Hello from the School Board

We hope everyone has finally adjusted and gotten back into the swing of things this school year. For those who are new to the school, welcome! We're so thrilled to have you join us! The School Board has already been hard at work to make sure this school year continues to be a positive experience for everyone. The playground has been a wonderful and exciting addition to the school already—but it took everyone coming together to accomplish it.

As a parent-owned school, we are excited to continue to have the community come together to achieve great things for the school. If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions, please don't hesitate to reach out to any member of the board:

Oliver Beers, President
Sarah May, Vice President
Libby Rarick, Treasurer
Laura Kroh, Secretary
Marge Wu
Donna Barket
Francisco Montalvo
Maria Marshall

Message from the Executive Director

By Cindy Garwood

Dear Parents,

WELCOME TO MSGL.

We are well into the acclimation period of the 2019/2020 school term here at MSGL, and campus is buzzing with activity. With each week that passes, the comfort level of the students rises and more happy discoveries are made by students and teachers alike!

Our student body this term is the largest we have ever served. We have over 190 students. Amazing! It is so exciting to see so many little faces every day.

Many of our families are new to MSGL and we want to again welcome you. We are very happy that you have chosen to share your children with us and chosen to join our community. We hope you take some time to come to some of our community events to get to know our staff and other families here. The all-things-Montessori parent development offerings and evening presentations we offer are a great way to meet other families and staff members. Also, by coming you get credit for the time you attend toward your required volunteer hours.

Our annual auction, coming up in November, is also a fun way to get to know other parents. It is our adult only event with dinner, drinks, and laughter. We would love to see you there!

If you are good at planning social events and creating community, consider joining the Montessori Parents Association (MPA). This group helps, via email, organize parent assistance for the teachers in the classrooms, organize and set up for social events, set up off-campus play-dates for various groups of children, organize staff appreciation events, and brainstorm other ideas for community building actions the school could take. To see what the MPA is up to take a look at and join the MPA Facebook Page.

All families have likely noticed several changes this year. Due to a substantial bump in enrollment, we have made many programming and staffing changes to serve all these new students and families.

We have increased the Parent/Infant offering to three days per week. Miss Lena is stepping back from teaching the class but remains in a supervisory and advisory position. Miss Darcy is teaching all three mornings.

We have expanded the Science Program to include three additional days that emphasize STEM topics on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday while continuing with the science experiments on Tuesday and Thursday. Miss Constance, Miss Dena, Miss Ginette, and Miss Rosie are covering these offerings.

continued onto page 2
Message from the Executive Director (cont.)

We have had so many Early Childhood students want to enroll this year that we added another three-day afternoon class on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday with the standard Montessori Early Childhood curriculum. Miss Melissa is the lead teacher in Globe Willow and Miss Chloe is her assistant. Miss Chloe has also joined the Toddler teaching team on Wednesdays through Fridays. Our All Day Program (ADP), the lunch (Lunch Bunch) and after-care program for three- to five-year-old children, is staffed with Miss Luzy as lead teacher and Ms. Natasha as her assistant. The After School Program (ASP), the aftercare program for Extended Day (Kindergarten) and Elementary children, is now staffed with Mr. Blake and Ms. Adrianna. Thank you to all the staff members who stepped up to help serve all our children and thank you to all the parents and children for being so patient with the staffing changes that were necessary.

Finally, a quick note about our grounds. As a result of the efforts of so many people, committee members who planned the changes, donors who funded the changes, and laborers who effectuated the changes, we have some lovely changes on our grounds to enhance them as our Outdoor Classroom.

I am sure you have been quite taken by the wonderful hill and slide area that went in over the summer. It turned out to be even more beautiful than we imagined. The new sandbox was fully constructed by parents/grandparents and funded by parent donations and it is fabulous! Over the next few weeks, you will see the installation of a rope “spider web” climbing activity on the large playground and an A-frame climber on the Toddler playground. We will also be taking out the old sandbox to make way for the installation of some balance-work equipment next spring. We will also be installing a suspension-bridge-type climbing activity on the large playground sometime next spring.

