Welcome families,

I would like to welcome back all of our returning children and families and extend a warm welcome to all of our new children and families. September is always a time of excitement, yet with that comes anxiety and nervousness for many children. We will do our best to ensure the transition is as seamless as possible and to ensure that each child feels loved, respected and safe. A Montessori learning environment is like no other … our main objective at the Vineyard Montessori School is to provide a carefully planned, stimulating environment which will help children to develop within themselves the foundational habits, attitudes, skills and ideas as essential for a lifetime of creative thinking and learning. Respect and courtesy in our Montessori school is the foundation for everything we do and each child will soon learn the following important skills:

- how to put their work away where they found it
- how to tidy up after themselves
- the importance of helping a friend in need
- the importance of respecting the materials, the teachers and each other
- how to tuck in their chair when they leave the table
- how to walk in the classroom
- how to be self directed and find their own ‘work’ and most importantly,
- how to be independent!

Each child will feel empowered at the Vineyard Montessori School and learn how great it feels to do things on their own! Each of the teachers and myself are here to nurture, support and guide them each and every day and are committed to making your child’s Vineyard Montessori preschool experience productive, stimulating and fun! I am honored that you have chosen VMS and I am confident that this will be a wonderful year for everyone involved!

Deborah Jernegan, Head of School

If you are interested in joining the Vineyard Montessori School Book Club please let Debbie know by sending an email at director@vineyardmontessori.com or stopping in the office. The first meeting will take place the last week in September. The day and time will be determined by the group. I have 4 great Montessori & child development books to choose from for our first
As much as we all get anxious for summer vacation to begin, I am always equally, if not more excited for the start of a new school year. The children have had a wonderful first week getting to know each other and becoming familiar with the classroom and the teachers. We have been learning and reviewing activities that are essential in creating a harmonious and peaceful classroom. Grace and courtesy lessons are often taught at the beginning of the year to help the children learn how to be a member of a larger community and to help develop respect for their environment, their peers and themselves. You may notice your child sneezing and coughing into their elbows or using phrases such as "Yes, please" or "No thank you". Your child may want to put their hand on your shoulder when needing to interrupt, waiting patiently for you to acknowledge them. These lessons will help your child to become confident, competent and independent. By striving to achieve these qualities in each child, I highly recommend that you encourage your child to walk into school independently by not carrying them into the classroom. Try to establish a routine of saying goodbye at the front door of the school. Holly and I will be there to help your child enter the room and put away their belongings. Your child will begin to feel a sense of confidence by being able to achieve these beginning goals independently. I am looking forward to working with your children this year and watching their amazing growth and development.

Rebecca and I welcomed nine new children into our class this Tuesday and Wednesday. Ranging in ages from 2 years 10 months to 4 years 11 months, we had a broad developmental spectrum and we were very impressed by all their abilities! They learned to sit patiently and listen on the blue line while I taught them songs, read them stories, or gave them lessons. They also practiced rolling rugs, pushing in chairs, walking quietly in the classroom, and greeting each other politely. They worked with transferring objects, drawing, stringing wooden beads, Play Dough and puzzles. All nine new children worked hard at learning the rules of their new classroom, and are making great strides in their understanding and memory.

We were so happy to see the returning students on Thursday and Friday. Although some were a bit chagrined that many of our beautiful materials that they were used to had been tidied away over the summer, all made wonderful use of their time using blocks, art, puzzles, beginning practical life, and some math work. I explained to them that we bring out those materials one or two at a time throughout the next weeks. Hopefully each of the exercises will be greeted with enthusiasm when they are brought out, as old friends. This phasing in keeps the environment fresh. My wish for the "old" students is that they make an effort to welcome the new ones, and I have seen many instances of this already. If a young one has a spill, the older ones help to pick up the pieces. At the end of the day the older ones quickly tidy up the rugs or volunteer to wash a dirty tray. Our question for these next weeks is: “How can I be a friend?”

All that work made all the children very hungry on these days, and they enjoyed a group snack of crackers, peanut butter, apples, or watermelon. Please be on the lookout for when it’s your turn to bring in the snack! Rebecca will put the list in your child’s backpack. I can’t wait until next week! See you then!
Welcome back students and parents! Wow, what a whirlwind week. We have been getting used to our new surroundings including the lovely new lockers and furniture! There are now five of our students walking to and from school responsibly. Through their conversations with each other I see that this is truly fostering their independence.

