



Winter 2019 Newsletter

Guided by the principles and spirit of Dr. Maria Montessori, the Orcas Montessori School offers a creative learning community for preschool and kindergarten children and nurtures each child's unique gifts, love of learning, independence, and compassion for others.

It is surprising to notice that even from the earliest age, man finds the greatest satisfaction in feeling independent. The exalting feeling of being sufficient to oneself comes as a revelation. -Maria Montessori



From the Teacher

Welcome to the New Year!

The class is busy with explorations of amphibians and the rainforest, weather and a variety of seasonal projects.

For the older children, it has been a big leap into the more advanced math and literacy shelves. For our younger students, they are beginning to put their hands on the more complex practical life and sensorial materials.

We are getting ready for parent/teacher conferences, so please look for the sign-in sheet! Lastly, while it has not been too wintry, we still love seeing those hats and coats! As always, we follow the public school regarding closures and delays. Looking forward to a great Spring! Cheers!

Tom Rubottom

School Calendar

January 21: No School/MLK Jr. Day

Feb. 2: Work Party

February 8: Midwinter Tea

February 18-22: Midwinter Break

May 11: Spring Carnivale Fundraiser

Wreath Sale Success and Thanks

A huge thank you goes to all who helped with our annual wreath sale! We sold all of the wreaths we had ordered, over 350 in number! New parent, Nicole Matisse, took the lead on much of the volunteer responsibilities including the sales, organization of inventory and delivery and spent many hours making sure it ran smoothly! Huge thanks go to the time and energy of Sara, Laine, Desiree, Maggie, Emily,



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Erin, Alison and Chris who all together created the team needed to make the fundraiser a success! Arthur was integral in managing and maintaining the financial flow of the sales and assisting in any way possible. We made \$1,000 more from the sale than last year – a big step toward our \$50,000 fundraising goal for the year to keep our doors open.



An additional shout out of thanks goes to Miss Maddie who beautifully decorated the OMS Holiday Tree at Rosario and under her guidance, helped the children joyfully create sweet decorations in accordance with the theme.

Parent /Teacher conferences

Please look for the sign up calendar that will be posted on the clipboard throughout the month of January. We expect all parents to sign up for a conference to discuss your child's progress. The conferences will be scheduled after school and Friday afternoons *without your child*.

Conferences last about 20 minutes. Please bring your questions.

Mid-Winter Tea

Our Mid- Winter Tea is scheduled **for Friday, February 8 at 10:30** at the **Oddfellows Hall**. The children will perform a few songs and poems, then we all have tea and goodies! All families are invited! In past years, we all squeezed into the classroom with all the shelves pushed back against the walls, but our room just isn't big enough to accommodate everyone comfortably. We have held the event at the Oddfellows the last two years and followed up with our family dance! A fun time for All!

We will post a sign-up sheet for our potluck snacks. You will bring your children to school at the normal time in the morning and drop off the food either at the school or Oddfellows in the morning so that we have time to set up. We are looking for one or two parents to help set up at Oddfellows before the event. The Kaleidoscope van will transport us from the school.

School Closure/Delay Policy

With the onset of cold weather, we would like you to know our procedure regarding notification of snow days and late starts. We follow the public school's lead, who determines closure as well as late starts after a report on the safety of travel on the roads from the school bus drivers.



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Instead of waking you up with phone calls after you may have gone back to sleep after seeing the snow, we ask that you check our Facebook Page, check your email or call the school and listen to the recorded message on the school answering machine for notification of either closure or late start. We will make the announcement on all these platforms.

If we do have a snow day, instead of tagging more days onto the school year or shortening a vacation, we will have a sign-up calendar posted where you can sign up to bring your child on a morning they do not normally come – or for an afternoon spot.

If we have a late start and you decide not to bring your child, *please* call us and let us know so that we know how many children to expect for the morning and lunch time.

Upcoming Spring Carnivale

Get ready for the Montessori School's upcoming Carnivale on Saturday May 11 at the Oddfellows Hall! We will need everyone's help to put on this big party and major fundraiser!! You will be contacted to see how you can help.

There will be Carnivale booths and games, food and music and silent and live auction. We have a lot of money to raise this year for our auction both to keep the school open and towards our expansion project – so the more people we can have join us for this celebration, the better. We will begin in earnest now that we are back from break.

Upcoming Work Party Feb 2

Our school participates in the Early Achievers Program, which is a state program that assesses the quality of preschools according to state defined criteria. We get rated every three years. **We are preparing for our unannounced rating visit which will take place sometime between March 16 and May 15 this year.** In preparation, there are some repairs and improvements that need to be made outside and would love your help to get these completed!

We are scheduling a work party on Saturday Feb 2 from 9-12. Please let us know if you can come. Children are welcome! We will provide snacks. If you are not able to come that day, but would like to help, please talk to Megan or Teresa. We will be posting a list of projects as we get closer to the date.

Although this assessment does not align entirely with the Montessori curriculum, as an ECEAP school we are required to participate. This assessment looks at the cleanliness and safety of our physical environment, our paperwork and record keeping, our curriculum and classroom materials, and our staff qualifications and teacher/ child interactions.

With your registration paperwork, you signed a consent form that your child's paperwork might be randomly selected to make sure the files are complete. Some of you agreed to answer questions about your family's experience with the school if they contact you.



