

MONTESSORI PATHWAYS' NEWS

The First Week of School (August 25— 29, 2025)



Welcome to Montessori Pathways—
your child's home away from home!

Notes from Ms. Alena (Head of School)

We would like to welcome back all of our returning children and families and extend a warm welcome to all of our new children and families. August—September is always a time of excitement, yet with that comes anxiety and nervousness for many children. We will do our best to ensure the transition is as seamless as possible and to ensure that each child feels loved, respected and safe. A Montessori learning environment is like no other. Our main objective at Montessori Pathways is to provide a carefully prepared, clean, safe, and stimulating environment which will help children to develop within themselves the foundational habits, attitudes, skills and ideas essential for a lifetime of creative thinking and learning.

Respect and courtesy in our Montessori school is the foundation for everything we do and each child will soon learn the following important skills:

- ◆ how to put their work away where they found it
- ◆ how to tidy up after themselves
- ◆ the importance of helping a friend in need
- ◆ the importance of respecting the materials, the teachers and each other
- ◆ how to tuck in their chair when they leave the table
- ◆ how to walk in the classroom
- ◆ how to be self directed and find their own 'work' and most importantly,
- ◆ how to be independent!

Each child will feel empowered at Montessori Pathways School and learn how great it feels to do things on their own! Each Montessori teacher is here to nurture, support and guide them each and every day and are committed to making your child's Montessori preschool, kindergarten, and elementary experience productive, stimulating and fun! We are honored that you have chosen our school and we are confident that this will be a wonderful year for everyone involved!

Montessori Pathways Team 2025-2026

Our experienced, enthusiastic, and outstanding teachers who will be helping your children become strong and independent learners, as well as responsible, kind, and helpful individuals:

- ◆ **Ms. Alena** – Director of Montessori Pathways School
- ◆ **Ms. Bridget**– Elementary I-II Teacher in the North Room.
- ◆ **Ms. Carole**—Elementary Assistant Teacher in North Room
- ◆ **Ms. Masha**– Primary Lead Teacher in the East Room; Kindergarten and Pre-K Extended Day Teacher
- ◆ **Ms. Laxmi** – Primary Teacher in the East Room
- ◆ **Ms. Kathy** – Primary Lead Teacher in the South Room; Kindergarten and Pre-K Extended Day Teacher.
- ◆ **Ms. Ellen**– Primary Assistant Teacher in the South Room; Kindergarten and Pre-K Extended Day Assistant Teacher.
- ◆ **Ms. Tina**—Nap Group / After School Care Teacher
- ◆ **Ms. Emma**—After School Care Assistant Teacher/ Substitute Teacher
- ◆ **Ms. Lilly**—Music Teacher in Elementary Class
- ◆ **Ms. Suzy**— Art teacher in Elementary Class



Each month, we will be sending out a newsletter to let you know about everything that has happened at school, as well as to announce upcoming school events. We understand the parents' interest and curiosity about their child(ren)'s first few days at school, so we have prepared a newsletter for the first week.

For most of our students, the beginning of the new school year was smooth and organized. Some of the children are returning students and are a great help for their new friends. Some of our new students had also attended our summer camp, which helped them build a strong relationship with the school, as well as learn the rules and procedures of the classrooms.

Our newsletters will contain information from each individual classroom, but we suggest that you take the time to read all of it. Oftentimes the teachers include helpful information, interesting recipes, and other tips to be used at home, as well as a greater picture of what is happening around the school.

These newsletters also serve as a starting point for conversations about school with your child.

I would like to extend our appreciation to the teachers, who spent a lot of time, energy, and creativity in preparing such a wonderful and safe environment for our students.

Many thanks to all of our families who actively support our school and team and help us to provide a phenomenal learning environment and opportunity for our students. We, of course, would not be able to make it without your help and support!

We are looking forward to getting to know each child and working with each family to make this year an accomplish one! If at any time you have questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us at **815-459-6727** or via email montpathways@hotmail.com so that we can discuss things in detail. Have a Happy and Safe Labor Day!

A Poem for Parents: "Nothing"

(Author Unknown)

When children come home at the end of the day,
The question they're asked as they scurry to play is,
"What did you do at school today?"

And the answer they give
Makes you sigh with dismay.
"Nothing, I did nothing today!"

Perhaps nothing means
That I worked with *Pink Tower*, counted to ten,
Or studied about *The Parts of Flower*.
Maybe I painted or learned to tie my shoe;
Or discovered what happens when you mix red and blue.
Maybe I learned to tuck in my chair and put my work away,
Or maybe I learned to be kind to a friend while I was playing outside today,
Maybe my scissors followed a line and I mastered to write my name.
Maybe I learned some sounds or numbers or learned to play a new game,
Maybe I made a craft or sang a song from beginning to end,
Or maybe I learned to play with a special, brand new friend.

