



Montessori Pathways School News

September 2026

The Power of Letting Children Do Things Themselves

Have you ever watched a toddler trying to button their coat, even when it takes them several minutes-and every ounce of patience you have? It can be so tempting to jump in and do it for them. But what if those slow, clumsy movements are exactly what they need to grow?



Maria Montessori taught that children don't just want to play life-they want to live it. They want to do real things with real purpose: pour water, sweep the floor, carry their own bag. These aren't distractions or chores. They're opportunities.

Not Just Busy Hands-Busy Minds

Children thrive when they are allowed to act with meaning. Montessori called it "spontaneous activity." That's when a child, without being told, chooses to do something purposeful-like watering a plant or folding a napkin. To an adult, it may look small. But to a child, it's everything.

These moments help build coordination, concentration, confidence-and above all, joy. The joy of doing something "by myself."

An Environment That Says: "Yes, You Can"

Think about your home. Are things sized for little hands? Are children free to move, reach, and choose? When we offer tools that fit-a child-sized broom, a pitcher that's just right for pouring-we send a clear message: "You are capable."

Montessori believed that the prepared environment should support-not interrupt-a child's natural desire to learn and act.

What Happens When We Step Back

Imagine you're at a café, enjoying a quiet moment. Someone suddenly snatches your cup, pours your coffee, and tells you when to drink it. You'd probably feel frustrated-or even insulted.

That's how it can feel for a child when we constantly do things for them instead of letting them try.

Yes, spills happen. Buttons get missed. But over time, children learn. And even more importantly, they build a sense of self-worth.

A Quiet Revolution

Montessori often reminded us: freedom doesn't mean letting children run wild. It means allowing them the freedom to choose purposeful work within clear, respectful boundaries. It's a kind of freedom that supports both independence and community.

Letting a child do things for themselves might not feel revolutionary. But in a world that often hurries children along-expecting them to sit still, to follow, to adapt-it truly is.

So, the next time you see a little one struggling with a sock or carefully pouring water into a cup, pause before you help. Watch. Smile. And remember - this is growth in action.

Let's keep nurturing spontaneous activity-because every small action builds a stronger, more confident child.



When the power of love overcomes the
love of power the world will know peace.

~Jimi Hendrix

On September 21st the children from Montessori Pathways School joined together to celebrate 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" was sung continuously for 24 hours by Montessori school children around the world. Our school was excited about joining the many other Montessori schools to "Sing Peace around the World".

Back-to-School Picnic



We enjoyed meeting old and new friends and spending a wonderful time together at our annual Back-to-School Picnic. The children had an amazing opportunity to enjoy nature and play games together while the parents had a chance to meet each other and talk to the teachers



Hardy Mums Sale Fundraiser

On September 23, our elementary students spent a wonderful morning working together to unload a massive truck filled with 175 beautiful mum plants ordered by our school families. The kids were incredibly organized and demonstrated amazing teamwork, taking just 20 minutes to "create" a beautiful garden next to our school.



We would like to extend a huge thank you to everyone who contributed to our Fall Mums Sale Fundraiser, as well as those who reached out to the surrounding community to help raise funds for our school. Thanks to your generosity, we raised a total of **\$1,580.00!** These funds will go directly toward scheduling carpet cleaning, replacing the batteries in our emergency lights, and upgrading the restroom flush systems.

We also want to express our sincere appreciation to the **Zahnle Family** for generously donating free air duct cleaning services, which are scheduled for October 10. Thank you all for your continued support!

Community Corner: Sharing Parents Feedback

We would like to thank you for guiding our daughter in making solar system project. She did presentation in front of us today and it was just amazing. We were thrilled to see the way she presented it. She knew each and everything about whatever she wrote in it. And she did it so confidently. Her way of presentation was so good; she even offered us to ask questions and answered those questions with so much confidence. And whatever she didn't know, her way of responding was very impressive. We really appreciate your way of teaching her about solar system in such a practical way. She really wants to present it in front of class as well if it's possible.

Thank you so much for your all efforts.

*Best Regards,
Singh Family (parents of kindergarten student)*

Coming School Events in October



- **October 8 (Thursday) – at 5:30pm – Primary Montessori Curriculum Night for Parents: “Tech-Free learning in a Digital Era”.** Please RSVP by October 2.

- **October 12 (Monday) – No School** (Columbus Day)

- **October 14 (Wednesday) - 9:00-11:00am - Picture Day**



Please dress your child(ren) appropriately. If your child does not attend school that day, you can bring him/her between 9:00am -10:30am to take a picture. In this case your child will have a chance to be included in the class picture.

Picture background Request is due October 13.

- **October 15 (Thursday) - 6:00pm - Elementary Montessori Curriculum Night.**

Current **Kindergarten parents** are also invited to attend and learn about our elementary program to aid in making their decisions in the future.

Please RSVP by October 5

- **October 23 (Friday) - Primary Parent / Teacher Conference Day** (East and South Rooms)

- ✓ No School for all Primary students on Conference Day, October 23.
- ✓ The link to schedule your 15-min conference with your teachers will be sent to you on September 28.

