. Both of whom have completed graduate courses at Butler University. This year, our Computer Class teacher Ms. Breeding, has also been assisting in the first-year room. The first-year teachers do a wonderful job welcoming the students lovingly into their classroom and guiding them through personalized growth and development.

The individualized environment has been prepared with a diverse set of Montessori based materials. Each child is assessed weekly and given work based on their needs and abilities. Weekly homework assignments include a math packet, a reading book with writing activities, and spelling words. Two book reports are given during the year.

The structured day starts out with group exposure to new concepts in the morning followed by Independent Study in the afternoon. During Independent study, students choose works between science, math, reading, and culture based on their ability level to appropriately challenge them. The teachers are facilitators during this time observing and aiding children when needed. They also record each students' growth on a log sheet. The students take responsibility for their learning and achievements by plotting their weekly achievements on a graph. A child's experience in the first-year room is a special one. The teachers do an outstanding job preparing children for the rest of their educational path at Stewart. Students are given the tools to become confident, independent, and enthusiastic learners while building the foundation for their future academic endeavors in grades two through six.



Miss Tonnie Lane



Miss Lori Lynn



We know it's the time of year where you make decisions on where to send your child for the upcoming school year. We hope you choose to continue giving your child the gift of a Montessori education. If you would like additional information on ABC-Stewart elementary, please reach out to Rae in the school office. You will not be disappointed!

Kids Corner

Current First Year students were asked: "What do you love about being a First Year student?"

"I like working on maps. I am working on the United States map right now."

- Zeke

"I like being in the bigger school. I also like to learn cursive and math." - Leticia

"I like doing the rainforest puzzle. I also really like science, math, and reading." - Hunter



"My teachers and my friends" - Cooper

"I like working in small groups. I also like reading. I am really happy that I have nice teachers."

- Moksh

"I really like reading. We get to read a lot!" - John Paul

"Independent Study. I like to draw, recess, and work time with my teachers. I like my teachers and my friends." - Nadia

Second through Sixth Year students were asked: "What is your favorite memory of being in the First Year room?"

"I liked my teachers. They were very nice." - Kadel, 2nd Year



"I liked our science experiment when we grew gummy bears in liquid. I also loved when we could write to our friends in preschool and put letters in the mailbox." - Ethan, 5th Year

"We learned about Martin Luther King and we all got a booklet that we took turns reading out loud. I remember that very well. I liked when Ms. Lane would teach us math. One time we did pretty heart math and I really liked that."

Emma, 4th Year



"I liked doing extra math. I always loved the science area in the room. I remember being the teacher helper and getting to help pass out student planners. I also really liked the teachers." - George, 4th Year

Parent Perspectives on Stewart Elementary

As an ABC Stewart parent I can rest assured that my kids are in a safe environment. I know that their teachers want the best for them and are looking out for my kids. What I really like about the school is the importance on values and overall growth of my child. I am very grateful for the ABC community with like minded teachers, kids and parents. The fact that my kids enjoy spending their day at school and in fact make me wait around when I go to pick them up after classes speaks volumes about the happy environment the school provides to it's pupils. Thanks ABC Stewart for taking such good care of my kids. - **Niharika Gourineni**

We liked the idea of Montessori education since our kids were coming from overseas and we wanted them to take time in getting adapted to a new society and language. At Montessori, where kids learn at their own pace is something we thought would work well for them rather than a regular curriculum. Secondly, we wanted to have a school with least possible teacher to student ratio ensuring our kids get enough attention to help them adapt to a new culture and come over any fear of public speaking. We came back after 2 months of joining public school because the kids felt not being challenged enough academically even though the fun part was equally good. We feel ABC is a family just the right size where everyone knows everyone, kids get sufficient attention, challenged at a pace matching to their aptitude and build confidence. - **Ravinder and Akiko Singh**

ABC-Stewart School was recommended to our family by another educator in town. When our son Bryce turned 2, we enrolled him in the Two's Classroom. Bryce is now in First Year, and we couldn't be happier with the experience. We found teachers who treated us like family and instilled a love of learning in our child, a parent community dedicated to giving their kids the best possible education, and a diverse learning environment. Most importantly, my son found a school he absolutely loves. He wants to go to school every day, loves his friends and teachers, and has developed a love of learning. When considering whether to continue at ABC-Stewart through the elementary program, we spoke with other parents and heard nothing but wonderful things about the First Year Teachers and Classroom. They have exceeded our expectations. We forward to many more years at ABC-Stewart school! - **Nick and Sheena Seger**

We are fortunate to live in a community with abundant educational options for our children. The reason we choose ABC-Stewart is because from preschool on we have appreciated the added emphasis on developing confidence, independence, creativity, and critical thinking skills. At the same time, if emphasizing any of these skills detracted from the 3Rs curriculum we would be the first to be skeptical. However, ABC also does an excellent job of ensuring that students pick up all of the core curriculum necessary to thrive on standardized tests and in future school settings elsewhere. Meanwhile, the relatively small class sizes and collegial relations among staff ensure that the school truly has a family atmosphere. Students learn to love their teachers like a favorite aunt or uncle. We have no hesitancy in highly recommending ABC-Stewart to anyone. - **Dr. Andy and Jen Day**

We love ABC-Stewart! We have three boys who all began attending ABC-Stewart in the Two's Room. Guy is currently in the first year classroom. Van is currently in the fifth year classroom. And Zane is an ABC-Stewart graduate, currently a Junior at East High School. As ABC-Stewart parents, we have a unique perspective because we have already experienced the results of a Stewart foundation. Zane transitioned with great success into middle school and high school. He has thrived academically, athletically, and socially. He gives credit to his time at ABC-Stewart, as do we. ABC-Stewart provides the perfect balance of nurturing and educating. The school really does develop the whole child. Students are well educated, competitive, and prepared for their next stages, but when asked why to choose ABC-Stewart my answer is always the same; Stewart students are taught to be kind, compassionate, and confident. I find this to be an incredible advantage and important aspect of an elementary education. Stewart produces good people who also tend to do great things. - **Annette and Ryan Moravec**

Montessori Minute

What is Montessori education?

