



# The Montessori School of Englewood School Newsletter

## A Message from the Executive Director

I am often asked what is distinctive about Montessori education, and why we felt compelled to make this unique kind of learning experience available to children growing up in Englewood. As many of you may know, Maria Montessori established her first schools in high-poverty sections of two Italian cities, where many children lacked proper nutrition and social preparedness. Her understanding of why we must educate the “whole child”—not just the mind, but also the heart—was ahead of her time.



Dr. Montessori was a pediatrician who also specialized in psychology. She observed her students closely and came to understand how much learning took place through hands-on activities. She particularly noted the intrinsic drive children demonstrated when adults let them pursue those activities independently.

Our purpose at MSE is to replicate the profound empowerment, serenity, and focus on learning that children in Dr. Montessori’s schools experienced a century ago. And in the 2017/18 school year, we made great strides toward that goal.



Chicago Public Schools requires standardized assessments several times a year, which enables us to track students’ academic growth from fall to spring. From autumn 2017 to spring 2018, we saw a steep rise in achievement. In math, one-third of our students jumped percentiles and grew by more than a full academic year. This outstanding trajectory exceeds a typical growth rate. From a **school-wide perspective, MSE showed significantly better-than-average math growth**—only slightly below one academic year—whereas the average growth rate for high-poverty students, and African Americans in particular, is generally far lower.

Moreover, close to half of our upper-grade students—those in grades 5, 6, and 7—increased their national percentiles. As for reading, our fall-to-spring data show that nearly half of the MSE students who went up in reading had growth that exceeded one academic year. Once again, our **schoolwide reading growth is ahead of national norms**. Together these data show that MSE’s work with students is **closing achievement gaps**.

MSE is fast becoming a model for CPS and other urban schools seeking to provide a holistic, caring, and effective approach to educating high-needs students. Please read this year’s annual report which will highlight some of our innovations—from the Chicago Montessori Residency to Freedom School, to our trauma-informed, a culturally responsive curriculum that places social-emotional development and global citizenship on equal footing with academic success.

Thank you for your ongoing support. Together we can achieve Maria Montessori’s vision to facilitate the intellectual and spiritual development of every child, according to each one’s unique strengths, needs, and circumstances.

Peace,



Rita Nolan  
Executive Director



## Recognition Corner

Every year children at MSE go out of their way to support their fellow students and their school, to help, and to show kindness, and to be great role models in the classroom. We want to recognize those children whose teachers or classmates have noticed special acts of helpfulness or compassion or excellent work and attitude. Though we’ve only been in school 2 weeks, we have three students below named for special honor.



Elantra  
House  
  
Room  
308



T. J  
Stokes  
  
Room  
301



De'Syni  
Smith  
  
Room  
301

## Upcoming Field Trips and Events:

### NWEA Testing: Sept 18-Oct 4

Please encourage your child not to be nervous but to do their best.

### Middle School Trip to Court Theater: Sept. 26

On Weds., Sept. 26 the middle school will attend a matinee performance of August Wilson’s play Radio Golf, and attend a discussion after.

### 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> Grade trip to the apple orchard

The 9-12 year olds will take a trip to the apple orchard for apple picking and enjoying the farm on Oct 32.

### 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> Grade Trip to the Filed Museum

On Oct 10, the 9-12 year olds will visit Chicago’s Field Museum of Natural History.

## Meet the Staff & Teachers

Each newsletter we will feature a few members of our school community to help you get to know us better.

### **Carmen Williams, Parent and Family Coordinator**

Ms. Williams works in the front office, and coordinates parent volunteering and parent and all-school events.



### **Doris Perry, Librarian and Teacher Support**

Ms. Perry manages our new library, including running story hours, the learning lab, and other forms of support for students and teachers.



## Welcome to the 2018-19 School Year to All Our Parents and Families

We at MSE want to welcome all of you to our new school year. We hope you will participate actively in your child's education, volunteer if you are able, and celebrate all the children's achievements in our shows and events. Let's make this year our best year yet!