



The River Current

September 2014

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear River Montessori Families,

It is truly humbling to be a part of this Montessori community. Every day I am privileged to watch your children stretch their imaginations, intellectual capabilities, and their mental endurance. I see them delving deeply into their reserves for patience for themselves and others, developing their “stick-to-it-iveness” so necessary for learning and life, and I am awed as they learn to balance the responsibilities of tending and advocating for one’s own growth as well as supporting others in doing the same.

While the new state standards are touting the benefits of meaningful, applied, critical thinking and collaborative learning, we humbly stand in the knowledge that this is the nature of the Montessori classroom. One of our Board Members, a traditionally-trained teacher herself, once pointed out to me that “Montessori teachers won’t wave the flag of success; it’s not our style”. It gave me pause, why is this the case? After some reflection, I believe that the very nature of being good with the children—acting more as supporter and facilitator— may hinder us from helping others know just how successful Montessori is in developing well-educated, fulfilled and thriving adults.

We are very proud to be an authentic model of Montessori education in the Montessori and education communities. We are proud that others are asking to



come see our school to see how Montessori can operate with integrity within a public school. Here are a few sound bites from

some who are not afraid to yell it from the mountain tops....

A Better Way to Educate—After more than a decade of efforts to improve schools by focusing exclusively on a narrow definition of student achievement, Montessori education is capturing the attention of a growing segment of parents, leaders, and educational reformers seeking a better way to educate our nation’s children.

~The National Center for Montessori in the Public Sector
(Continued on page 2)

UPCOMING EVENTS

September

- 1st **Labor Day** (School & River Crew closed)
- 2nd **RMF Meeting** 8:15 a.m.
- WASC** 6:00 p.m.
- Finance Committee** 6:30 p.m.
- 4th **Parent University** 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.
- 5th **RMF Playdate in the Park** 12:30 p.m. @ McNear Park
- 9th **Board of Director’s Meeting** 6 p.m.
- Community Forum** 7 – 8 p.m.
- 10th **Walking Field Trip** – San Lorenzo Bird Identification 8-10 a.m.
- 16th **Portraits** Levels 1-6
- 17th **Portraits** TK/K
- 18th **Tolay Lake Field Trip** – Kaweah & Tuolumne 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.
- 19th **International Day of Peace Celebration**
RMF Coffee & Tea 8:15 –9:00 a.m.
- 22nd **Lawrence Hall of Science** - Upper Elementary 8:30 a.m. - 2:30p.m.
- 25th & 26th **Parent/Guide Conferences** (School closed.
River Crew open.)
- 29th **Fall Break Begins** (September 29th – October 13th)
River Crew open Monday – Friday (camp rates apply)

October

- 1-10 **Fall Break** Continued
- 14th **Prospective Parent Meeting** 6 p.m.
- 16th **RMF Board Meeting** 8:30 a.m. in River Crew
- 17th **RMF Coffee & Tea** 8:15 –9:00 a.m. in River Crew
- 21st **Board of Directors Meeting** 6 p.m.
- 22nd **Rosicrucian Museum & Tech Museum of Innovation** – 6th level
8a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
- California Academy of Sciences** – 4th level 8a.m. – 2:30p.m.
- Cal Skate Night Fundraiser**
- 27th **Community Conversation** 6-7 p.m.
- 28th **WASC Meeting** 6:30 p.m.
- 31st **History’s Mysteries**

When it comes to producing creative business leaders, a Montessori education has proven to be a potent predictor of future success.

~ What do P. Diddy, Sergey Brin, and Peter Drucker have in common? Glenn Rifkin Leadership Winter 2013

Montessori Builds Innovators

~Andrew McAfee , Harvard Business Review, July 2011

Montessori education leads to children with better social and academic skills.