"For more than a century now, the child-focused approach that Dr. Maria Montessori, an Italian physician, developed for educating children has been transforming schools around the globe. As soon as you enter a classroom, you know that something different is afoot. Montessori classrooms are immediately recognizable. You will see children working independently and in groups, often with specially designed learning materials; deeply engaged in their work; and respectful of themselves and their surroundings. The Montessori Method fosters rigorous, self-motivated growth for children and adolescents in all areas of their development—cognitive, emotional, social, and physical."

~ American Montessori Society



Alumni Spotlight

Laura Free



Dr. Laura Free is an Associate Professor of History at Hobart and William Smith Colleges in Geneva, New York. She also hosts the women's history podcast Amended, which you can find wherever you get your podcasts.

I was in one of the earliest classes at ABC/Stewart, back when the school was in an old army barracks at Bakalar. I remember so many things about those days – as Merry Carmichael worked tirelessly to create a Montessori school from scratch. How the floor was covered in carpet samples scavenged from local stores. How my parents built and painted bookcases for the school building. How Art Kroot provided the barrel of a cement mixer truck for us to scramble around in on the playground (It was the '70s, so the rules about playground safety were a little looser back then.) I remember how we carpoled out to the school with neighborhood friends, sitting in the third row of the family station wagon. And how we started a basketball team but didn't have enough boys of the right age, so some of us girls played on the team to round out the numbers. (I was an absolutely terrible basketball player!) And of course, I remember the musical productions — I can still sing all the words to "A Bicycle Built for Two," thanks to Merry and Sue Mumley!

I'm so grateful for the strong educational foundation that ABC/Stewart provided me through my years there. The ethos of independent learning that I took in as a Montessori student stayed with me through college and graduate school and into my professional life as a historian. As well, the love of sharing knowledge that every teacher at ABC/Stewart demonstrated continues to inspire me as I work to teach others today. I feel so grateful that I had the opportunity to be a part of ABC/Stewart's earliest years. It is such a joy to see how ABC/Stewart has developed and grown over the years and to know that it continues to thrive as a community.

Recipe Corner

Chocolate Banana Bread

Adapted from ambitiouskitchen.com

With Valentine's Day approaching, this paleo, dairy-free, and gluten-free chocolate banana bread is a healthy way to send some chocolate love in their lunch box. Sweetened with bananas and pure maple syrup, this bread tastes like brownies.

Ingredients:

- 3 very ripe bananas , mashed (about 1¼ cup)
- 3 eggs
- ¼ cup pure maple syrup
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 2½ cups fine almond flour
- ½ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 tsp baking soda
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ cup dark chocolate chips, plus 2 TBS extra for sprinkling on top

Directions:

- Preheat oven 350 degrees. Spray 8½ x 4½ inch loaf pan with cooking spray
- In a large bowl, whisk bananas, eggs, maple syrup, and vanilla until well combined. Add almond flour, cocoa powder, baking soda, and salt. Stir to combine. Fold in chocolate chips.
- Pour batter in to loaf pan. Sprinkle 2 TBS chocolate chips on top. Bake 50-65 minutes until toothpick comes out clean.

Note: If your kids like sweeter bread, you may want to increase the amount of maple syrup. My family enjoyed this out of the oven with ice cream.

School Announcements

Please see the following important information:

COVID Policy Notice:

The COVID-19 guidelines have been updated. Please review the email from Rae explaining the updated policy.

Important Dates

2/3 - Home Basketball Game at 5 / 6:15 pm vs. Columbus Christian

2/4 - Home Basketball Game at 1:30 pm Teachers vs. Students

2/8 - Away Basketball Game at 6 / 7:15 pm Immanuel Lutheran

2/14 - Valentine's Day Tea - see email from Rae for additional details

2/21 - 2/25 - Elementary Standardized Testing

Elementary Clubs

Dulcimer Club - Friday 4-5 pm

Dulcimer Club (1st & 2nd Grade) -

Wednesday 4-4:30 pm

Math Bowl - Monday 4:30-5:30 pm, Friday 7-8 am

Basketball Practice (4th - 6th Grade) -

Tuesday and Thursday 4-5:30 pm

Elementary Special Days

2/2 Reptile Stuffed Animal Day - Bring a stuffed animal to school (one big or two little - must fit in backpack)

2/9 Spiderman/Ironman Day - Dress like one of these superheroes (or actors); bring action figures to school

2/10 Tag Day (Grades 1-3) - Play tag at recess (in gym or outside depending on weather)

2/11 Charity Day - Additional details will be sent

2/16 Funny Mask Day - Wear a funny COVID-19 face mask

2/17 Ice Cream Sandwich Day - Buy an ice cream sandwich and enjoy it during lunch (more information will be sent home)

2/18 - D.E.A.R. Day - Bring one or two books to school. There will be time to drop everything and read during the day

3/1 Obstacle Day - An obstacle course will be setup either in the gym or outside

3/4 Board Game Day - Bring two board/card games to play during or after recess

April TBD - Easter Egg Hunt Day - A school Easter egg hunt. More details to come.

Volunteer Newsletter Editors:

Stefanie Stafford, Veronica Turner, Sheena Seger