When you're in preschool
And your heart has wings,
"Nothing" can mean so many, many things.





COMING SCHOOL'S EVENTS



- ◆ **September 1 (M) - No School in observance of Labor Day.**
- ◆ **September 5 (F) - Back to School Picnic at Veteran Acres Park—5:30-6:30pm**
We welcome all of our families to meet each other as well as our wonderful team! Let's begin this school year together!
- ◆ **September 19 (F) at 11 a.m.**, children from Pathways School will sing "*Light a Candle for Peace*" in celebration of the **United Nation's Annual International Day of Peace.**

Beginning in New Zealand and finishing in the Hawaiian Islands, the song "Light a Candle for Peace" will be sung continuously for 24 hours by Montessori school children around the world.

Our school is excited about joining the many other Montessori schools to "Sing Peace around the World". It is a chance to connect our regular lessons of encouraging the children to treat each other with respect and dignity. To show compassion, patience, and kindness to others are values nurtured in the Montessori environment as the children work together each day for a peaceful classroom. In the words of Maria Montessori, "*The child is both the hope and promise for mankind.*"



- ◆ **September 24 (W) - Mums Sale School Fundraiser.**

Thanks to many of our families during previous years' fundraisers, we were able to replace some furniture, change the carpet around the school, update the floor, kitchen counters and cabinets in all rooms, and renovate our playground, support the teachers' Wish Lists to renew and update the Practicla Life Areas in their classrooms. This year, proceeds will go to cover the front door lobby renovation and cosmetic repairs of the hallway and classrooms.

If you would like to participate, **please return your order forms with payments no later than September 8th. You and your child will be able to choose the color and pick up your plants on 24th at dismissal time.**

- ◆ **September 25 (Th) - Fire Drill**
- ◆ **September 26 (F) - Elementary Parent / Teacher Conference Day (North Room)**
 - * No School for all Elementary students on Conference Day
 - * It will be Zoom conference
 - * The link to schedule your virtual conference will be sent to you on Monday, September 8th.
 - * The link for Zoom P/T meeting will be sent on Monday, September 22rd.

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NEWS FROM THE ELEMENTARY CLASS (NORTH ROOM)



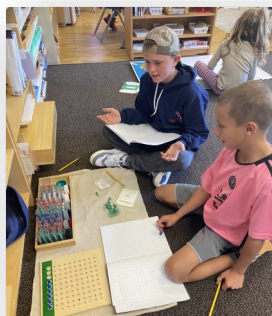
Ms. Bridget, Ms. Carole

"It is interesting to notice that where life is simple and natural and where the children participate in the adult's life, they are calm and happy." —Maria Montessori

Happy First week of the elementary school year. It has been a week of reconnecting with friends as well as reviewing/ learning practices and procedures in the class.



I love to see the older students taking younger students with them to do a work or to try a new activity. Already this community feels strong and full of curious learners.



This week, students received their first works on their work plans and logs. Lots of choices were made and work accomplished.



The students also hear the first 2 Great Lessons of Maria Montessori....The Coming of the Universe and The Coming of Life. These are BIG stories that get students pondering where they are in this big world and starts them thinking about how they can contribute and be good community members to society.



We had our first reading groups on Thursday and math and language lessons early in the week. All were engaged and ready to contribute to lessons.



We did paired writing on Wednesday and had fun in the afternoons playing Octopus Tag, learning rhythms in music, practicing sport fundamentals and art with our hand...how many idioms have hand in them? The kids knew a lot!



Friday is our first trip to Veterans Acres. As you can imagine, all are excited to be back in a happy place for us all.



NEWS FROM THE SOUTH ROOM

Ms. Kathy, Ms. Ellen



It has been a great start to the year. We welcome back both our "old" returning friends and quite a few brand-new friends. We begin our days outside weather permitting as it is easier and more relaxing to make friends on the playground. We played inclusive games, such as Duck, Duck Goose, obstacle courses, Legos and drawing in the gazebo. A bit of something for everyone. The children were free to play or choose whatever appealed to them.



To end each morning outside we need to divide ourselves by classrooms—South in the Gazebo and East room on the benches. We then separately played "Follow the leader" with each head teacher as the leader, Ms. Kathy for the South room and Ms. Masha for the East room. We toured the playground stopping at each piece of equipment to inform the children of the specific rules for each of the stops on our tour. During the process the children had fun learning to walk in a single file line (ok maybe a zigzag). There are a lot of playground rules for various safety reasons. The parade was concluded in the gazebo to play. "Find your teacher" a variation of hide and seek where the teachers hide somewhere on the playground and the children need to seek them out. It is a favorite for all and was repeatedly requested. Next day, all the children knew their groups, but we played repeatedly! On Tuesday the children were introduced to the sandbox. Wednesday, we played "Circle, circle, make a circle" before we count down from 10 to 0. We did it even from the far-reaching corners of the playground.