~Science, 2006

Maria Montessori Stands At The Head Of The Class

~Nancy Gondo, Investor's Business Daily

Montessori Is An Example Of The New Culture of Learning

~ Steve Denning, Forbes Magazine



The goal of the Montessori classroom whether it is a prepared environment for infants and toddlers, preschoolers, elementary, or secondary

students, is first and foremost the development of skills necessary for a productive and fulfilling life. The best of the academic curriculums are useless if the child does not develop inner discipline, integrity, and respect for others and oneself. In today's world of moral degeneracy, these goals may seem out of reach, but they are more important than ever before. The young person who faces the world of tomorrow armed with self-confidence and self-discipline is far more likely to achieve success and happiness. They will be prepared to meet any challenges that the 'real world' may present, and will hopefully bring to that world a bit of the peace and joy they experienced in the Montessori environment.

~Tomorrow's Child Magazine

And there it is, the culture becoming more familiar with the truth of education and the value of Montessori: Education cannot be effective unless it helps a child to open up himself to life.

~Maria Montessori

Peace, peace,

Kelly

PROSPECTIVE PARENT SERIES TO START!

Thank you for sharing with others the benefits of a Montessori Education and RMCS for your children! Many families are looking for a place for their children to love learning and to develop a structure which allows children to hone the discipline of pursuing inspirational and productive work, but parents may not realize how this is readily available through River Montessori Charter School.



We are proud to offer an education which allows for a social environment with productive collaboration, individual pursuit and pacing, and a framework of independence and achievement. As RMCS families, you know that the best way to understand Montessori is to see it in action... prospective families are welcome to come visit and learn about our school... thank you for inviting your friends and families to give us a call to find out more!

Prospective Parent Meeting Schedule

October 14, 2014	6:00 p.m.
November 12, 2014	6:00 p.m.
January 13, 2015	6:00 p.m.
February 3, 2015	6:00 p.m.
March 9, 2015	6:00 p.m.

Morning meetings can also be arranged for those considering current enrollment. We look forward to sharing the successes possible with RMCS!



“The instruction of the teacher consist then merely a hint, a touch—enough to give a start to the child. The rest develops of itself.”

~Dr. Montessori’s Own Handbook

ARRIVAL, DISMISSAL, & TRAFFIC

We’ve made it through our first weeks! Much like the classroom, it takes some time for everyone to get into the swing of things individually and as a cohesive community. Thank you for keeping all of our children safe with your patience as children and adults learn the procedures, for maintaining 5 mph on campus, refraining from cell-phone use while driving on campus, and preparing your children well for an efficient exit and entrance to their cars on the driver’s side/landing strip. Please watch for children at all times and leave enough



room that you can pull out of the car-line if your family is ready to go before the car in front of you.

ATTENDANCE

Parents, thanks for all of your support in building good habits for your child’s consistent attendance at school! It will make all the difference in your child’s experience. September is *Attendance Awareness Month* and we are so proud to know how hard our families work to ensure timely and daily attendance for their children!

We all know that consistency is integral for children but sometimes life gets in our way. Please know that we understand that on the odd occasion any one of us might find ourselves late or absent from school. Please also be aware of the following:

- As Montessori school, we champion independence, competence, confidence, and collaboration. Consistent on-time arrivals and attendance ensure your child can access his or her potential with ongoing Montessori lessons and experiences
- As a public school, we are required by the CDE to maintain specific records regarding attendance, timeliness, tracking, and communication with parents to eliminate any concerns
- As a charter, our public funding is solely based on attendance. We appreciate your efforts to support our school budget by advising of independent study well in advance to allow guides time to prepare packets and for the school to capture the funding.

VOLUNTEERING

Thank you for helping our school with your talents, time, and donations! You assist the school in managing all that needs to be done to keep our learning environment beautiful and inviting for the children to continue on their path of learning with inspiration!

Please check out the following needs... Thanks in advance for your contribution!

- Talent or hobby to share... Are you a violinist? A magician? A philatelist? The children would enjoy *your* joy!
- Occupation you love... Are you a bricklayer? A doctor? An artist? The children would *love* to see your expertise, tools of the trade, and passion and to witness the value of having purposeful and inspirational work!
- Car-Line Assistants- Morning Arrival or Afternoon Dismissal
- Supervise Upper Elementary lunch fundraisers

Please let us know... 778-6414 or admin@rivermontessoricharter.org

Thanks, thanks, thanks!



