"To have another language is to possess a second soul"
~ Charlemagne

Calendar

Thursday, 2:30 pm - 3:30 pm the Elementary and Middle School students are invited to the Elementary I classroom to play chess, dominos, bingo, and other games from 2:30 pm - 4:00 pm

Saturday, January 27th 10:00 am - 11:30 am: Open House -- Current parents, friends of current parents, and students are invited for a fun morning in our classrooms.

Share Our Open House on Social Media
Let's come together as a community to help promote our love for learning in the community. We encourage you to like our Facebook page and share our admission open house post with your Facebook friends. See our post here.
Primary 1 Classroom  
- Miss Cristina and Miss Rebecca

This week, the students loved working in all classroom areas. I put new activities on the shelves during the weekend. They loved making different crafts made of toilet paper rolls, felt, straw, pieces of paper, and pipe cleaners. It is amazing to see what they come up with. They also love working with scissors and glue. Using scissors is definitely a complex task to learn: It builds up the tiny muscles in their palm and hand since they have to continuously open and close the hand. Also, cutting enhances eye-hand coordination. The children must be able to see what they are cutting while moving their hands.

Another popular work this week has been to draw the parts of the flag of the United States of America. Many of the students have been working on the countries in North America and have created their own maps. In order to do this work, they need to carry the flag to the table. We talked about how important a flag is to the people who live in the country it represents, and for that reason, we have to be respectful when we carry it. The students like to help, be responsible, and take care of the materials in our classroom.

Miss Ava showed the students the difference between the wool that had been cleaned and the wool that still needed to be cleaned. After this lesson, the children got to put some wool in a Ziploc bag, add food coloring to it, and then squeezed it to see how the wool began to change colors. They had to leave the bags in school so that they can keep working with the dyed wool next week.

Primary 2 Classroom  
- Miss Chris and Miss Holly

The children were very excited to return to school after the long weekend to find many new lessons out on the shelves. In the Practical Life area, I added mirror polishing, soap grating, and bubble making. Soap
grating and bubble making have been very popular as the children use the soap flakes that they create after grating the bar of soap. The flakes are transferred into a bowl that is kept on the shelf, and when a child is ready to use the bubble-making lesson, they use a spoonful of the flakes to whisk in a bowl, creating a sudsy foam. If anyone has small bars of soap (hotel-style soap), please send them to school as we go through these travel-size bars quickly.

In geography, I introduced the flags of North America to some of the older children that have already worked with that puzzle map. We matched the flags to the countries and then the children had the chance to color in the flags to make booklets. I also have blank flags so that the children can create their own flags.

Our science area now has animal tracks activities that the children can use to match animals to their footprints. This is a great time of the year to have this lesson as we are able to search for tracks in the snow and mud out on the playground.

We began our "Get to Know Your Neighborhood Safety Personnel" unit this week. Officer Max Sherman came to school to introduce himself and to talk about the role of a police officer. He showed the children some of the tools he uses, did some detective work with the children, and he showed them the police cruiser. This was a very exciting day for all. Next week, Max will return with some other special friends. I can't wait to see who he brings next!

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Elementary I Classroom
- Miss Nora

This week, the Elementary I students started work on flags of the world. The students learned the parts of the flag and proper etiquette. We also studied the history and design changes of the American flag over the past couple of centuries.

In math, they are working on addition and subtraction word problems and mapping. In geography, they continue to study all of the continents and will be moving onto land and water forms around the world.

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Elementary II Classroom
- Carly Coggins
This week, we have been talking a lot about recycling and composting to work towards zero waste in our classrooms. Ty has been reading zero waste tips to us every day at morning circle. Some of the tips include getting rid of straws and using steel ones, using reusable water bottles, and making our own snacks in a reusable container instead of buying snacks that come in plastic bags, which are bad for the environment! We have also almost filled up our composting bin, which is great! Today, I dumped more scraps in, including tea and coffee grounds from Miss Ty and Miss Irene, banana peels, and old fruit.

This week, we have an MMUN position paper paragraph due. Mine is about making my own possible solutions for the effects of atomic radiation.

Since we observed the holiday, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, this weekend, we did not have museum class, which we usually have on Mondays. Later in the week, we made up for our missed lesson. I am pretty excited about it.

Today, we are learning all about life on a whaling boat, specifically about the topics of working, playing, sleeping, eating, and p_ _ ping!

Next week, we will have out first art class with one of Miss Ty's friends. She will help us to make a project for the "Big Night Out"! I am totally excited for that, too!

We have Spanish tomorrow, which will be fun, and then we will have gardening on Friday. We have a pretty packed week that will be fun.

See you later,
Carly

Middle School
- Miss Ty

The Middle School is teaming up with the Upper Elementary class to help our Montessori
community become more conscious of waste. VMS is eager to join other island schools in having a zero waste week in April. The older students are going to make teams and present concepts of recycling, composting, and other conservation strategies to the younger classes. A team of students will visit the Primary and Lower Elementary classes and help them to understand the exciting wonders of generating as little waste as possible in their lives.

In science, as part of our ecosystems study, Matthew is beginning a lab where he will test pollutants. He will answer the question, “How will similar populations react to different pollutants?” Human activities affect ecosystems in both positive and negative ways. One negative effect is pollution. A pollutant is a variable that causes harm to an organism. To begin, we are hatching some brine shrimp eggs and hopefully will use these creatures to test tolerance to different pollutants.

The study of Native Americans is progressing. Matthew’s people of choice are the Inuit tribes of northern Canada and the US. Matthew will research their lifestyle, including housing and clothing, their government and social organization, religion and spirituality, and art.

### Late Day
- Miss Weezie and Miss Cristina

Our new Afternoon and Late Day students have been a welcome addition. They have adjusted successfully to our routines and to their fellow students. We continue to expand our beading work by adding a natural science component. We are discussing birds in winter and their difficulty finding food when the ground is cold and snow covered.

This week, we strung cranberries using large needles and cord to make chains and garlands for our tree at the entrance to school. Students added math to our lesson by counting each cranberry they added. We have hung some of the chains on branches the students selected. Hopefully, we will spot some of our feathered friends enjoying a winter feast.

I have introduced the students to "Peterson's Field Guide to Eastern Birds". They enjoy the beautiful illustrations and can identify many familiar birds. We discuss color, size, similarities, and differences. Nature walks in winter with children are a great source of learning and entertainment. Have fun!
Recommended Reading
"There's No Such Thing as the Real World" by Peter Piche in MontessoriParent
Read article here.

Book Corner for Parents
"Yardsticks: Children in the Classroom Ages 4-14" by Chip Wood
"The Six Stages of Parenthood" by Ellen Galinsky

Book Corner for Children
"What Do You Do With An Idea?" by Kobi Yamada

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