The planning committee has a few more ideas we could implement if our fundraising goal of $60,000 is met. We have currently raised over $47,000 so we are getting close. If you would like to contribute, please go to our Fundly page, which you can access on our Facebook page. I just want to thank everyone who has helped with the improvements we have made in our Outdoor Classroom. Every one of you was necessary and most helpful in turning our dreams for these improvement into reality! You are what make MSGL so special.

Welcome one and all! Please feel free to reach out and contact us in the office if you have any questions or are having any difficulties connecting at the school. We are happy to help in any way we can. We are glad you are here and I am looking forward to getting to know or getting to know you better. Here’s to another great year everyone!

Miss Cindy

**Cindy Garwood** is the executive director of MSGL.

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Tibetan Monks visit MSGL

The afternoon classes at MSGL—Hickory, White Oak, Catalpa Pods, Canoe Birch, and Globe Willow—were visited by a group of Tibetan Buddhist monks from Drepung Gomang Monastery. Eight monks from the high mountains of India came in their costumes to show us some of their traditions. They throat sang, danced, and played some traditional drums and horns. They ended their presentation by doing the “Snow Lion dance” to promote world peace.
Dear Parents,

There is so much for you to think about when raising young children. We honor you as your child’s first and best teachers, and our goal as your child’s Montessori teachers is to collaborate with you. In service of that collaboration, we’d like to share with you some suggestions that will enrich your child’s Montessori experience:

- When we ask you to arrive on time, it is to enhance your child’s start to the school day. When your child arrives at the same time as the other children, he observes the morning routine, and thus naturally joins in, doing what comes next—greeting teachers and each other, putting belongings away, and entering the classroom with peers. This is a joyful time for your child. Arriving late means he misses this start to the day and must join the class already in progress. While this may be no big deal to adults, for many children it can be disorienting.

- On the journey to and from school, we urge you to create the space for your child to engage with you, rather than with an electronic device. We also ask you to refrain from being on your own cell phone on the way to and from school. When you are using your phone in your child’s presence, you have left your child. You may be in the same space, but you are not present. The same is true if you are on the phone during the moment of separation at the school door. You have already left, and your child feels it. Please save your calls and texts until after your child has separated from you. To learn how to leave (and to return to) loved ones is an important skill. Transitions can be challenging for both you and your child, but, nevertheless, separation is a significant ritual that happens best in the moment, in real time, rather than slipping gradually away through use of electronic devices.

- One of the most important ways you can help your child gain confidence is by allowing him or her to take increasing self-responsibility. Allow her to walk into the school, rather than be carried by you. This says to her, “I see you as an independent person, rather than as an extension of me,” and fosters her ownership of her own body. Your child can also take responsibility for carrying her jacket, backpack, lunch box, and any other belongings. When you allow her to walk into school, carrying her own possessions, you foster her development of responsibility as a natural part of learning how to be independent.

- At school, we seek to limit the number of parent events so as not to overwhelm your schedule. At the same time, we urge you to attend our parent education events. We create them especially for you. Our goal is to enhance our partnership with you by spending time together with you as adults, without children present. We offer topics that we think will be useful to you as parents and will further your understanding of Montessori. It’s also a time for you to socialize with other parents who are doing exactly what you are doing—raising children in today's modern culture. There is much to learn from each other. Your questions and concerns are important, relevant, and useful for other parents as well.

And finally, please know that we want to see you, hear from you, and welcome you to be a part of our school. When your child sees you are happy to be here, he or she gets the message that this is a great place to spend the day!

Thank you for your partnership,
Your Child’s Montessori Teachers

P. DONOHUE SHORTRIDGE is a Montessori school consultant based in Littleton, CO. Visit her website at http://www.pdonohueshortridge.com
Parking Lot Safety:
SLOW DOWN

MSGL wishes to foster a safe and respectful environment for everyone. We have a lot of cars and kids coming through the parking lot every day. Our parking lot is small and can get tightly packed. Please follow the parking lot rules and drive safely through our parking space. Thank you for doing your part to keep MSGL a safe and efficient school!