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Expansion Update

Our long awaited expansion project plans are almost ready to submit for permitting! We are so excited about the program improvements that our project will make possible. We have included the proposed plans in this newsletter for you to see. Some of the benefits are:

- We will be able to have more children 26 and not turn away families who apply in the spring and summer.
- We have a beautiful, spacious classroom on the south side of the building so that we can have more activities available for the children to choose from.
- We will have an eating area which will transform into a rest area for younger children who need to rest or nap after lunch.
- Our enlarged and redesigned bathroom with two stalls will accommodate more than one child at a time.
- We will have a staff/ materials prep/meeting room and staff bathroom
- We will have a separate entrance into the office so that visitors will not interrupt the classroom to come to the office.

We will be going out to bid soon and are looking for any contractors who might be interested in bidding on the project. If you know any contractors with a large enough crew to take this on and get it completed by fall, please encourage them to contact us.

We still have funds to raise to raise for this project! You can help by encouraging friends, grandparents and other family members to visit

our website and click on the donate button or go directly to

<https://orcasmontessori.networkforgood.com/>



Summer School

We are investigating how we can have a summer program this year, with our building construction going on! We plan to make that decision within the next month so that you can be free to make other plans if need be.



Notes from the OMS Kitchen

We all know SUGAR is not the good guy, except in taste! Here at school we are intentional in the meals cooked and presented to use natural ingredients with little to no added sugar. Exceptions to this rule are holiday treats and with the occasional agave/real maple syrup/coconut sugar add for some Maddie Snacks once weekly. The following article may give you some food-for-thought!



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Long-Term Trouble

Even if the effects of sugar overload don't seem obvious now, they can hurt your child's health later. "Eating too much of it can make kids gain weight, which then puts them at greater risk for diabetes, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol -- three major contributors to heart disease," says Dr. Shu. Today, one in three American children are too heavy; a recent study in the *International Journal of Pediatric Obesity* suggests that nearly half will be overweight by 2010.

As a result, these "adult" conditions strike earlier than ever. For example, less than 5 percent of kids diagnosed with diabetes in 1994 had type 2 (formerly called "adult-onset" diabetes). Today, it's 30 to 50 percent. "When these problems develop in elementary school instead of middle age, the advanced stage of heart disease tends to occur earlier too," says Francine Kaufman, director of the Comprehensive Childhood Diabetes Center at Children's Hospital Los Angeles.

Pull Your Kid's Sweet Tooth

Don't be fooled by food labels. On the nutrition-facts label, sugar is measured in grams -- which isn't at all easy to visualize. Keep in mind that four grams is about one teaspoon.

Pay attention to "natural" sweeteners like fruit purees and concentrates, which are commonly found in foods such as fruit rolls and flavored applesauce. "They're just processed sugar by another name," says Dr. Ludwig.

Think small. When you do dish out a dessert like ice cream, put it in teacups, not soup bowls.

Teach kids to be choosy. Let children have a treat, but only one each day, says Margo Wootan, PhD, director of nutrition policy for the Center for Science in the Public Interest. When Dr.

Avoid processed foods. The more control you have over what your child eats, the better. For example, one packet of maple- and brown-sugar? flavored oatmeal has 13 grams of sugar. You can add these ingredients to regular oatmeal yourself (which has no sugar), using half the sweetener.

Make compromises. Banning sugary cereal will just make your child want it more. Let him have it, but only if he mixes it with a whole-grain one with no added sugars.

Skip the soda. Ditch the liquid sugar by helping your kids make their own fizzy drinks. Get a bottle of seltzer, add some juice, and they can mix up any flavor they want. Six ounces of seltzer plus two ounces of orange juice contains about 6 grams of



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sugar, versus 35 grams in a can of orange soda.

Sweet Treat Makeovers

Instead of: Flavored yogurt **Try:** Plain yogurt with mix-ins. Add agave, honey (if your child is over 1 year old), fresh fruit, or raisins. Bonus: Honey may help the body absorb calcium.

Instead of: Canned fruit **Try:** Chopping up the fresh stuff. A cup of fresh peaches has 13 grams of sugar; the same amount canned in light syrup has 33 grams.

Instead of: Maple syrup **Try:** Topping pancakes or waffles with preserves. The low-sugar variety has only six grams of sugar per tablespoon. (Syrup has 39 grams per 1/4 cup.)

Instead of: Barbecue sauce **Try:** A dry spice rub or your kids' favorite taco seasonings the next time you prep meat for the grill. BBQ sauce can have up to 8 grams of sweetener per tablespoon!

Doe Bay Café Donation to OMS!!



Come out and support Orcas Montessori School!

On island visitors and residents to share music, spoken word, and other performances on the night when we come together in that ancient ritual of community and communion. The Doe Bay Café is open from 5-10 p.m. and Open Mic begins at 7:30 p.m.

Each Thursday in FEBRUARY Doe Bay Open Mic Night gives \$1. per entree sold that night, to **Orcas Montessori School!** Great food, music and a fantastic cause!

AMAZON SHOPPING TIPS

Can't find it locally? Save yourself the expense of an off-island trip and help support Orcas Montessori School simply by doing your shopping through Amazon.

Go to our website:

orcasmontessori.org and click on the amazon box. You'll find a wide selection of merchandise and 6% of the proceeds will go to Orcas Montessori if you purchase items within 24 hours of adding the merchandise to your cart. But you must use the link! Be sure to add a shortcut to your desktop or your favorites bar and replace your shortcut to Amazon. **And make it a habit.** Help us get back to our \$2000 earnings!

NOTE: This is a different program than Amazon Smile, which donates 0.5% of purchases instead of the 6% we get through the link above.



Orcas Montessori School
Offering a creative learning community for preschool
and kindergarten children of Orcas.



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