



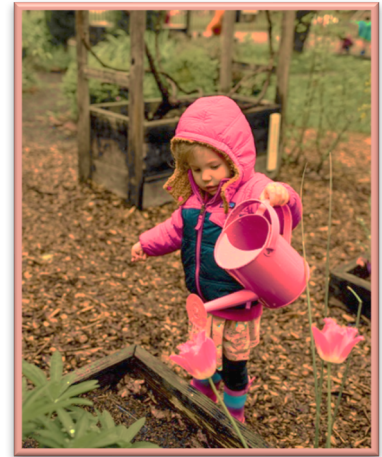
PHILOMATH
Montessori School

November 11, 2024

Dear Friends of Philomath Montessori School,

Earlier this summer, I was shopping at a long-time downtown business with my daughter and husband, the latter of whom was wearing a forest-green hoodie with the new Philomath Montessori logo brightly emblazoned on the front. The clerk helping him try on shoes asked about the school, saying that she and her partner were aiming to start a family and she was beginning to look into preschools. I immediately launched into an enthusiastic spiel for Montessori education in general and PhMS specifically. It produced a fun and lively conversation and made our local shopping experience all the richer. And it was an excellent reminder that wearing school merch isn't just about supporting the school through purchasing a T-shirt or sweatshirt – it's about spreading the word that PhMS is a special place to begin our children's education.

Word of mouth has long been the primary way that new students find our school. And we're happy to report that it's working beautifully: this year we're back at full enrollment *and* our student age distribution has leveled out so we have the balanced makeup of ages that is part of what makes our classroom so effective. Both metrics were hindered by the Covid pandemic, and we're thrilled to be moving forward.



Know what else we are moving forward with? Forty full years of Montessori education in Philomath! We celebrated this significant milestone in September with a gathering in the recently expanded school yard, and it was a delight to see so many families and PhMS alums. When Doni invited all current and former PhMS students in attendance to join her for a rousing rendition of "This is My School," the lineup on the stage was an impressive array of adults and children of all ages, all of whom still remembered those iconic lyrics! We bestowed our thanks to Pauline Tanaka for starting the school forty years ago and honored her with a newly planted coral bark maple, her favorite tree, and a commemorative plaque on the church grounds. If you missed the celebration, swing by sometime and check it out.

The fantastic attendance at the event was a reminder of how big our support network is, and the important role we can all play in ensuring PhMS continues to be able to enroll students from all walks of life. Your contribution to the school's Annual Giving Campaign will help **fund scholarships** for families in need, **purchase educational materials** for our classrooms, and provide **professional development** for our staff. We are so thankful to have such an involved and generous PhMS community! And who knows? Maybe in a few years, the child of that downtown store clerk I talked to will join our ranks.

With gratitude,

Karen Petersen
PhMS Board member

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