- Stay to the right as you enter the main parking lot.
- Do not cross the double yellow line.
- Watch for and yield to pedestrians in the crosswalk.
- The speed limit in the parking lot is 5 miles per hour.
- Watch out for children, parents, or strollers coming from behind parked cars.
- Do not drive through designated parking spaces.
- The pattern in the main parking lot is counterclockwise.
- Park in designated parking spaces.
- If dropping off at the elementary house, stay as far out of the traffic pattern as possible.

Development Office News

- We still have a little way to go in our fundraising to meet our goal for Phase 2 of the OUTDOOR CLASSROOM. Check out our Fundly page for updates and please consider making a donation for this exciting campaign. Donations can be made online, in the office or we can bill your MSGL account! E-mail Hannah Scott (development@msgl.org) with any questions. Thank you to all who have contributed so far!
  Special thank you to Melissa and Oliver Beers for kickstarting the campaign and Biancofiori Masonry (Rick and Courtney Biancofiori) for taking care of the site prep.

  Melissa and Oliver Beers
  Lisa and Jason Hoverman
  Cargill
  Oriana Suh and Joel Dragoo
  Rickin and Meredith Shah
  Sabeena and Joseph Hubbard
  Bethany and Garrett Jackson
  Genevieve and Jeff Wang
  Cindy and Doug Garwood
  Hannah and Sean Scott
  Patty and Martin Jischke
  Rebecca and Ted Goodman
  Lena and Brett Atkinson
  Morgan and Andy Loetz
  Julie and Joseph Peretin
  Sara and Alan Cloutier
  Becky and Brien Dick
  Lucy and Nick Piotrowski
  Darcy Keegan
  Katie and Josh McDowell
  Micheal Shen
  Victoria Proano Reyes and Francisco Montalvo
  Ximena Bernal and Andres Vargas
  Stephanie and Brian Leavell
  Angie and Jason Henderson
  Fumie and Joe Roth
  Vivian Lu and Stanley Chan
  Maria Marshall and Petrus Langenhoven
  Shannon Carey/Beautu Counter
  Mallory and Rose Ellen Wang
  Donations can be made by cash, check, or billed to your account. You can also donate online at our Fundly page.

  Hannah Scott
  development@msgl.org

- Thank you to Steven Willis, Larry Huba, Andy Loetz and Sean Scott for their leadership on the amazing SANDBOX AND PERGOLA. Many other people helped make those projects possible by contributing time and resources including Matt Weber, Ronald Diallo and family, Aaron and Austin Morris, Rich Spencer, the Burdin family, Al Chong, and Cary Kerr.

- THE AUCTION is coming up on Saturday, November 16 at Carnahan Hall in Lafayette. Come join other members of the MSGL Community in supporting the school at our biggest fundraiser of the year! Dinner is being provided by D&R Market. Tickets can be purchased at our auction site. We hope you will join us!
Parent Education Classes

The Montessori Explained Series is a program filled with parent development events during the year that focus on Montessori practices and curriculum. This series gives parents the opportunity to participate in discussions, learn more about child development, and engage with their peers. All events in the Montessori Explained Series qualify as part of the service hour requirement (up to a maximum of 6 hours).

Alumni Panel
Monday, October 14, 2019, 6:00 p.m.
Hickory (Elementary House)

All parents are invited to come and listen to a panel of Elementary graduates as they respond to questions posed by the audience about “life after Montessori.” High school students, college students, and young professionals who graduated from the Elementary program at MSGL return to reflect on their experiences in Montessori. This evening was designed to answer questions about transitioning to more traditional academic environments following Montessori as well as the lasting effects of an MSGL education from those who know it best—our graduates.

Register now!

This event is open to the public and space is limited. Childcare is available to all current MSGL students and their siblings ages 2 to 10. The cost for childcare is $10 per child and includes age appropriate activities and pizza. Reservations must be made for childcare. Once you have signed your child up for childcare, you will be billed. Food and staffing are based on registration numbers. Childcare cancellations must be made at least 24 hours in advance of the event. Thank you for understanding.