BOARD BANTER

Welcome to the 2014-2015 school year at River Montessori Charter School! I hope everyone had a great summer break and that you share our excitement for a new school year full of learning and collaboration.

As president of the school’s governing board, I wanted to take this opportunity to tell you a bit about what we do – and invite you to join us! The RMCS board of directors works behind the scenes to guide and support the school. We meet on a monthly basis to review the organization’s strategy, its policies and educational plans, and its budget; we also maintain several board committees that do deeper work between board meetings on issues like

fundraising, finance and community outreach. Among our accomplishments over the last year: developing a strategic plan, working with administration to secure our charter's renewal by the Old Adobe Union School District, and helping to launch the new TK/K classroom.

The school's bylaws have always specified that we include significant parent representation on the board because of the importance of their insight and perspective in our work. Today, three RMCS parents sit on the board: Carolyn Duffy, Milagros Ott, and Ginny Hautau. Ginny's three-year term on the board is ending this fall, creating a vacancy for a new parent to join the board beginning this fall.

Joining the board is a great way to give back to RMCS, and to help us grow in the years ahead. There will be elections in late September for one parent board member. If you are considering running for the position, you should:

1. Plan to attend the September 2014 board meeting (**Tuesday, September 9 at 6:00 pm at the school**)
2. Submit your name and brief biography (1 to 3 paragraphs) to our Secretary, Ginny Hautau, at ghautau@rivermontessoricharter.org by **Monday, September 22.**

Voting will take place **Wednesday, September 24 – Wednesday, October 15.** The parent-elect will be notified immediately following the election, and must attend the October 2014 board meeting (**Tuesday, October 21 at 6:30 pm**).

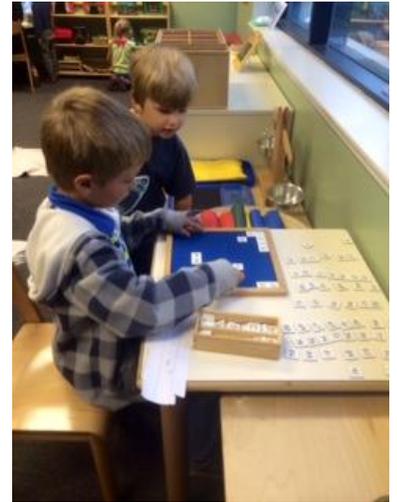
If you have any questions or know community members who would like to join the board or its committees, please give me a call at 707-478-7716 or email me at jparnow@rivermontessoricharter.org.

Honored to serve this community,
Julie Parnow
President of the RMCS Board



COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

Community Conversations are monthly discussions for parents, guardians, staff, and the occasional expert to take time to talk candidly, reflect, and support each other with child development, Montessori philosophy, and supporting a child in growth and learning. For this year's adult-only meetings, we are piloting the option of child-care. Of course, RSVP required so we can arrange staffing and activities. We'll have a topic of interest and also have time for questions about other subjects as they arise.



2014-15 Schedule and Topics

September 23, 2014 *Helping Children Deal With "Mean" Kids* 6 – 7 p.m.

October 27, 2014 *Too Much Love: Are We Raising Narcissists?* 6 – 7 p.m.

November 17, 2014 *Life After RMCS- Middle School Perspectives from RMCS Alumni Students & Parents* 6 – 7 p.m.

December 4, 2014 *Surprisingly Great and Inexpensive Gifts for Kids* 6 – 7 p.m.

January 27, 2015 *Five Inadvertent Mistakes that Even the Best Parents Make* 6 – 7 p.m.

February 12, 2015 *When is Misbehavior Bad Behavior?* 6 – 7 p.m.

March 31, 2015 *How Much is Enough? (Sleep, Nutrition, Down-time, Play, Media)* 6 – 7 p.m.

