

September 2004

Philomath Montessori School

Newsletter



For the Families and Friends of the Philomath Montessori School

Welcome to the 2004-2005 school year! We've had a very intense, but thoroughly enjoyable first few weeks at school getting prepared and introducing our school to our new children and families. Among our new eleven students entering this year are **Taylor and Shaden**, who now get to actually walk into the classroom without being snatched back! Also joining us are **Anna**, whose older brothers both went to Corvallis Montessori, and **Jensen**, who is returning after a short hiatus. All of our other children are new to our school and to Montessori: **Anya, Blake, Dylan, Jenna, Leo, Lillikoi, and Madison**. We would like to offer a warm welcome to everyone.

To teach detail is to bring confusion. To establish the relationship between things is to bring knowledge.

- Maria Montessori, *From Childhood to Adolescence*

We have some pretty exciting things happening at our school this year. One of the highlights will be the Biome project. We will be extending our study of biomes to new continents and creating a biome in our backyard! Our greenhouse, the incubator for our biome, is due to arrive any day as well all our new biome materials. We are very grateful to Meredith Howell, the Meyer

Memorial Trust and all our families for making this project possible.

What IS a Biome?

A biome is a community of plants and animals that live in a large area that has a particular climate and soil.



North American Biome Map

The plants and animals making up that biome have special adaptations that help them to thrive there.

Thanks to our Silent/Live Auction and Road Race fundraisers, we were able to purchase

some beautiful materials on planets, constellations, and music for our older children. We were also able to add some new cultural materials in anticipation of our focus on Ghana, Germany, Israel, Armenia, and Costa Rica this year.

Cultural Curriculum for 2004 - 05
 Ghana - Homowo Festival
 Germany - St. Nicholas Day
 Israel - Hanukkah
 Armenia - International Women's Day
 Costa Rica - Earth Day

In response to ideas and suggestions offered at our last parent meeting, we will be having monthly, instead of, quarterly parent

meetings, more opportunities for parent-child lunches, and an additional date for our children's open house. We will also be inviting parents to attend their children's birthday ceremony in the classroom. Be sure to come to our first Parent Meeting of the year. We will be making lots of decisions, soliciting more ideas, and passing on important information.

Doni, Leslie, and I feel ready and enthusiastic about the coming year. We look forward to getting to know our new families and strengthening ties with our returnees.

2004-2005 Goals

<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Classroom</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend Biome curriculum to other continents and create a biome in our backyard • Continue Sign language -- review and keep alive • Refresh geography pictures • Focus on these countries: Ghana, Germany, Israel, Armenia, Costa Rica • Create a library for "Listening to Music" activity in the classroom 	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Materials/Books/Equipment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add another piece of artwork to our classroom. • Replace some classroom furniture - cloth washing stand, hand washing table, water table, 2 small chairs and indoor easel. (\$830.) • Add new reading materials - new phonetic & phonogram reading card sets, early reading poems, and books card sets. (\$600).
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>School</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue our work with the College of Philomath Community Corporation to secure a new site for our school. • Provide more opportunities for parents to participate in classroom life and gather as a community. • Create a school handbook for emergency, classroom, and fiscal procedures. • Incorporate earthquake and evacuation drills into monthly emergency drills. • Update our classroom album. 	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Family Community</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise \$3500 for scholarships -- This will enable us to grant two partial scholarships as we did last year. • Invite parents into the classroom to observe their child's birthday celebration. • Add another Children's Open House date in January. • Schedule monthly parent meetings that include parent education and discussion opportunities. • Provide opportunities for parent/child lunch visits from mid-October on. • Have books and videos in parent library available for parents and other family members to borrow. • Have photo albums available for loan to families.

Parent Article

This article has become a tradition in our first newsletter of the year. I think it is worth repeating and I hope you'll take the time to review it even if you've read it before.

Here are some ideas garnered from an article by Priscilla Winning, a guide from the Franciscan Montessori Earth School in Portland that might help make the transition from home to school go more smoothly for your child.

- o Establish a **consistent routine** with your child each morning. Regular routines give children a sense of security. By creating a calm and stable morning atmosphere in your home, you'll be greatly affecting your child's mood in a positive way. If your child regularly watches television in the morning, slowly wean him/her. **Television is not an appropriate activity before school**, nor a way to prepare the mind for learning.
- o Set an appropriate bed time so that your child can get **plenty of sleep**. This will allow your child to feel rested and ready for a full day at school.
- o **Let them know what will be happening that day**. If they are in a carpool it's important to let them know who is dropping them off and picking them up. Many children become upset if there are unexpected changes in their routine.
- o **Prepare in the evening for the following day**. Children usually are pleased (and sometimes demand!) to be involved in choosing their clothing to be worn to school, preparing their lunch, planning breakfast, etc. Making these decisions and preparations the night before can help you and your child avoid the stress and pressure of rushing.
- o Be prepared to **make a short and cheerful departure** with your child at the classroom door. It will make your child's entry into the classroom more comfortable and positive. (Everyone's been doing a great job!)



Maria Montessori in the late 1940s

Newsline

- Our **class list** was put into family boxes last week. Please look it over for mistakes and typos. We will print out a revision by the end of the month.
- Please remember to send in a **complete extra set of clothes** and PLEASE put your child's name on **EACH** piece of clothing -- even initials will do. Remember **rubber boots, headgear, and raincoat** the first rainy day. We need to have **names on these items** as well. Canvas bags are in the hallway ready for rubber boots. Please also send your child with a **water bottle everyday** to conserve paper cups and cut down on the use of bottled water. A name is a must for water bottles, too!
- If your child is a returning student, your child's current forms are or will soon be in your box for you to review and update. It is very important for us to have current information on the emergency card, immunization records and your registration form. **Please update information, sign again and date. Thanks.**
- **New families**, please turn in all your paperwork as soon as possible. If you are missing a form, please let us know.
- During the year, we will be posting **flyers and brochures** on the bulletin board from various individuals and groups offering services that may be appropriate for your families. However, **it should not be taken as a recommendation** as we cannot investigate every source for quality.

Upcoming Events

Plan to come to our **Beginning-of-the-Year Potluck** from 5:00 - 6:30, Saturday, September 18 in our backyard. If the weather turns wet, we will dine in the classroom. See you there!

Our first **Parent Meeting** will be on Thursday, September 23, at 6:30! Free childcare will be provided. Please come by 6:15 to get children settled in. We plan to start the meeting at 6:30 -- we have a lot of ground to cover and we like to end the meeting by 8:00 -- your children will be happier for it.

We are planning to put our **next newsletter** out the week of October 18.

Would you like more information about Philomath Montessori School?

You can always call the school at 929-2672.

We'll be glad to send you a brochure about our pre-school and kindergarten program.