Annual Spring PTO Fundraiser

Dear parents,

Together we can have an incredible annual spring fundraiser.

You are invited to the 1st sub-committee meeting for our annual fundraiser.

This fundraiser is our biggest event, in which we raise a large amount of money that goes towards our wonderful scholarship and enrichment programs.

There is a sign up sheet hanging next to the cork board when you walk in the door. Please sign up and join our group in planning our next event.

We welcome new, unique and creative ideas that support a successful evening event.

Nicole deBettencourt and myself, Holly Lawyer, have volunteered to co-chair the committee. If you have any questions, feel free to contact us at pto@vineyardmontessori.com

Our 1st meeting will be held Tuesday, January 26th at 6:30pm at the Copper Wok restaurant in Vineyard Haven.

Please join us if you can!! Holly

INFORMATION

- Please find attached the PTO minutes from Tuesday, January 19th meeting.
- Tuesday, January 26th at 6:30 P.M. First Spring Fundraiser Subcommittee Meeting at Copper Wok in Vineyard Haven
- 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.
**Primary with Miss Chris and Miss Holly**

As many of our new materials have arrived, the children have begun using them with great enthusiasm. One of the new materials is a light panel. The children have been exploring with colorful geometric shapes along with colored glass pebbles. The light gives a different experience for the children. I am excited to see other ways the children will use the new activity. The children have also enjoyed bouncing on our personal sized trampoline. Being able to add some gross motor activities to our environment is a wonderful way for the children to be able to move their bodies before settling into longer lessons or for when the weather is too extreme for outside play.

The children finished their last lesson of the fiber unit with Miss Emily. This week the children made felt from the wool that they cleaned and brushed. Each child took a small piece of wool, placed it in a Ziploc bag and then added food dye and vinegar. By kneading the wool, the children were able to feel the wool becoming felt. Miss Emily took the baggies home to let the felt dry and will bring them back next week.

Thank you to all that came for Special Visiting Day. We had a wonderful turn-out and I hope everyone had an enjoyable morning.

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**Primary with Miss Ty and Miss Rebecca**

Well, Special Visiting Day was a huge success. It was wonderful to see parents, grandparents, and friends experiencing a morning in our Montessori classroom. The children were so proud to show you all what they have been learning. I must admit that I was proud of them too! Carrying materials carefully, walking around rugs, tucking in their chairs after working with a material – they have really mastered the norms of the class. Lessons from all areas were shown to eager “learners”, from the moveable alphabet to pouring rice to painting with water colors to addition with the golden beads!

Thank you all for coming and sharing your time with your child.

We do go outside every day if it’s not raining, unless it is severely cold. Sometimes even if it is very cold we still go out for twenty minutes to a half an hour. Please send your children with snow pants, gloves and hats, as well as their coats and boots. Outside time is essential to all the children. After a morning inside with their quiet, concentrated work, it is important for them to have unstructured, physically active play time.

Staying on the subject of winter clothing, we must consider the child’s ability to dress him or herself. Part of the Montessori philosophy is that each child should become independent and able to care for themselves. Please help us by TEACHING your child about the intricacies of putting on boots, gloves, coats, etc., instead of doing it for him or her. You’d be surprised how well each of them does when you are not here! “Every help is a hindrance,” is something we often say. Please try to include clothes for your child that are easy for them to maneuver.
This week students finished an expository writing assignment that will be displayed next week in the window at Mad Martha's on Main Street in Vineyard Haven. The students were asked to think of important pieces of information that would be exciting to warrant skywritten messages. They wrote letters to fictitious skywriting pilots. They included an explanation of the purpose of the message, their audience, and the importance of the message. The students added details such as the design of the banner and determined the time and place to fly the banner. They designed and cut out bi-planes pulling the banners with their messages which will be hung in the window along with their letters.

During our Island Grown class, Emily gave students information on the history of corn, following up with questions and answers. Next she passed out copies of recipes made from corn, rice and wheat. The students voted on which recipes to make in class next week. They decided on banana bread from the Caribbean and a chocolate sweet drink from Mexico called Atole which contains flour.

This week we went ice skating during open skate time on Thursday. The students did not have a lesson but enjoyed their time with friends, helping each other out, demonstrating their skills, practicing technique and getting exercise.