We then reviewed how to enter the building, exchange shoes, hang jackets, etc. At the beginning of the school year there are both early morning and post work cycle line times. The morning line time is very short and informative and full of basic presentations. We sing songs about community, friendships and name songs. I am sure you have heard a few of them. These songs strengthen the sense of community and help each child to feel a sense of belonging within the group.

Our formal lessons began with carrying a rug, rolling and un-rolling a rug, as well as how to walk around a rug and within the classroom. We use walking feet, inside voices and gentle hands. Safety is the most important rule in our room. The post work cycle line time is about movement and controlling our bodies.



Lessons on Grace and Courtesy are also given. We did quite a bit of role-playing as older children modeled how to ask for help, how to wait, and how to watch another child. Everyone enjoyed having at least one turn to model different lessons.

Individual and small group presentations are given to children; to give experiences of the different activities or works as we call them (they are the "work" of the child) in the room. The small group lessons presented are not just for the small group itself but also for others who watch from nearby and across the room, absorbing the information shown.



Work began and everyone was excited to choose work. During the work cycle individual children are given more specific lessons catered to the child's age group. These lessons will continue throughout the year both individually and in small groups and build upon one another, laying the foundations of each child's classroom experience. As the weeks progress the children become more confident each day. Repetition is key to each child's individual success. Taking the time to master each activity may last from a few days to a few months depending on the child. Each interaction with a material brings new aspects, defines the content and refines the child's experience. We expect the children to repeat activities until they master them and move on.

We look forward to seeing everyone at the annual Back to School picnic at Veterans Acres, Friday September 5th at 5:30. It is a great opportunity to meet the families and connect, play games and well, bring a picnic to enjoy. See you then.

NEWS FROM THE EAST ROOM



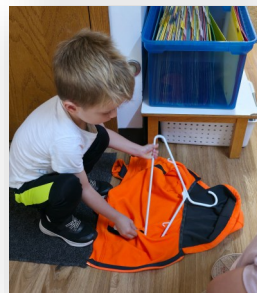
Ms. Masha, Ms. Laxmi

Welcome and welcome back, East Room! What a friendly and caring group we have! Since most of the East Room students were at Summer Camp for at least a few weeks, the transition to the school year has been so smooth! Children feel familiar with the environment, expectations, and each other. Our returning students have been wonderful role models and help us keep the pace of the routines moving smoothly, while our new friends have been keenly observing and adapting quickly to the environment. Every child has been beautifully extending a friendly smile and invitation to play together to each other, and we see so many friendships forming already!

Our mornings outside have allowed for a relaxed transition. There is much excitement to see friends back after the week or summer off and to welcome new friends. We have a variety of games and activities happening at any time to allow each child to find what draws them in, be it drawing, chalk, basketball, train tracks, the playground, or a game of Duck Duck Goose. Our Kindergarteners and early morning Elementary children are so caring and gentle with the newer students, inviting them in to help them feel welcomed and loved. We wrap up the mornings by resetting the playground, splitting into the two classes, and focusing on reviewing some playground rules.



Once inside, we go through the big work of exchanging our shoes and hanging up our jackets. This seems like a simple task for adults, but kids are having to take off their outside shoes, bring them to the hallway, remember which closet is theirs, locate their inside shoes, exchange the shoes, think of whether they need a hanger for a jacket or sweater, return to the class, put on their shoes and hang and zip or button their jacket. All as independently as possible! It is a lot to think through and navigate in a new environment and our returning students, being complete masters of the routine at this point, are so patient and helpful when guiding their newer friends through this process. The adults are there to assist if needed, but we barely get the chance to as another student is always excited to jump in and help first!



Then we start the day with morning meetings to help us transition back into the school year –songs to learn each other's names, a tour of the room, how to get snack, pouring water to drink, where to use the bathroom, and the small details that keep our room organized and safe like rolling and unrolling rugs, carrying a chair or a table, and waiting for a teacher.

In an environment with so many options and much freedom, it is that much more important to ensure the boundaries and expectations of the room are set and clear from the very first day – we have prepared an environment with freedom within limits. The first weeks are all about establishing these limits in our community and learning how to respectfully remind others of them. Our returning students have been gracefully guiding our newer friends through the many transitions and expectations of the day.

In true Montessori fashion, however, each morning we hear “can we go to work yet?” and a disappointed “aw we’re done working already?” when the bell rings. Although it has only been one short week, we have already had some incredibly big work! The food prep area is buzzing with baking,



apple cutting, carrot peeling, and so much aromatic coffee grinding. Table scrubbing, laundry folding, polishing, window washing, and sweeping to keep our room clean. Story building, preposition work, painting and parts of the body, types of apples, apple lifecycle, print making, sink and float experimentation, balancing solids, and handwashing, just to name a few, are in full swing from day one. Two friends even worked together to sand and paint a piece of bark to be the “East Room” sign! We are a busy and friendly room this year and we love to see it. I cannot emphasize enough how helpful the time in summer camp has been with this transition. Children returned to a familiar environment, are acquainted with the routine, and pick up right where they left off!

