

ROCHESTER MONTESSORI SCHOOL

5099 7th St NW
Rochester, MN 55901

Phone: 507-288-8725

Http://www.rmschool.org



Whole Child * Whole World

Whole Child * Whole World

About Us

Rochester Montessori School is a nondenominational, not for profit organization serving children from 18 months to 12 years old. Our diverse community is open to children of all cultures and backgrounds. We frequently serve children from the international community. We are alive with the spirit of acceptance and inclusion. We currently have approximately 160 students from 120 families and 28 staff members to serve them.

Photos courtesy of: Nathan Hauber

Newsletter Contributors/Authors:

- Nathan Hauber
- Janine Yanish
- Sherry Jester
- Patrick Sheedy III
- Julie French
- Sarah Field

From the Director

Over the last three years the staff at Rochester Montessori School has been involved in helping me develop an operational model that I believe has contributed to the great success that we have had since 2004. Together with the Board of Directors, a few handfuls of dedicated volunteers, and the generosity of many parent donations, we have come from the basement of a church running budget deficits, to operating in the black. This is pretty amazing considering that during that same time we built a multimillion dollar building and started work on what will be an amazing outdoor environment.

This first phase of this operational model started with the individual. Maria Montessori believed that in order for an adult to be properly prepared to work with children, one had to have both the skill and the spirit of teaching. That means that being able to work with the material and classroom supplies is necessary but not sufficient. An adult, she believed, must be

“spiritually” prepared as well. This, to Montessori, meant that the adult has to take an inward journey and seriously look and analyze ones own actions. Adult “defects” need to be addressed and changed so they do not affect the perception of the child. We’ve addressed through practiced self-reflection and focused on what it means to be a true teacher – a master teacher.

The second phase was working together to monitor and help each other stay true to agreed upon norms. We had a workshop aimed at setting non-negotiable practices. This was followed by some work on the principles of effective feedback and the dynamics of helping one another stay true to our mission. The staff is now pretty comfortable pointing out any deviations from what we have all agreed upon.

The final stage of this model had to do with inviting third party oversight organizations to come in and compare our practices to

state and national standards. This includes, among others, the State of Minnesota Department of Education and the American Montessori Society. We are reviewed each year by the state and last year we had our first Montessori consultation in over 20 years. This consultation was very encouraging and our status has been “upgraded” from Initiate Member to Associate Member. As such, we sit very well in the eyes of the State as well as in the eyes of the largest Montessori Organization in the world.

I just wanted everyone to know how much work the adults do here to prepare themselves to best serve your child(ren). I, as a father, am proud to have my daughter go to a school where the staff takes self preparation as seriously as they do their work with the children. First we work on the self and then we work with the child.

Montessori News



Check It Out!

- NEW! RMS Community Profiles
- NEW! Classifieds
- NEW! Montessori Philosophy
- NEW! From the Board
- NEW! RMS Gift Registry

2007-08 Board of Directors

- Jeff Piepo
- Ben Brinkman
- Bryan Neel
- Richard Wright
- Jackie Emery
- Sarah Field
- Todd Humphrey
- Janine Yanisch
- Zelalem Temesgen
- Nathan Hauber
- Michelle Blesken
- Sherry Jester

Submission deadline for December newsletter is: **NOVEMBER 19th**

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Naturally Beautiful

As you can see, the outdoor environment has drastically changed! Doesn't it look great?

Enough thanks can't be given to 2 people in particular. Without parent extraordinaire, Nathan Hauber, we would not have the spectacular play area we now have. Without the expertise of Kelly Rae Kirkpatrick (former RMS parent and professional landscaper – Green Spirit Designs), we wouldn't have the beautiful design or the number of new plants, trees, and shrubs we now can enjoy. Please take a moment to thank these 2 amazing volunteers. And then thank them again. And

again. And again. They deserve it!

Custom Retaining Walls has finished the access to the Elementary patio, and also constructed the 8 mounds of dirt (it was the remaining fill dirt) for the children to play around and on. These mounds have been hydro-seeded and fitted with erosion mats. Working with Farmer Dan (RMS's neighbor, who we hired) the log climbing feature has been completed, log walls have been built around the sand pile, holes for the Amazon climbing



trees have been drilled, some erosion has been repaired, and 6 log benches have been placed around the hillside.

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Fun Facts—Outdoor Environment

- 48 trees
- 118 shrubs
- 131 perennials
- 3,888 cubic feet of mulch
- About 12 volunteers to date
- Hundreds of hours of work
- Since Sept. 1st, one parent has volunteered over 160 HOURS (and he has 3 children!)
- a FORMER parent has volunteered about 80 hours, in addition to using her business discount to save the school about \$3,700
- Sept. 18th was IBM Days of Caring, and 12 IBMers came to work on that wet day. We are thankful!