April 28, 2015 *Self Esteem is Over-rated* 6 – 7 p.m.

May 19, 2015 *Wholehearted Parenting* 6 – 7 p.m.



Don't Forget to like us on Facebook

PARENT UNIVERSITY

Join us for an invaluable parent series this year! We have tailored this list based on feedback from parents and look forward to working together and learning more about how to best serve our children in their growth!

September 4, 2014 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.
What Happens in a Montessori Classroom?
Why & How it Works

November 13, 2014 5:30 – 7:00 p.m.
Geography, History, Science, Oh My!
Montessori Cultural Curriculum

February 27-28, 2015 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. Friday
8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Saturday
*Special Two Day Workshop Experience!**
The Montessori Journey: Tour Transitional
kindergarten through Upper elementary
through the Eyes of a Student
(*Space is limited; registration required.)

April 9, 2015 5:30 – 7:00 p.m.
Cell phones, video games, and labels:
What Does a Child Really Need?



ROWING WITH RIVER CREW...

Come join us for two fun filled weeks over Fall Break. We'll have cooking projects, art activities, sports games, board games and much, much more! For more information, take a look at our webpage or contact

Hannah at: rivercrew@rivermontessoricharter.org.

Hope to see you there!

“And so we discovered that education is not something which the teacher does, but that it is a natural process which develops spontaneously in the human being. It is not acquired by listening to words, but in virtue of experiences in which the child acts on his environment. The teacher’s task is not to talk, but to prepare and arrange a series of motives for cultural activity in a special environment made for the child.”

~Dr. Maria Montessori, the Absorbent Mind

WISH LIST- THANK YOU!

Basketball Hoop

Mason Jars and Classico Pasta Sauce Jars

Kitchen cabinet for out of sight out of the way classroom storage

Patio umbrellas for shade while dining

Umbrella stands for patio umbrellas

Tree stumps for community meetings and creative play

Area rugs to beautify our classrooms and River Crew

Carpet samples/rectangles for games, etc.

MONTESSORI MATTERS

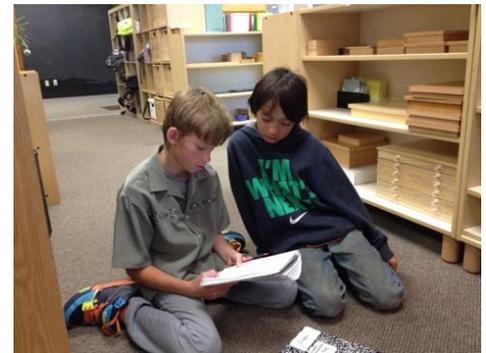
Characteristics of Authentic Learners

In addition to State of California published standards, RMCS focuses on developing several attributes (listed below) of

successful learners and character traits in our students. Nancy Rambusch (Founder of the American Montessori Society) and Dr. John Stoops identify these traits in *The Authentic American Montessori School*, American Montessori Society, 1992.

1) Cognitive Understanding and Thinking Skills

- Students demonstrate an awareness of order and sequence.
- Students demonstrate the development of observation, questioning, and critical thinking skills.



- Students evidence a variety of complex thinking processes to help resolve complex issues.
- Students are able to access, evaluate, and integrate information from a variety of resources.
- Students are able to reflect upon their learning and to transfer learning to new situations. In Montessori education the students are to think for themselves, not merely learn what other people have thought.
- Students demonstrate the ability to effectively use technology.



- 2) Confidence and Competence
- Students are capable of correcting their own work upon observation, reflection, discussion, or completion of additional lessons.
 - Students manage the available array of information with a clear sense of purpose.
 - Students demonstrate the development of concentration, patience, and persistence.

3) Independence

- Students are able to choose their own work, apply energy to that work, complete it to agreed-upon criterion, and return material used to the place it is customarily kept in such a way that another child will be able to find and use it.
- Students participate in designing their own Individual Learning Plans.
- Students are able to locate resources to continue the self-chosen task, or are able to solicit help if necessary.

