



# RUSD MONTESSORI PROGRAM NEWS

Amy Shepherd, Program Director

<http://www.rusd.org/montessori>

November 2017

## A Time for Thanks



It's already November! As a program we are thankful for all families and students who have come together to help make our program successful and who continue to collaborate with us and support the learning of all of children. It sure does take a village and the work and support of community to raise our children!

## Parent Tip: Grace and Courtesy at Home!

Grace and Courtesy is an important part of the curriculum in a Montessori classroom. Children ages 3 through 6 are especially susceptible to learning courtesy and manners and will model their behavior and actions after the adults in their lives. In the classroom, your child's teacher models lessons on how to greet one another, say "please" and "thank you", how to interrupt activities politely and how to introduce friends. Take a look at some times throughout your family's day when you can be sure to model positive interactions with your child. Using a meal time or play time to model polite and respectful language is a great way to role model Grace and Courtesy in the home. Ask your child's teacher how they learn about grace and courtesy in the classroom and for more ideas at home!



## Monte-SPEAK

### Montessori Terms Decoded

#### "Normalization"

In Montessori education, the term "normalization" does not refer to what is considered to be "typical" or "usual." It does not imply that children are being forced to conform. Instead, Maria Montessori used the terms "normal" and "normalization" to describe a unique process she observed in child development.

She observed that after a period of intense concentration, working with materials that fully engage their interest, children appear refreshed and content. Through continued, concentrated work of their own choice, children grow in inner discipline and peace. She called this process "normalization" (*The Absorbent Mind*, 1949).

#### The 100 Board

The 100 Board is simply a board with 100 squares and 100 tiles printed with the numbers 1-100. It comes with a "control card" which is simply a card with the numbers 1-100 arranged in order as they could be placed on the board. A preliminary work that a child might do would be to match each tile to the control card. Next children might begin by placing the tiles in the board. The board is useful for number recognition, number sequencing, and patterning,

**November 2 & 3: Parent Teacher Conferences, NO SCHOOL**  
**November 10: 2 Hour Early Release @ 12:05pm**  
**November 16: Parent Ed Night 6-7pm—No Students Please**  
**November 7: Picture Retake Day**  
**November 23 & 24: Thanksgiving Recess, NO SCHOOL**  
**December 22—January 2: Holiday Recess, NO SCHOOL**



# Meet our Educational Assistants

*"Whoever touches the life of the child touches the most sensitive point of a whole which has roots in the most distant past and climbs toward the infinite future."* Maria Montessori



## **Brooke Olsen — Educational Assistant with Ms. Ami**

My name is Brooke Olsen. I am a 23-year-old graduate from the University of Wisconsin-Parkside where I studied Education and Spanish. I was first introduced to Montessori schools when I studied abroad in Mexico in 2015. I quickly fell in love with the encouraging child-centered environment and the ability to have each child work at their own pace. I value a child's independence and believe each child has their own special and unique way of learning! "It is not true that I invented what is called the Montessori Method...I have studied the child; I have taken what the child has given me and expressed it, and that is what is called the Montessori Method" - Maria Montessori



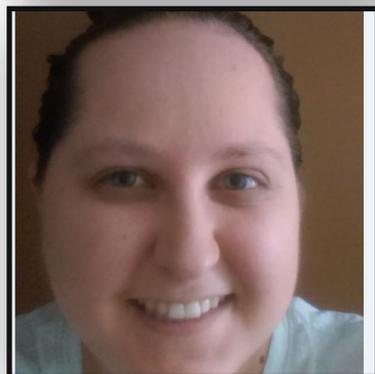
## **Elaine Gearheart—Educational Assistant with Ms. Kate**

This is my first year as an Educational Assistant with the District. I received my Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Wisconsin-Parkside in 2006 with a major in Psychology and a minor in Biology. In 2006, I also married my high school sweetheart. My original goal was to work in the zoos, however, I found myself fascinated by child development especially after embarking on the adventures of parenthood with our 8 year old son and 5 year old daughter. I have also discovered the social responsibility of educating our youth. I am currently serving as the president of the PTA at Red Apple School and as a co-leader for my daughter's Daisy Girl Scout troop. In my spare time, I enjoy decorating cakes for family and friends, painting, and taking our beagle, Hank, for walks.



## **Alfonso Gardner— Educational Assistant with Ms. Missy**

My name is Alfonso Gardner and graduated from Gateway Technical College with an Associate Degree in 1985. I retired in 2013 as para professional in the Wisconsin Works(W2) program. I decided to apply with Racine Unified and was hired in fall as an Educational Assistant . I was placed at Racine Civil Leaders Academy. This school year I was reassigned to Goodland after RCLA closed. I have been married for 18 years and I have two step children who are grown and five grandchildren.



## **Johanna Ploeger— Educational Assistant with Mrs. Dundore**

I graduated in December of 2014 with my Bachelor's Degree in Social Work and I'm currently working toward my Master's in School Social Work. I have worked with children in a variety of settings for many years and enjoy helping them find their independence and confidence. I have not experienced Montessori first-hand but love learning new ways to help youth as I believe that every child learns in their own, unique way. When I'm not working or in school, I enjoy reading, volunteering, and spending time with friends and family.