After our morning cycle wraps up, we straighten the room together and move to Line Time. This is our chance to move together, dance, and sing. We finish each morning by making silence, where we work together to find control over our bodies and mind to create a peaceful silence together. In the meantime, a group of students is also helping set up our lunch tables. Draping tablecloths, putting out cloth napkins, silverware, glasses, flowers, and candles for each table. We take great care in preparing a beautiful and inviting space for lunch. These children are simultaneously practicing their analytical skills, problem solving, and one-to-one correspondence, but we will touch on these concepts in later Newsletters. We eat lunch as a community, still using this time to practice grace and courtesy in asking for seconds or politely declining them, using a napkin at the table, and being open to trying new foods. Children then clean up after lunch, including washing their silverware and dishes, shaking out the tablecloths, sweeping the floor, and ensuring the chairs are pushed in ever so gently without making a sound.

The school year has started with a buzz of excitement and enthusiasm in the room, and we look forward to working with you to maintain that excitement in our students throughout the year! Even as the “honeymoon phase” of back to school wears down and we enter the gloomier and rainier seasons, if we remain positive and upbeat, so too will our children. We are looking forward to working together for an amazing year up ahead!

NEWS FROM THE KINDERGARTEN AND PRE-K EXTENDED DAY

Ms. Masha, Ms. Kathy



In the afternoons, the Pre-K and Kindergarteners from both rooms come together to the South Room for a second work cycle. After a group story read aloud, we transition to a variety of activities. There is vast variety of concepts we delve into during this additional time. Sometimes we will be working on more advanced art techniques, other times it will be sewing, physical development, a group cooking or baking, a larger science experiment, deep dive into botany, zoology, or geography concepts, as well as more complex language and math presentations. This is also the time we can focus more on refining handwriting and practicing reading.

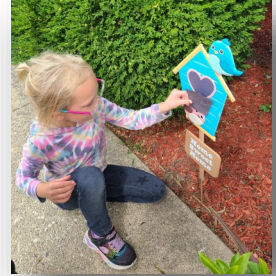


Despite the short time we had, we have already had a lot of exciting experiences with our group!

We started with making the start of school year self-portrait. At the end of the year, the children will make one again. It is one of our favorite ways to see the children's progress in self-awareness, self-expression, attention to detail, creativity, and writing! The portraits are staying safe in their Pre-K folders and Kindergarten binders.



Many of you have likely heard of the shape scavenger hunt around the outside of the school as well. The first day, we became familiar with a variety of shapes, their names, and how to identify when something in our environment reminds us of a shape. Each child chose a shape to then trace and poke, and label with their name. The next day, we took these shapes on a walk around the playground, the side yard, and the front of the school, and each child focused on finding things that are of their shape. It was so interesting to observe their light bulbs going off! After they saw one or two things, suddenly they were seeing their shape everywhere! Did you know that the edges of the parking concrete beams are trapezoids, and so are the back windshields of cars? And buildings aren't only a square with a triangle roof; they're giant pentagons!



The wagon of our wooden tray on the playground is a right-angled trapezium, and the handles of the swinging monkey bars are curvilinear triangles. Several students wanted to take their shape home and see what else they could find in their environment with that shape and we were so happy to see how many of you supported that curiosity with them – thank you!

On Friday, we had our first Friday hike! Thank you everyone for submitting the permission slips quickly so we were able to make this happen! We walked to Veteran Acres Park, where each pair of kids worked together on a search for Living and Non-living. Ask your child if they remember what the three characteristics are of something that is living (1. It uses energy 2. It grows 3. It reproduces or makes more of its kind). One child filled a bag for examples of Living and another filled the bag for Non-living. Then we gathered in the shade of a maple and oak tree to discuss what each pair chose and why they made those classifications.



This is where the beauty of Montessori discussion comes to life!

"I put this feather in Non-living because a feather doesn't eat, grow, or make more feathers."

"I put a feather in Living because it came from a bird, who is living."

Both are valid and accurate lines of reasoning! The same applies to sticks, leaves, and more! And the most beautiful part of all, was the grace and curiosity with which these young children listened to their friends share opinions that are sometimes completely different from their own, realizing that there is more than one way to think about a problem.

We are very excited to see all that this group will discover about the world and themselves this year!



MORE WONDERFUL MOMENTS AT MONTESSORI PATHWAYS



In August



Our care of the children should be governed not by the desire to 'make them learn things', but by the endeavor always to keep burning within them the light which is called intelligence.

- Maria Montessori