4) Autonomy

- Students are able to accept or reject inclusion in another child's work or group with equanimity.



5) Intrinsic Motivation

- Students are drawn to continue working for the apparent pleasure of so doing.

- Students, once having achieved competence, are able to move on to revel in mastery by showing others.

6) Ability to Handle External Authority

- Students are able to accept the "ground rules" of the group and abide by them.
- Students, when distant from the teacher, are able to function as if the teacher were nearby.



7) Social Responsibility

- Independent and autonomous persons are also always a part of a group and must realize independence and autonomy through participation in group activity.
- Students are able to collaborate and work effectively with others in cooperative groups.
- Students are respectful of others.

8) Stewardship, Good Citizenship

- All children are part of both a world political reality and a world ecological system. Both systems have their constitutions and the citizen must learn to live within the spirit of the laws of man and nature.



- Students demonstrate citizenship by planning and implementing a project in service to the school and/or the greater community.

- Students demonstrate an understanding of the natural world, and their interconnectedness to it.

9) Positive Self-Image

- Students are able to express feelings in a healthy manner.
- Students demonstrate the ability to solve conflicts effectively and fairly using skills of active listening and negotiation.
- Students demonstrate knowledge of pertinent issues of personal health.

RIVER MONTESSORI FOUNDATION NEWS

The foundation thanks you!

Many thanks to Yuba for hosting the Foundation's August Morning Coffee! We had a great turnout and hope to see you all again and many more on Friday, September 19th from 8:15 to 9:00 a.m. in River Crew when Copper Creek hosts our monthly gathering. A special thank you to Yuba parent, Mark Edwards from Pub Republic for committing to donate coffee for all future Morning Coffee events this school year!

We appreciate everyone who came out for our first Dine & Donate at Mary's Pizza Shack on Wednesday, August 27th! Stay tuned for more of these opportunities to get together with other River parents while earning money for our school and its students.

BENEFITING RIVER MONTESSORI & ITS STUDENTS

THE ANNUAL RIVER SOCIAL

50/50
RAFFLE



LIMITED TO
JUST 50
PEOPLE



GREAT
BEER!

Join us for The Annual River Social in the VIP Room at Lagunitas Brewing Company in Petaluma!

Tickets include awesome Lagunitas brews & snacks! 100% of the proceeds go to support River Montessori & its students!

Buy your tickets today, visit: www.RIVERMONTESSORIFOUNDATION.org

RIVER MONTESSORI FOUNDATION
FOUNDED BY FAMILIES • FUNDED WITH LOVE

Join us this month

We hope to see an equally impressive number of parents at this month's River Montessori Foundation Board meeting as we saw at our August meeting! Join us on Tuesday, September 2nd at 8:15a.m. in River Crew. Come one, come all just to listen or to share your thoughts and ideas of how to strengthen and grow our parents' based group. For those who have daytime commitments, our October meeting will be held October 16th at 6:30 p.m.

We hope to see many of you at McNear Park (1008 G

Street, between 8th and 11th) for our first ever play date in the park on Friday, September 5th at 12:30 p.m.

We are excited to announce that The Annual River Social will be held Saturday, September 20th from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at Lagunitas' VIP Room. Tickets are \$25 and will be available via a link on our web site

<http://www.rivermontessorifoundation.org>. This event was a lot of fun last year — a great time to get together with fellow RMCS parents... get your tickets soon as the VIP room is limited to just 50 people.