PTSA News

Welcome back to another school year of fun at Rochester Montessori! We have scheduled a number of social and fundraising events to make our school even better! Last year our Springtime Revelry social night with a silent and live auction made over \$16,000. The new additions to the outdoor environment you have noticed over the past few weeks were funded by the proceeds from the Springtime Revelry and the Rummage Sale (which brought in \$3000 last year).

We have started the year with two social events, both of which were well attended. The first was a Welcome Picnic during ori-

entation week where new and old members of the RMS community were able to get acquainted and re-acquainted. Many families also enjoyed a beautiful day at the apple orchard for the Apple Harvest Gathering in mid-September. (I need to note that this event will need to take on a new form next year or be cancelled altogether due to a near tripling of the cost by the orchard for 2008 and beyond.)

We kicked off the PTSA calendar with an evening meeting for planning. Unfortunately, we used a grid calendar for our scheduling and failed to be reminded of the Jewish and Mus-

lim holidays that were observed that day. Our apologies to those of you who were unable to attend due to this conflict. We still had a very good turnout at this meeting and appreciate all the people who have volunteered for this year's planned events. There are many opportunities still open for you to volunteer! Just contact Sherry or Juli for information.

PTSA Meetings are held on the second Thursday of the month at **9 am** in the school library unless otherwise notified via school mailings. **The next meeting is Oct 11.**

Make a Difference!

Events still needing coordinators and/or other volunteers:

- Parent Coffees
- Staff Appreciation
- Rummage Sale
- Multi-Cultural Day
- Winter Gathering
- Scholastic Book Fair
- SCRIP
- Springtime Revelry
- Outdoor Environment projects

If there are no volunteers for these events they will not occur. If there are not enough volunteers they will certainly not be as wonderful as they could be. Please step-up and help out with these events. Your child is depending on you!

CONTACT:

Sherry Jester at:
hcloft@charter.net
Juli Gifford at:
jagiff@hotmail.com

"The true meaning of life is to plant trees, under whose shade you do not expect to sit."
-Nelson Henderson

From the Board

The Board meets at 7:00 on the 3rd Wed. of each month, and welcomes parents to attend meetings.

The Board has an executive committee as well as 3 committees which meet regularly – Buildings & Grounds, Marketing & Communications, and Fund-

raising – in addition to the monthly meeting. The Board's purpose is to guide the school and direct its policies in a fiscally responsible manner so that the school will continue long into the future.

In recent months we have passed (with flying colors!) our

yearly independent financial audit, heard a presentation from parents regarding nut allergies, reviewed our insurance needs, discussed future needs of the school, as well as heard reports from each committee and the Executive Director.

Naturally Beautiful

(Continued from page 1)

There was a family work (and play) morning on Sat., Sept. 22 which was well attended. The dome climbing structure was completed, as were the stepping stumps, much more mulch was spread, and the crosswalk was painted. Thank you!

Thank you again to everyone who has been able to help with this huge undertaking. It is rewarding to watch how joyful the children are when they try out the new parts of our unique and beautiful outdoor environment.



Understanding Montessori Philosophy

Independence: Not depending on another—"with various shades of meaning"(OED, p.836). Normal developmental milestones such as weaning, walking, talking, etc. can be seen as a series of events which enable the child to achieve increased individualization, autonomy and self-regulation. Throughout the house planes of development, the child and young adult continuously seeks

to become more independent. It is as if the child says, *Help me to help myself.*

Sensitive Periods: Young children experience transient periods of sensibility, and are intrinsically motivated or urged to activity by specific sensitivities. A child in a sensitive period is believed to exhibit spontaneous concentration when engaged in an activity that matches a par-

ticular sensitivity. For example, children in a sensitive period for order will be drawn to activities that involve ordering, repeating the activity over and over, without external reward or encouragement. Young children are naturally drawn towards those specific aspects of the environment which meet their developmental needs.

Classifieds

Michael Cleary Photography

A full service professional studio. Treating every event with artistry and professionalism; family, portrait, special event, weddings, corporate, and commercial. You will be immediately impressed by the beauty, clarity, and quality of your photographs. **507-536-3981 or www.YourMCPhoto.com**

Art: Original signed and framed paintings from contemporary masters from the Czech Republic. Abstract, landscape, still life and more. 10% discount for Montessori families. **Visit www.dartemgallery.com. E-mail mail@dartemgallery.com or call 507-285-4823** with questions or orders.

For Sale: KozyHeat Woodburning Mansory fire place insert with arched gold doors. 507 634 4880

For Sale: 21" snow chief electric snow-thrower \$10. 775-7288
Give away- Direcway internet satellite dish. 775-7288

Needed: Free, decent mulch for the RMS outdoor environment. 289-8282

Needed: Use of skid loader for Outdoor Environment. 289-8282

To place an ad, email: sarahafield@hotmail.com