**Late Day with Miss Weezie and Miss Cristina**

Miss Weezie has had to take a temporary personal leave from working at VMS. I have placed an ad in the newspaper looking for a temporary Lead teacher to replace Weezie till she is able to return to her position at VMS. We are looking forward to her return to school.

This week the children have enjoyed using the new shovels for moving around the small amount of snow we have had in the playground. They have also been excited to use the new monkey bars and climbing structure installed on the playground. Books this week have been: *Grandma Tells a Story* by Lois Grambling, *Bear about Town* by Stella Blackstone & Debbie Harter and *Marisol McDonald Doesn't Match* by Monica Brown.
VMS PTO Minutes: January 19, 2015
Called to order by Nicole de Bettencourt at 6:00pm

In attendance. Nicole deBettencourt, Debbie Jernegan, Chris Rasmussen, Ty Johnston, Erin Slossberg, Guinevere Cramer, Holly Lawyer, Jennifer Doyle, Jennifer LoRusso

Montessori Moment presented by Chris:

**Art & Montessori:** Art in a Montessori classroom has a higher purpose. An emphasis on learning new techniques and working with care and precision; the process is always important and a specific end product is almost never highlighted. The focus is on learning the colors, mediums, and processes for children using their own creativity.

Each medium starts at a simple skill level and builds to the more complex. For example in a painting lesson the child is first shown how to make strokes with a paintbrush with water on a stone. Next they are introduced to one color at a time with the paintbrush and so on from there. A great resource for Montessori inspired art activities for children ages 3-8 is the book *I want to Paint a Zebra, but I Don't know How*.

**Treasury Report:**

**Income:** December income $225. from Truckin’ MV

**Currently there is:** $10,085.82 in the bank.

**Director’s Report:** Highlights below

**Alumni & Current Family Survey:** Debbie reviewed the results of both annual surveys. If anyone would like an email with results of the survey please ask Debbie.

**Strategic Intent:** Please see attached Strategic Intent. If anyone is interested in volunteering on a subcommittee to helping reach our 2021 goals please contact Debbie.

**Most Likely To Succeed:** VMS has purchased the rights to the screening Most Likely To Succeed. The Film will be shown Saturday February 6th 4pm at the MV Film Center. Please see attached flyer. 50% of ticket sales will be contributed to VMS.

**Summer Program:** VMS will be hosting the [http://letgoyourmind.com](http://letgoyourmind.com) summer program at VMS in 2016. Registration is open at Letgoyourmind.com.
Upcoming Events:

**Ice Skating:** MV Ice Arena will be offering ice skating lessons for 4 and 5 year olds. The cost will be $20 per child. The dates for the skating lessons will be four weeks in March. We will need to leave school at 9:10 and should be back by 10:30. If you would like your child to participate please let your classroom teacher know right away.

We will need drivers. Please let your classroom teacher know if you are able to drive.

**Jeanine Fitzgerald:** Jeanine Fitzgerald will be coming to VMS for a parenting education evening on Wednesday, February 17th.

**2016 Spring Fundraiser: We need your help with the VMS Spring Fundraiser.** If you would like to be on the sub committee please contact Nicole de Bettencourt, Holly Lawyer and/or ask Debbie where to sign up to help. The Spring Fundraiser will be an evening event in April or early May. The first sub committee meeting will be Tuesday January 26th at the 6:30 at the Copper Wok in Vineyard Haven. Everyone is welcome to participate.

Jennifer LoRusso

[Jennifer@chilmarkgeneralstore.com](mailto:Jennifer@chilmarkgeneralstore.com)

Cell: 347-683-3665
Film Screening

Saturday, February 6th, 2016, 4:00 P.M.

Martha’s Vineyard Film Center

$12. General Admission $9. Member

$7 child 14 or younger

Doors open for admissions 30 minutes prior

Panel discussion Q&A immediately following with:

Matthew T. D’Andrea, L.P.D., Superintendent of Schools

Richard Smith, Assistant Superintendent

Donna Luther, Head of Inly School, faculty member of Creative Education foundation and adjunct faculty member at Lesley University

Timothy Madden, State Representative for Falmouth, Martha’s Vineyard, the Elizabeth Islands and Nantucket

Andrew Bartlett, General Manager, Harbor View and Scout Hotel & Resort Management

Presented in collaboration with the Vineyard Montessori School

The current educational system in the United States was developed a century ago during the rise of the industrial age and was once the envy of the world. However, the world economy has since transformed profoundly, but the US education system has not. Schools are attempting to teach and test skills, when mastered, that still leave graduates woefully unprepared for the 21st Century. After presenting this problem, the documentary focuses on the story of a school in San Diego that is completely rethinking what the experience of going to school looks like. As we follow students, parents and teachers through a truly unorthodox school experience, the audience is forced to consider what sort of educational environment is most likely to succeed in the 21st century.

