



**Director's Note** Our school's identity as a preschool which challenges students to flourish is established. This year, we took on a new facet, a new developmental phase, as we opened our Elementary classroom (1st thru 3rd grade). With our growth, we have re-evaluated our communication vehicles including our website and newsletters. Based on parent feedback, we are pleased to introduce two changes which we feel will help you, our parents, be more aware of the happenings in the classroom while also informing prospective families of who we are becoming a new exciting educational option for students into Elementary school!

First, the newsletters will now be issued by classroom (Toddler, Primary, Elementary) and include a calendar (see reverse) which will detail snack, library, and topics of study. The newsletters will be delivered in the tote bags and be available online. I hope this will clarify for our toddler parents, which events their students attend and which are on the calendar for our older students. Second, the website is being redesigned. We will announce it formally in the coming days. A few features of the new site:

- ★ A redesigned calendar page; Parents with a Gmail account can subscribe to the calendar & import school events into their own schedules.
- ★ An Elementary blog featuring daily and weekly teacher updates and information on Montessori education
- ★ Primary blog to communicate class highlights, photos, reminders, and upcoming events
- ★ Both blogs are password protected. Passwords will be provided when site is launched.
- ★ Parents can subscribe to receive new blog posts via email or can check the blog at their convenience.
- ★ Easy access to the TMS online library catalog
- ★ Printable forms for activity registrations, ordering classroom shoes and lunch boxes, etc.
- ★ Optimization for smartphone/ipad access

We look forward to a wonderful spring with your students! We welcome your feedback on the aforementioned modifications ~ Ms. Amanda

**CLASSROOM NEWS :**

*We turn our focus to Spring, Reptiles, Music, & South America this March. A work in which the students will participate in will be determining the difference between mammals and reptiles as well as lakes and islands. We will discuss the more obvious differences between the two classifications. The students will also sort reptile and mammals figures in the classroom. This study will be enhanced thru some live visitors. In the primary/elementary classrooms over the coming months there will be ant farms, praying mantis, tadpoles, and maybe even some meal worms. The students love the chance to get up close and personal the these little creatures. The toddlers will have many opportunities to visit the live specimens. We will also look at weather so begin talking with your students about the temperature and forecasts. The students will have the opportunity to make a weather book.*

*Our Musical studies will highlight composers as well as the many instruments used to create the music. This year we have two new groups coming to the school; The Richmond Symphony's Woodwind Quartet and the Richmond Youth Harp Ensemble. We are excited to welcome both of these groups who will share a concert with the students. In addition to these groups, interested parents are welcome to come a play their instrument. Please email the office to schedule you time to share your gift!!*

*We will also begin preparing the garden for a spring planting. Cheairs and Sarah Porter have volunteered to come and help start our planting. Special Thanks to Kathy Bor for coming to make some homemade fruit and vegi juice with the classes. It is shaping up to be an exciting spring at TMS!*

*Food Prep: As toddlers grow they become more observant and helpful with the activities that parents do every day. These are what Maria Montessori calls Practical Life. One important aspect of practical life is food preparation. Food Prep is something that will begin in the classroom this month. We will begin with banana cutting. Food prep is different from snack in that it gives each student the opportunity to independently prepare their own food. The students have a designated table on which they will follow a sequence of steps to prepare the food. After, they will get to enjoy the fruits of their work!*

*How can you incorporate this at home? Make your kitchen safe and accessible to your toddler. Have a low drawer for their own utensils. Have a special place in the fridge for their food and drink that they can serve themselves. Allow toddlers to help you in the kitchen with a sturdy stool that gives them access to the kitchen counter. An apron can also be good to help with the mess. Remember, every time you start an activity in the kitchen teach your child good habits by always washing hands.*

**PARENT-TEACHER PARTY:** Interested in helping plan the Annual Parent-Teacher Appreciation Party? If so, please stay after drop off on **Tuesday, March 6th**. We have the location and time. We just need help with decorations, food, set up and clean up. The party is a fun event for parents and staff so get your babysitters scheduled! You should have received your evite via paperless post this week. If you didn't receive it, please call the office.

**CONGRATULATIONS:** The school extends congratulations to Ms. Karen (Ms. April's class assistant) for completing **her certification in Primary Montessori Education** through the Center for Guided Montessori Studies. Good Work!