



dubuque **montessori** school

# THE SANDPAPER LETTER

SEPTEMBER 2020

**A Non-Profit,  
Parent-Run Organization**

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*The mission of Dubuque Montessori School is to bring together children of all social, economic and cultural backgrounds in an atmosphere that encourages children to develop to their fullest potential, using proven, child-directed Montessori methods and materials in a warm, nurturing safe and loving environment.*

## MONTESSORI AT HOME

Montessori isn't just for the classroom. Encouraging order, independence, and self-motivation is fundamental to the Montessori approach. You can easily bring its principles into your home—and doing so can be an invaluable bridge to reinforcing what your child learns at school.

- 1 Observe** Take time to observe your child at home, without interfering in their activity. You can help develop your child's concentration at any age by observing what sparks their interest and providing opportunities to pursue it. Set them up with the materials to explore what has piqued their interest and let them work without interruption until they are ready to choose another activity.
- 2 Model, Invite & Practice Modeling** You may need to demonstrate a new skill a few times, but soon your child will have memorized the routine and mastered it themselves—and they will take great pride in being able to do it on their own.
- 3 Adapt** Based on your observations, make changes to the environment to ensure your child's success, interest, and independence. For older children, work together and include them in the decision-making process. Give choices but be sure that you are comfortable with all of the available options, so you support the child no matter what choice is made.
- 4 Practice Real-Life Skills** Montessori students learn to take care of themselves and their classroom and to be helpful to others. In addition to the satisfaction of mastering real-life skills, they come to see themselves as valued members of the community. Creating an environment that encourages your child help at home can bring similar rewards.
- 5 Nurture Inner Motivation** Children are most willing to apply themselves when they feel there is intrinsic value to their work. Some parents use external rewards such as an allowance, gold stars, and merit-based privileges. But Montessori is based on the belief that pride and pleasure in one's own work has lasting, and meaningful, effects that external incentives do not. By expressing encouragement and appreciation for your children's efforts of accomplishing a task at home, you—like their teachers—will help nurture an inner motivation that will serve them for life.

*from Montessori at Home by the American Montessori Society*

# A MESSAGE FROM OUR DIRECTOR

Dear DMS families,

Welcome to the 2020-2021 school year! It has been wonderful catching up with our returning families and getting to know our new families more and more each day. Our teachers seem to already be in full swing and in their groove with the children. The teachers have been spending a lot of time going over classroom expectations and the children are getting used to the structure of the day. Their classroom has been carefully prepared for them to nurture their independence and to stimulate their development in all areas. Each year we celebrate Montessori with a different theme. On a three year rotation, these themes are Art, Science and our World. It is with great enthusiasm that this year we are celebrating the “Year of our World”! We will learn about our families and homes, our community, and then gradually branch out into learning about all the wonderful places on our planet. We will be learning about different countries and cultures through books, music, artifacts, art, food, and of course our beautiful Montessori materials. If any of you have traveled and/or have something unique or interesting that you wouldn't mind sending with your child to share, that would be great! Nothing valuable that could be damaged easily, but something small that would tie into our theme this year, even a photograph of a family vacation! Just send the object with a little note describing it and maybe give your teacher a heads up.

Since we closed back in March, we have been working tirelessly to plan our reopening to make everything we do as safe as possible for our students, families, and staff. We needed to do this while carefully paying attention to the ever changing guidelines we need to follow. I want to take this opportunity to thank our amazing Board of Directors and staff for all of their knowledge and volunteered time they gave this summer to make our reopening a success. There was definitely some stressful times and also some very happy times when genius ideas were created. All in all, even though this is a very unwanted situation to be in, it was such a pleasure to work with them and to now finally see that all of our hard work has paid off. I also want to thank all of you, our parents, who have put your trust in us to care for your precious children. Your patience and understanding while we figured things out, is simply outstanding. We appreciate that you are here with us so very much. It is such an honor to have this opportunity to teach your children about the wonderful world of Montessori. We look forward to growing along with your children this year and making wonderful memories.

Wishing you all a beautiful September!

