Welcome and introductions
Approval of December PTO Minutes
Montessori Moment presented by Chris

Director’s Report:
- Report on Annual Surveys (Alumni and Current Families)
- 2021 Strategic Intent
- Screening of the documentary Most Likely to Succeed at the MV Film Center
- Letgo Your Mind summer program

Treasurer’s Report:
- Request for funds

Upcoming events:
- Ice Skating
- Jeannine Fitzgerald

Fundraising:
- Dine to Donate
- Big Fundraiser

Wish List
Open discussion

Thursday, January 21st is Special Visiting Day. Special Visiting Day is your child’s opportunity to invite a special person into their classroom. The visitor has an opportunity to learn by participating and observing how the child chooses a lesson, works with the lesson and puts the lesson away. This particular morning is filled with your child’s excitement and pride over the arrival of the special visitor. The visit is held from 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

Thursday, January 21st is Dine to Donate at the Offshore Ale Company. Offshore donates 20% of your lunch and/or dinner eaten at the restaurant. Please present your coupon which is attached to the newsletter. Feel free to share with your friends and family. Reservations can be made for the evening by calling the Offshore Ale Company.

Save the dates for upcoming events:
Saturday, February 6th at 4:00 p.m. Most Likely to Succeed at the MV Film Center. The flyer is attached to this newsletter.
Wednesday, February 17th, Jeannine Fitzgerald is coming to VMS for a Parenting Education Evening just for our families. Please sign up at pto@vineyardmontessori.com if you are interested in attending.

Child watch is available
If you are interested in child watch please email the pto@vineyardmontessori.com and let them know.
Primary with Miss Chris and Miss Holly

“Does it sink? Does it float? Does it attract or does it repel?” These are some of the questions the children are learning the answers to by using some new science lessons. The activity of sink and float has become a new favorite in the classroom. A child can fill a small tub with water and place objects one at a time to see whether it will sink and float. He then categorizes the objects under cards that read "sink" or "float". Some children have gone through the environment exploring other objects that have similar properties. Exploring, observing, discovering and recording help children to understand their world.

Finger knitting was introduced to the children during our gardening class. Miss Emily brought in the yarn that the children spun last week and showed them how to finger knit. Some children made bracelets, others made necklaces and headbands. She then showed them how to create a ball of yarn by using a spinner which each child got to try. Next week we will be making felt.

Some of our new materials are arriving causing a great deal of excitement in the class. Our flags of North and South America have been put together and are being displayed on top of our puzzle maps. Many old, chipped and used materials have been replaced with beautiful new ones. Our research guidebooks have created curiosity in many children. There are still many more items to come and each day I am so grateful for the support and generosity from my families. Once again, I thank you!

Primary with Miss Ty and Miss Rebecca

There are several new materials in the class, thanks to the generosity of many families this holiday season. Some of these new activities are: “Field Guides” that will give the children short and scientific information about plants, insects, reptiles, birds, and mammals, to name a few. I purchased much-needed supplies for the practical life shelf. We also have some new rocks and mineral science kits for the children to explore. In future weeks and months you will hear about some other purchases including carpentry supplies and a butterfly garden.

This week the children were introduced to “Carrot Cutting.” They carefully wash the carrot, scrape the peeling, and then make carrot coins to be shared with the entire class. This activity is in addition to the apple cutting that has been available to the children since last semester. Part of the exercise is the passing of the finished product. The child who has cut the carrot or the apple goes up to another child and asks, “Would you like a piece of carrot (or apple)?” The response would either be, “Yes, thank you.” or “No, thank you.” After the recipient takes one of the pieces, the original child then responds with “You’re welcome.” This is a very popular exercise that takes a lot of preparation, careful concentration, and then a lot of clean up. All of those dishes have to be washed! It’s wonderful to see the excellent work the children do in this area.

Ms. Emily from Island Grown Schools has been working with the students on a “Fiber” unit. Students learned to wash and comb raw wool, dye and spin it into thread, and this week they learned to knit a simple chain. The children were very interested and attentive to her lessons, and this is a wonderful sequence of knowledge that the students can take into their lives.
This week in the Elementary classroom our students started learning about grains from around the world with Emily of Island Grown Schools. This will be a three week grain unit which was introduced with a group discussion to determine the origin of the different grains. The students identified originating countries on a large map and Emily revealed which countries consume the greatest amounts of each grain, discussing relative products produced using different grains. Emily introduced samples of grains and passed them around for the students to examine. They will continue this unit with a cooking project using different types of grains.

Our class as a whole was introduced to two new science lessons this week. The Tree of Life is a biology lesson in which students build a large tree with wooden leaves containing photos of members of the five kingdoms of life on Earth. They begin at the trunk with the Prokaryotes which were the first to appear on Earth, followed by the Monera, Fungi, Plant and Animal kingdoms. Ongoing work of the individual kingdom is expected in the lower and upper elementary classrooms. The students at this point are most familiar with the five vertebrate classes and the plant kingdom but will be encouraged to continue their research of the other kingdoms with this impressive work as a starting point. Each sample leaf on the tree matches information cards containing facts about that specimen which may be used for students to quiz each other. Research worksheets accompany this work and students are encouraged to use the fact cards, encyclopedias and the internet for sources.

The other group lesson that was introduced is the periodic table of elements. Half of our class is familiar with this work but we now have a newer version which was donated by parents in our class. This particular table has photographs of each element shown in one form on the card along with its atomic weight and number. Matching cards contain information such as the scientists who discovered the element and what it is used for. Students may use a control chart to recreate the layout of the periodic table. The lesson is introduced by recalling the Big Bang Theory lesson in which the majority of atoms produced were hydrogen, along with helium and traces of lithium. We discussed other familiar elements such as carbon, oxygen, gold, silver, and neon and which elements were needed for the first life forms on Earth to develop.