- **October 30 (Friday) – in the Morning (Primary); Afternoon (Elementary) - Halloween Costume Party**

Volunteering opportunities are available to help organize our upcoming classroom Halloween parties!

Detailed information and sign-up details will be sent directly by classroom teachers soon. Keep an eye on your inbox and thank you for helping make this a fun celebration for our students!

Halloween Party Guidelines:

The children are invited to come to school dressed in a Halloween costume. Each classroom will have a simple celebration, which will allow time for each child to show off their costume and tell a little bit about who or what their costume represents. Afterward, each class will participate in special morning or afternoon holiday activities.



Our children need consistency and routine even more on exciting celebration days, so we will strive to make it special while maintaining a level of regularity for the children.

School Day and All-Day children will be changing out of their costume prior to lunch, so **please send a comfortable change of clothing and a labeled bag to place your child's costume into.** *Children who leave at 11:45 will wear their costume home.*

Costume Guidelines:

We highly encourage you to choose an age-appropriate costume with your child. As a Montessori school, we aim to operate within our philosophy of providing the children with real experiences that are beautiful and natural and encourage you to choose a costume that is based upon a person, thing or animal. Some costume ideas include animals, community helpers, athletes and storybook characters. The most important feature of your child's costume should be comfort; please make sure they can still independently use the bathroom and can sit and move with ease.

Please note the following guidelines for costumes:

- No scary costumes
- No masks or headwear that covers the face
- No weapons or “fighting” props (swords, light sabers etc.)
- Please do not send any costume accessories that may be lost or damaged.

News from the Elementary Class (North Room)

Ms. Bridget, Ms. Carole

"Our experience with children in elementary schools has shown us that the age between six and twelve years is a period of life during which the elements of all sciences should be given. It is a period that, psychologically, is especially sensitive and might be called the 'sensitive period of culture' during which the abstract plane of the human mind is organized."

— Dr. Maria Montessori

A topic of conversation during many of my conferences with parents was about work plans. This is definitely a new concept for students arriving from the primary classes. So, I will give an explanation here:

On the first day of elementary program, students get their first work plan. It is usually only a few works to accomplish, and all are reviews of primary works that are also in our class. Children select from this list to begin working.



One outcome of a work plan is to show them where the work is in the room and how to let the teachers know that the work is finished. Another outcome of this list is for them to go to others to find what they need so they become acclimated to where things are in the class. Finally, it also builds confidence that maybe this elementary work is not too difficult.

After finishing their plan, which has no deadline since it is their work, the student receives work plan 2. This plan will have follow-up work on it from lessons I have given. When I give a math lesson to first grade, I add the work they are to do on my log. Then it goes on future work plans. They can do the work before it arrives on their work plans or wait.

Work Plans are visuals to help them do work and a record of what they have done. Kids love visuals like this. They love to get more and more work plans finished. They feel successful and competent.

As they get more work plans, they become more individualized as reading and math are areas where some are more eager or competent learners. Thus, work plan 5 might look the same for all of the cultural and science work so that they can work with more people and collaborate. Math and reading will look different on every work plan.



As they get older, work plans change still. Some have just one blank for reading as the book that they are to read becomes longer. There may be more works. They also are individualized to meet needs.

When a work plan is finished, the student can choose a work to do. Some read. Some draw. Some paint. Many do some crafting or coloring pages. Soon they will have crocheting as a choice.



It is enjoyable to see the excitement on their faces when a work plan is completed. It is also a joy to see their expressions when they see their new work plan. Overall, it is a good experience for helping kids become autonomous.

At Curriculum Night on October 15, you will be able to see the various work plans as well as the ones that your child has finished. At the end of the year, I give them all of their plans to take home so that they can see all of the big work they have completed in one school year.

News from the East Room

Ms. Masha, Ms. Laxmi

September is the month of welcoming new friends, rediscovering routines, and discovering the first “I can do it!” moments of the year. Our newest children are excited to say, “*I put my shoes on all by myself!*” and “*Look I can do my jacket by myself!*” while our returning friends are proudly offering “*I know how to tie – I can help with your apron*” or “*I know how to get snack, let me show you!*” Each is excited about their newly emerging independence and capabilities.

We also welcomed a new member into our community – a female Betta fish. The children offered name suggestions and voted for their favorite. Our pet’s name is officially Rainbow! And despite what many might think about young children and small animals, they are incredibly caring and gentle with her. The children know how to look without touching the tank, to speak gently and quietly not to startle her, and, perhaps most important, to remember to feed her! Children have been coming up to Rainbow’s tank to show her their artwork and even leave artwork for her to enjoy. Taking care of Rainbow is part of the larger Practical Life curriculum in our classroom, which includes lessons in taking care of the environment (dusting, sweeping, polishing, scrubbing, washing, watering plants, gardening etc), taking care of oneself (buttoning, zipping, using tools like spoons/tweezers/screwdrivers, cooking, sewing, etc), and taking care of others (grace and courtesy). These Practical Life lessons strengthen the children’s hands, foster their independence, sharpen their focus, and provide them with important *practical* life skills.