-Beth



## WE NEED YOUR HELP

At DMS, we are so grateful for the dedicated staff who teach our children. Please consider joining Parent Club, a committee that focuses on supporting staff and building community among families. As a Parent Club member, you will occasionally be asked to donate snacks for the staff's break room and contribute meal items for staff in-service days. We also organize Teacher Appreciation Week.

If you'd like to join the Parent Club or have questions, please contact Hilarie Welsh at [hilarie.welsh@gmail.com](mailto:hilarie.welsh@gmail.com) or 563-213-7918.

## BOX TOPS FOR EDUCATION



Remember to send your Box Tops to school! Also check out the Box Top phone app and make sure you are scanning your

receipts if you purchase items that have the Box Top logo! This is an easy way for us to earn money for our school! Thank you for your continued support!

## FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE

As a non-profit organization, DMS provides many opportunities throughout the year for families to take part in our fundraising efforts. Participation is not required however we encourage families to support DMS through the donation of their time and/or, if possible, monetary contributions.

Although we are limited to what we can do this year, our committee is excited to get creative! If you are interested in helping with organizing an effort or have an idea for a fundraiser please do not hesitate to reach out to Gabriela Vega Bauerly at [gvbauerly@gmail.com](mailto:gvbauerly@gmail.com).

More information about future fundraisers and how you can support DMS will be included in upcoming newsletters and social media posts.

## SEPTEMBER 2020 CALENDAR

07 - NO SCHOOL - Labor Day

14 - Parent Board Meeting @ DMS 6:15 pm

## SCHOLASTIC BOOK ORDER



Please watch your child's mailbag as the first book order will be sent home this week! It's a great opportunity for you to pick out some great books for your children and helps DMS have the opportunity to pick out new books for school use. Orders can be placed online or sent to school with a check made out to DMS!

## THANK YOU'S

Thank You to the DMS Board and Parent Club members for donating break room snacks, beverages and meals for our staff during class room set up week. It was so nice to have grab and go food and drinks and we still have a large supply left!

Thank you to our families that helped prepare our playground for the children by working hard weeding, raking, pruning and planting! You all have made such a difference!

Thank you to the DMS Task Force, Board Members, and staff, Child Care Resource and Referral and our Child Care Nurse Consultant, Kim Gonzales for all their help and guidance with reopening! We couldn't have done it without you!

## LEAVE US A REVIEW

We would love to hear your experience at Dubuque Montessori! Leave us a review on Google or Facebook!



# WELCOME FROM THE BOARD

Hello fellow DMS parents,

Welcome to DMS! My name is Becky Jenkins, Co-President of the 2020-2021 DMS Parent Board. Due to the many changes COVID has presented, the Board felt it would be beneficial to prepare a summary of our Parent Board meetings to all our DMS families to ensure that parents stay informed without having to attend the meetings. These summaries will be available in our monthly newsletters. Most of our Parent Board Meetings last less than 30 minutes, parents are always welcomed and encouraged to attend. We are also now offering our meetings via Zoom. If you would like to participate in the Zoom meetings or have a suggestion for the Board, please e-mail Board Co-President Charleen Shea at [charleenlynette@gmail.com](mailto:charleenlynette@gmail.com) and the Board will add the topic to our agenda for the following month. We value input from parents to help make our school the best it can be!

At the July and the August Board meetings, the following was discussed:

- Board Committees will review their goals for the upcoming schools and brainstorm ways to increase parent involvement.
- The Marketing Committee is reviewing a product available free to non-profits to assist with marketing of DMS.
- Parent Orientation will be held virtually this year. DMS staff will create You Tube videos for parents to view to prepare for the school year. This will also benefit families that are starting later in the school year. An updated volunteer document (a Google form) will be available through the DMS website. Please see the different ways you can volunteer at DMS as we rely heavily on parent volunteers.
- COVID-19 Policies were sent to the families as soon as the policies were reviewed by DHS. DMS will require staff wear masks.
- Dial My Calls is the new messaging service DMS will utilize which will notify families via telephone call, text and E-mail.

For more information about the Board of Directors or if you are interested in joining the Board, please go to the school website [dubuquemontessori.org](http://dubuquemontessori.org) under the "[About Us](#)" section. The next Board meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 14th at 6:15 pm.

The Board and I would like to wish you and your families a wonderful school year!

-Becky