"...a message Americans need to hear, and desperately test." -Huffington Post

"...among the best edu-documentaries ever produced." -Education Week

An independent non-profit school
Pre-K through 6th grade
Fostering a lifetime love of learning, one child at a time.
VINEYARD MONTESSORI SCHOOL
STRATEGIC INTENT 2021

VMS 2021 is a vibrant, independent Montessori school located on Main Street in Vineyard Haven, MA, serving 90 children from ages 18 months to 14 years old in Grades 1 through 8, with toddler and preschool programs. The school is respected by the Cape and Island community as an exceptional progressive school that fosters self-motivated, creative, independent thinkers whose educational foundation has imparted the lifelong love of learning and skills necessary to navigate the complexities of the 21st century.

VMS is philosophically centered on the educational approach developed by Italian physician and educator, Maria Montessori. Known for its "intellectually active" and remarkably effective child centered classrooms, the school creates a successful environment for students to achieve their full academic, creative, physical, and social potential.

The parents, leaders and faculty are preparing Martha’s Vineyard’s next generation for future success, aiming to exceed the Massachusetts State Standards for each grade by fostering each student’s potential to become bright, outside-the-box thinkers - creative and open-minded about the future.

The VMS facility is intimate, caring and passionate. The revitalized campus offers a refurbished original building and a separate elementary building with a beautiful and dynamic outside learning environment. The school’s location in the heart of the Vineyard provides unique opportunities to take part in diverse community programs, such as food education with Island Grown Schools, dance with The Yard, art exploration with Sense of Wonder, physical activities with Vineyard Youth Tennis, Sail MV, MV Ice Arena’s Snowplow Sam, music appreciation with Music Together, foreign language with in-house instructors and community philanthropy and education opportunities with Vineyard Haven Public Library and the local Senior Centers.

VMS 2021 transforms lives.

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<td>VMS’s Board of Trustees supports the leadership of the school preserving and guiding the school’s mission while contributing time, expertise and financial resources to its current and future success.</td>
<td>VMS makes meaningful, impactful contributions to the community by maintaining academic excellence in an authentic Montessori child-centered learning environment serving children from 18 months through 8th grade.</td>
<td>VMS cultivates and supports a mission driven faculty that is passionate, highly qualified, and dedicated to the Montessori philosophy.</td>
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<td>Board has fully transitioned from parent board to parent, community and fundraising Board.</td>
<td>1. VMS is fully enrolled with a waiting list 2. VMS offers expanded innovative programming. 3. VMS’ student body is demographically representative of the Vineyard community. 4. VMS school hours meet the needs of the families. 5. VMS is AMS accredited.</td>
<td>1. Faculty culture of collaboration is driven by the mission and success of the school. 2. Staffing levels are appropriate for an expanded school and all teaching positions are filled by Certified Montessori teachers. 3. Faculty succession plan informs planning and hiring. 4. Faculty compensation and benefits are commensurate and competitive.</td>
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<td>Board operates on committee model and maintains processes for future success.</td>
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<td>Board members are school ambassadors, support VMS special events and contribute in many ways above and beyond meeting attendance.</td>
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<td>VMS offers an expanded, attractive, welcoming campus with facilities to serve children from 18 months through 8th grade.</td>
<td>VMS is fiscally stable and has anticipated growth and changing market conditions.</td>
<td>VMS has transitioned to an independent progressive school with a $3 million fully-funded endowment to meet future needs.</td>
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<td>1. Campus expansion includes land acquisition, new and upgraded buildings. 2. Campus landscape includes new and improved outdoor areas, playgrounds and parking lot.</td>
<td>1. VMS has developed and implemented a business plan for planned expansion. 2. VMS has developed and executed a robust scholarship program serving all grades.</td>
<td>1. VMS has a strong Annual Fund and Capital Campaign with 100% family participation. 2. VMS aggressively pursues all funding resources including major donors, grants etc. 3. VMS’ internal community thrives!</td>
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