Manners Matter
Wednesday, October 23, 2019, 4:00 p.m.
Spruce (Building A)

Want to learn more about how we practice manners in the classroom and how you too can bring up kind and courteous citizens of the world? Join Ms. Machelle and Ms. Chloe for afternoon tea in the Spruce room to discuss this timely topic. Bring your thoughts and questions on specific situations with your children.

Register Now!

Childcare not available.

Montessori Math
Thursday, November 7, 2019, 6:00 p.m.
Maple Room (Building A)

Montessori math materials are some of the most inviting and beautiful pieces you will find in your child's classroom. They are made to inspire curiosity in the child while helping to expand concentration and build confidence through repetition and independence. Join us as we explore Montessori math materials from Parent/Infant (12 months) through Upper Elementary (9–12 years old). Each family will receive a wonderful book by Michael Duffy called Math Works where he gives concise explanations of Montessori math materials. You will also have the opportunity to ask questions, get presentations on materials, and complete a work!

Register Now!

This event is open to the public and limited to the first 36 families. There is a $10 fee per family for the Math Works book. Childcare is available to all current MSGL students and their siblings ages 2 to 10. The cost for childcare is $10 per child and includes age appropriate activities and pizza. Reservations must be made for childcare. Once you have signed your child up for childcare, you will be billed. Food and staffing are based on registration numbers. Childcare cancellations must be made at least 24 hours in advance of the event. Thank you for understanding.
Children’s Corner

We know that many parents will page through this newsletter purely to find photographs of their own children. Here they are!
Learning to Read

Kindergarten Phonics and Letter Sounds

By Mary McKay

Dear Parents,

Reading and writing are very complex tasks that use many different parts of the brain simultaneously. When we think about how long humankind appears to have existed before there was any kind of written language—it is then quite remarkable to think that our children often gain the skills of reading and writing between the ages of three-and-one-half- and eight-years old.

There are many different pieces of knowledge that a child needs to have in order to learn to read. To begin to exercise and practice skills of reading English (to become an “emergent reader”), the child must at least:

- be able to recognize quickly and accurately most letters by vision, and to associate immediately the sound of the letter (not its name!) with that shape
- be able to hear accurately and distinguish the individual sounds that make up words in English. (This is greatly helped when the child can accurately repeat English words to him- or herself, which is why early hearing intervention or speech therapy is so important for children who need them. Making and hearing the accurate sounds speeds the child’s reading learning.)
- be able to combine letter sounds in a relatively fluid way to make (say or think) a word
- hear themselves saying or thinking the word, and associate a meaning with the word. (This is why exposure to a lot of vocabulary, such as we strive for all the time in Montessori classrooms, is a great boost to reading.)

At home, you can help by:

- always referring to letters by the sound they make, rather than the name of the letter

For example, when you and your child are looking at a letter t, please replace any talk of “That’s tee!” with “That says /t/!” (/t/ being the sound that is heard at the end of the word, “cat”).

There is a wonderful youtube video of an English person making most of the individual sounds that make up English: Jolly Phonics Letter Sounds video: 42 Sounds. I'm asking parents to view the video once or twice, and practice making the sounds. (It is not necessary for the children to watch the video—this is some of what we practice in the classroom.)

(My only quibble with this otherwise excellent video is that some of the consonants have been given too much extra sound at the end. For example, the sound of b such as is heard at the end of the word “cub,” /b/, should be said as shortly as possible: not “buh” but simply /b/ as you say at the end of “cub.” This is because, later, when combining sounds, the children need to hear and say individual sounds accurately to hear themselves making words. Think about how much easier it is to hear /b/ /a/ /t/ makes “bat”. It is much harder if we try to combine /buh/ /a/ /t/. “Buh-at”?)

At home, you can also help by:

- getting some toys that are lowercase letters for the children to play with. Unfortunately, these are more difficult to find than toys with uppercase letters, although the situation is improving. More than 94% of everything we read is in lowercase, and those are the letter shapes that it is most important for our children to recognize.