The kids returned with essays that they wrote about their summer vacation and presented them on the first day back. Next, we opened up our time capsule to discover their photos, hand prints, writing samples and a copy of the M.V. Times from the first week of school last year. We found that abilities and physical appearances have changed for the better according to their feedback.

The students are happy to see that Miss Jen is back to work with us. They have gone through unfinished work from last year to find a starting point and set new goals. We reviewed what they learned over the last few years about the Big Bang and the formation of the planets. Afterwards, we scaled down the solar system out on the playground to show the size difference of the sun’s diameter to those of the planets. We followed it up by measuring the distance between the Sun and each planet using toilet paper. Yesterday the class laid out the timeline of life on Earth to review. They were given tiny replicas and fossils to place on corresponding photos on the timeline as we discussed the evolution and purpose of some of them. Next, we began the timeline of just humans during the Pleistocene Era. Students will be creating their own timeline of humans with small groups assigned to research different groups of ancestors. We read an exciting article about several prehistoric human remains that were found recently in a cave in South Africa. Christine came into our class to observe and talk to the students about their prior knowledge of French. We are all excited to have her with us working on conversational French in our classroom this year.

It’s great to have the students back and see their eagerness to learn and work with each other! Irene & Jen

The Late Day Program begins on Monday, September 14th. Twenty of our V.M.S. students will be participating this year. Cristina and I have enjoyed observing in each classrooms this week and getting to know all of the students. Let’s look forward to afternoons filled with literacy, songs, creative arts and mostly, outdoor fun on our playground. Weezie and Cristina
Information & Reminders

- If your child stays for late day, please remember to pack an additional labeled snack.
- Slippers are worn in the classroom, please remember to place them in your child’s cubby. If you would like to order from Montessori Movers please email me or stop by and I will give you the website.
- There is a well equipped library, filled with many books about the Montessori philosophy, located in the office. If you are interested in borrowing any from the lending library.
- The first fall Fun Friday will be on September 18th. If your child is picked up at noon or does not attend on Friday please feel free to come to come and join us on the playground. If your child is normally picked up at 2:30, you may get them in the classroom and then head out to the playground. Fun Fridays are a great opportunity to meet other families at VMS and observe your child playing with his/her new friends. Donations of snacks are welcome, please check with Debbie.
- All families should have received a Save America package. All children are welcome to participate in the Vineyard Montessori School Banking program. Our school banking day will be Thursday. The program is run by volunteers and takes about 1/2 hour on Thursday mornings. I am looking for 2 additional volunteers to join Cassie (Silas’s mom) in sharing the responsibility of the program.
- The PTO’s first meeting is September 29th. The PTO is looking for a secretary to join the board. Please email Nicole deBettencourt at pto@vineyardmontessori.com if you are interested.
- Our doors open every morning at 8:30 a.m., unless you have signed up for early drop-off.
- Make sure your child has extra clothes in their cubby or locker. If clothes come home please remember to repack their cubby or locker.
- If you have any questions about your child’s day or want to share news of their morning please email your teacher. They want you to contact them with any concerns or joys you have to share.
- Please take the opportunity to let your child walk into the school on their own by saying goodbye at the gate or the bottom of the stairs that lead into the school. Trying to establish a routine of saying goodbye at the front door of the school. The teachers will be there to help your child enter the room and put away their belongings. Your child will begin to feel a sense of confidence by being able to achieve these beginning goals independently.
A Poem for Parents: Nothing

When children come home at the end of the day,
The question they’re asked as they scurry to play is,
“What did you do at school today?”
And the answer they give
makes you sigh with dismay.
“Nothing, I did nothing today!”
Perhaps nothing means
that I played with blocks, counted to ten, or sorted some rocks.
Maybe I painted or learned to tie my shoe
Or learned what happens when you mix red and blue
Maybe I learned to tuck in my chair and put my work away
Or maybe I learned to be kind to a friend while I was playing outside today,
Maybe my scissors followed a line and I learned to write my name.
Maybe I learned some sounds or numbers or learned to play a new game,
Maybe I made a craft or sang a song from beginning to end,
Or maybe I learned to play with a special, brand new friend.

When you’re in preschool
And your heart has wings,
“Nothing” can mean so many, many things.

(Author Unknown)