It's not too late

Did you know you may sign your child up to receive Pizza Lunch at any time during the school year? Just drop your child's pizza order form in the foundation lock box by the front office. (Orders should be returned the Wed. before Pizza Day to ensure your child gets on the list.) Pizza order forms may be downloaded off the Foundation website. Please refer to the Pizza Fee Chart on the Foundation website to view pro-rated pricing:



Easy ways you can support River when you shop

Remember that by shopping through AmazonSmile, you can support River Montessori Charter School! If you're already an Amazon shopper, you can help the school by linking your account to support River. Click here to get started - <https://smile.amazon.com>



Other easy ways you can help support the school is through BoxTops4Education & Escript. Box Tops are now found on hundreds of food and office products. Each box top is worth 10 cents. Simply cut out the box tops from products such as cereals, snacks, paper products, and more. The Foundation table at the front office has a container to collect all box tops. Sign up for Escript and keep your current account open by logging in here: <http://www.escrip.com>

With much appreciation for all your participation,
The 2014-2015 River Montessori Foundation Board
Javier Alverde, CHAIR
Eden Belov & Nancy Feldstein, CO-VICE CHAIRS
Brian Cochran, TREASURER
Julie Compton, SECRETARY
Beth Laurence, ADVISING BOARD MEMBER
Matt Hautau, ADVISING BOARD MEMBER

INTERESTED IN CARPOOLING?

Contact Sara Peracca at speracca@hotmail.com

WITH GRATITUDE...

To all of the families who so graciously donated classroom supplies.



Josh Barnett for many hours as a dedicated classroom volunteer

Cat Campbell for her work laminating, cutting, and repeating again and again

Joe Campbell for assembling shelves and a new Montessori Bead (Math) Cabinet

Leslie Fredrick for donating tree stumps

Heather Hartley for supervising PE for all of the Upper Elementary Classrooms

Becky Kruetz for donating car line goodies and coordinating the Dine & Donates

Maria Rodriguez for making materials for San Lorenzo

Kathryn Schmidt for helping with Pasta lunches every Tuesday

Dana Wade for signing up to help with burritos 4 times this year!

WASC WORDS

Regular meetings allow our school community to listen and learn from each other as to how we can best provide an effective Montessori learning environment for our students. Please share your perspective by joining us for meetings, sitting on a committee, or taking responsibility for a one-time or on-going task. All collaboration is integral to process and appreciated greatly!

WASC Meeting Schedule (includes both general meetings and breakouts for committees)

September 2, 2014	5:00 p.m.
October 28, 2014	6:30 p.m.
November 18, 2014	5:00 p.m.
December 16, 2014	6:30 p.m.
January 20, 2015	6:30 p.m.
February 17, 2015	6:30 p.m.
March 1-4, 2015	WASC Visiting Committee (All Days)
March 10, 2015	5:00 p.m.

Montessori education offers our children opportunities to develop their potential as they step out into the world as engaged, competent, responsible, and respectful citizens with an understanding and appreciation that learning is for life.

Each child is valued as a unique individual. Montessori education recognizes that children learn in different ways, and accommodates all learning styles. Students are also free to learn at their own pace, each advancing through the curriculum as he is ready, guided by the teacher and an individualized learning plan.

Beginning at an early age, Montessori students develop order, coordination, concentration, and independence. Classroom design, materials, and daily routines support the individual's emerging "self-regulation" (ability to educate one's self, and to think about what one is learning), toddlers through adolescents.

Students are part of a close, caring community. The multi-age classroom—typically spanning 3 years—recreates a family structure. Older students enjoy stature as mentors and role models; younger children feel supported and gain confidence about the challenges ahead. Teachers model respect, loving kindness, and a belief in peaceful conflict resolution.

Montessori students enjoy freedom within limits. Working within parameters set by their teachers, students are active participants in deciding what their focus of learning will be. Montessorians understand that internal satisfaction drives the child's curiosity and interest and results in joyous learning that is sustainable over a lifetime.

Students are supported in becoming active seekers of knowledge. Teachers provide environments where students have the freedom and the tools to pursue answers to their own questions.

Self-correction and self-assessment are an integral part of the Montessori classroom approach. As they mature, students learn to look critically at their work, and become adept at recognizing, correcting, and learning from their errors.

Given the freedom and support to question, to probe deeply, and to make connections, Montessori students become confident, enthusiastic, self-directed learners. They are able to think critically, work collaboratively, and act boldly—a skill set for the 21st century.

American Montessori Society