Next time I write to you about learning to read and write, we’ll spend some time on the subject of phonetic spelling.

Please enjoy the sounds video (it takes less than five minutes)! And I hope this window into the prerequisite skills necessary for reading has been helpful!

Excelsior!

Ms. Mary

MARY McKay is lead teacher for the MSGL Extended Day program
Late Arrival Policy

Beginning October 14th, 2019, the start time and late arrival times for each program are as follows:

- **Toddler**: 8:15 am start, late arrival after 8:45 am;
- **Morning Early Childhood Classes**: 8:30 am start, late arrival after 9:00 am;
- **Elementary**: 8:30 am start, late arrival after 8:45 am;
- **Afternoon Early Childhood classes**: 11:30 am lunch, 12:00 pm start, late arrival after 12:30 pm;
- **Extended Day Afternoon/Kindergarten**: 11:30 am start, late arrival after 12:00 pm.

If you arrive over 30 minutes late and your child’s class is outside when you arrive, you may deliver your child to one of his/her teachers on the playground as usual. If you arrive over 30 minutes late and your child’s class is in session inside the classroom, you must bring your child to the office before s/he may be admitted to the classroom. If your child is an Elementary student arriving more than 15 minutes past the start time for class, you must bring your child to the office before s/he may be admitted to the classroom. Once you have checked in at the office, we will notify the teacher that your child is arriving. You will then take your child to his/her locker to put away coats and bags and change shoes. Toddler and Elementary students will change in the classrooms. Please do not enter the classroom. You will take your child to the classroom door and wait for a teacher to open the door to receive him/her. We understand that many things may cause you to run late to school, often things outside your control. Should your family have ongoing special circumstances that make adhering to these timelines difficult, please contact Cindy to discuss how best to address your situation. By parents and staff working together to minimize classroom disruptions, we hope to give all of our students a more peaceful classroom experience. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

Playground Guidelines

We have school rules regarding the playground that we hope you will enforce when your children are under your care and playing on school grounds. These rules are intended to keep our environment safe and clean, and to promote respect and responsibility for our playground as well as to others.

- Please walk (don’t run) up the stairs.
- Climb up steps and slide down slide.
- Use chalk only on sidewalks or the basketball court.
- Woodchips and mulch stay on the ground.
- Trikes and bikes stay on the bike path sidewalk. They are stored in the shed.
- Balls stay on the basketball court and are also stored in the shed.
- Flowers are for observing, touching, and smelling. Please let them grow so everyone can enjoy them.
- Logs, stumps, and wood cross sections need to stay on the grass under the trees.
- No gum on the playground.
- If enjoying snacks while on the playground, please:
  - have children sit on benches or curb until finished eating;
  - throw away all trash in large trash bins;
  - Pick up and throw away large crumbs so another child doesn’t pick them up and eat them.
- Only adults may open gates. Please discourage children from climbing on gates to unlatch them.
- Please do not climb on the fences, gutters, shed, pergola, or trellis.

Thanks for your cooperation in making our playground safe!
# 2019–2020 Academic Calendar

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- **Parents’ days**
- **Student+staff holidays**
- **Staff in-service**
- **Student first/last days**

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**Key Dates**

- **January:**
  - 1–3: Winter break
  - 6: Staff returns
  - 1: First day, spring term
  - 17: Staff training + P-T conference (elem., kinder.)
  - 16–20: Spring break

- **February:**
  - 23–31: Winter break
  - 1: Final day, spring term
  - 20: Staff days

- **March:**
  - 1–29: Thanksgiving break
  - 1–3: Winter break
  - 6: Staff returns
  - 12: Orientation day
  - 13: First day, autumn term
  - 20: Last day, autumn term

- **April:**
  - 10: P-T conferences (no school)
  - 11: Staff training

- **May:**
  - 21–22: Staff days

- **June:**
  - 1: Staff training
  - 1: Final day, summer term