*If a child can learn to care for his environment, he can learn to care for another person. And if he can learn to care for another person, he can learn empathy. **Through empathy, we can know peace.***

We will be covering more on Practical Life and the entire Montessori curriculum for ages 3-6 in our Curriculum Night, “Tech-Free Learning in a Digital Era” on October 8th at 5:30 PM.

We highly encourage everyone to be there!

We see the beautiful **progression of skills** from first year to third year students already emerging.

The first-year children are learning to match (colors, shapes, cards...) and pin-poke to perforate paper.

The second-year students are applying those skills to independently make maps of the world or different continents.

And the third-year students are taking it a step further, now researching each continent and writing down what they learned. And each is able to look at the other for encouragement and inspiration. The same environment provides ample opportunity for continued growth and exploration.



Why do children pin-poke to perforate paper? This is a common project that comes home with children throughout their time in the primary Montessori classroom because it is endlessly important for their development. On the surface, it is a lovely art project with lessons in negative and positive space, using glue, and color theory, with room for creative expression. Physically, as children hold the push-pin or stylus, they are strengthening the exact muscles needed for proper pencil grip and the coordination needed to stay on the line, as they will later need for writing on the line. Even emerging writers need continued strengthening of these muscles to help form tighter, smaller, and neater letters.



But *even more importantly*, this activity develops incredible concentration, focus, and ability to stay with a task. The children want to see their chosen shape neatly come out of the border, so they are intrinsically motivated to keep going even though the progress is slow. Their focus needs to be strong, lest they veer off track and accidentally poke inside their beloved shape. This concentration and stamina is exactly what children need more and more practice in, especially in the modern day. Without them, they cannot make use of the letters and numbers they’ve memorized. Putting together words in a sentence, reading through a first page of a book, and calculating sums of numbers can only happen when a child has the stamina and concentration to work through longer tasks such as this! We are excited to see where the curiosity and creativity of this year’s group will take us this year!

News from the South Room

Ms. Kathy, Ms. Ellen

September was a productive and engaging month. The children explored friendship, community, and peace; practiced independence and self-care routines; developed grace and courtesy skills; observed seasonal changes; and became more familiar with classroom materials. We are pleased with the magnitude of learning accomplished in such a short time. We have a very peaceful and happy group.

Self-care skills are an important part of each child's development. *Please encourage your child to practice dressing and undressing independently each day, including pulling up pants and putting on shoes, socks, and a jacket or coat.* At school, children hang their coats on hangers and are encouraged to zip them independently. Please check your child's coat and test the zipper, a few children have coats that are even difficult for the teachers to zip.

During the first days of school, some children found it challenging to put on their indoor shoes, which caused understandable frustration. To support success, begin with one item at a time and gradually work toward fully independent dressing. Allow sufficient time so your child does not feel rushed, and do not be concerned if a shirt or pair of pants is worn backward; teachers value the child's growing independence. We also teach an effective method for putting on a coat: place the coat on the floor with the sleeves extended, position the tag or hood near the child's toes, slide the arms into the sleeves, and lift the coat over the head. Mastering these routines strengthens confidence and allows children to devote more time to other classroom activities.

Grace and Courtesy lessons are fundamental to maintaining a respectful and harmonious classroom. The children are learning how to ask for assistance, wait appropriately, and observe others at work; these lessons will continue throughout the year. Children practice approaching a teacher and waiting quietly while the teacher presents a lesson or assists another child. They are also learning to



observe without interrupting, with their hands at their sides. We reinforce these routines through regular role-play. Observing a presentation while waiting often enables a child to select the same

material later, repeat the lesson, and work toward independent mastery. Families can reinforce this skill at

home by encouraging children to wait patiently and quietly while an adult completes a task. We also practiced properly greeting others and making introductions. These lessons build confidence and provide children with clear expectations for social interactions. It was encouraging to observe the children introducing themselves to one another during the first weeks of school.

The new children received many presentations in the classroom's Practical Life and Sensorial areas. In Montessori education, **Practical Life activities** are purposeful exercises that develop motor control, coordination, independence, concentration, and responsibility. Activities such as food preparation, washing dishes and tables, spooning, pouring, and sewing also build the foundations for reading, writing, and math. For example, scrubbing a table in circular motions prepares children's muscles for writing, while cleaning from top to bottom and left to right supports early reading skills.



The **Sensorial area** uses self-correcting materials to refine the five senses and help children classify qualities such as thick and thin, long and short, big and small, and loud and soft. Working at their own pace, children also develop concentration, coordination, and independence.

Our older returning students resumed their work where they left off. They are creating stories with the printed alphabet and exploring cultural studies through mapmaking, from the universe and our galaxy to the planets, Earth, North America, the United States, and other continents. One child has moved beyond the Solar System puzzle to study each planet and write a favorite fact about it. Another made a map of North America and recorded favorite facts as well. As a group, the students are refining skills across all areas, building on prior knowledge, and advancing their learning.

As autumn began, we discussed seasonal changes, the Autumnal equinox, singing a simple song: "This is the day of the equinox, the equinox, the equinox. This is the day of the equinox. When day and night are equal." We also read several books related to the autumn season.

We are off to a great start!