



Westside Montessori School January 2012 Newsletter



Dear WMS Parents,

We hope everyone had an enjoyable Winter Break and joyous holiday celebrations. It was such a special end to the first term with our Annual Holiday Concerts. We look forward to sharing 2012 with your families.

January Themes



In January we are beginning an Introduction to Space. We will have a few months to explore the planets and the solar system before we go to the Planetarium on March 5th for further enrichment. This unit should be an exciting learning opportunity for the students! The study of Space come alive in all areas, from creative play, to the interest table and crafts, manipulatives, experiments, and for the older children, in their project work.

Artist and Composer Study

This month we have the pleasure of studying the artist **Pablo Picasso**. His art work is sure to be inspirational for the students and lead to some creative work on their part. *A special thank you to Ms Garland for making our artist studies come alive each month and for organizing our weekly craft activities. The Klimt-inspired Christmas cards were magnificent!*



Our composer study will cover the work of **Johann Sebastian Bach**. We will have a chance to experience his musical style and enjoy his compositions. Many of his pieces are well known to us and will become part of the children's lives as well.

Fun Family Phonics

We have covered the sounds of the letters /a/ through /k/. During the first week back, we will review the sounds we've learned. We will begin the second week with /l/: "Long-legged Larry says, luh-luh-luh." Here are some ideas for home to help with extending the sound focus of each week:

Pack a suitcase: Get an old suitcase and tell the children that you are going on a pretend trip. Have them collect items from the home that begin with that letter to put in it. Write out a word list together.

Magazine cutouts: Set up a table full of magazines and see if your children can find pictures with the Sound of the Week (the sound could be at the beginning, middle, or ending of the word). The children can bring them in to share with the class.

Snap it, Clap it, or Tap it: Read a list of words that contain the sound of the week. Ask your children to snap their fingers (or clap, or tap their shoulders) if they hear the sound in the word.

2011 Charity Project

Thank you for the unanimous support we received with our 2011 Charity Project! The bags raised over \$1200 which the children will use towards choosing and donating livestock through *Heifer International*.

Open House on February 8th, 2012

Please let interested family and friends know that they can register and receive an invitation to our Annual Open House for prospective parents on Thursday, February 8th, 2012 from 6:00pm to 8:00pm.



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WMS Staffing

We are pleased to announce that the classroom staffing for next School Year (2012 - 2013) will remain the same:

1st Floor Classroom and K:
Bettina Tioseco and Garland Lam

2nd Floor Classroom and JrK:
Portia Geczi and Tasneem Khimani



Welcome, Sarah Kuhl! We welcome Ms. Sarah to the staff at WMS. Sarah has taught Summer Camp for many years, and is a familiar face to many of the children. She is also Ms Jen's sister and will be taking over Music and Theatre when Ms Jen begins her travels at the

end of January. Sarah will also be taking on some office administration work for us on Wednesdays.

Best wishes, Ms Amanda! We are thrilled for Amanda as she goes on maternity leave, awaiting the arrival of her baby girl! Amanda has done amazing things in getting our office organized and in providing the much needed behind-the-scenes support. We wish her the best and share in the anticipation of her new bundle of joy.



Parent Information Night - Enrichment

Our next Parent Information Night is on Thursday, January 12th. The focus of this night is on the Friday Morning Enrichment Programs available at the school. We will have parents of children in the Enrichment Classes on-hand to offer insights as well information and photos of our program. Plan to join us for this informative evening and learn more about our programs.

The Three Year Montessori Program

To receive the full benefits of a Montessori education, a child who enrolls should remain in the program for 3 years. Each step of a child's development and learning from the time he/she enters the Montessori classroom serves as a solid foundation for the next. The child who does not finish the program will never experience the same benefits, joy and satisfaction of having reached the end. The best analogy would be to say, "having poured the concrete it also needs an opportunity to cure" for the foundation to be sound. A 'true' Montessori program works in the same way. Therefore, the importance of the 3-year cycle is so crucial in Montessori.

Pre-Registration for September 2012



Step 1: Intent Forms

Pre-registration for the Fall takes place this month.

Registration Intent Forms will be sent home on January 9th and

are due back on Monday, January 16th. Parents can request a different class time, but the school makes the final decision on class assignments in order to achieve a balance amongst the 4 classes.

Step 2: Parent Agreements

Parent Agreements, based on returned forms, are due back on Thursday, January 26th, without exception. Spaces will be held if your forms are returned with:

- a signed Contract
- complete post-dated tuition cheques as per the tuition schedule



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All classes will continue to be three hours a day and run from Monday to Thursday with an Enrichment Class for our 4 and 5 year-olds on Friday mornings. Class times as of September 2012 are:

MORNINGS:

8:30AM to 11:30AM (1st Floor)

8:45AM to 11:45PM (2nd Floor)

AFTERNOONS:

12:15PM to 3:15PM (1st Floor)

12:30PM to 3:30PM (2nd Floor)

JR KINDERGARTEN ENRICHMENT:

Fridays 8:45AM to 11:45AM (2nd Floor)

KINDERGARTEN ENRICHMENT:

Fridays 8:30AM to 11:30AM (1st Floor)

Chinese New Year Celebration

Year of the Dragon

We will be celebrating Chinese New Year on Monday, January 23rd. For all celebrations, we incorporate the holidays into different areas of the class, from songs and rhymes, stories, art, colouring and pin-poking to Math counters, puzzles, Practical Life activities and snack.



For Chinese New Year, the classrooms are decorated in red and gold and different things that represent the holiday and share in its celebration. We have an interest table with artefacts, such as red envelopes and the animals of the zodiac. We include festive snacks in the food table such as tangerines, dried seaweed, dried fruit and sesame cookies.

If your family celebrates Chinese New Year, we welcome you to come into the classroom and share your traditions with your child's class. Please speak with your child's teacher if this is something that you would be interested in doing.

Class Time Reminders

Arrivals: Punctuality is important. When children arrive to school on time, it gives them the message that their time at school is important and punctuality is valued. It is very disruptive for the class when students do not arrive within the allotted arrival period.



Late Pick-ups: At the time of enrollment parents sign a contract agreeing to the hours of operation of the school. We require that the children be picked up during the 15 minute window at the end of class. If parents are late picking up their child more than 3 times they are charged a late fine. Difficulty in adhering to our class times on a regular basis is a breach of the Parent Agreement.

Dates to Remember - January 2012

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| Mon. Jan 9th | Classes Resume Class New Year's Party |
| Thurs. Jan 12th | Scholastic orders due |
| Thurs. Jan 12th | Parent Information Evening Topic: Enrichment Programs |
| Mon. Jan. 16th | Registration Intent Forms due |
| Mon. Jan 23rd | Chinese New Year Celebration |
| Thurs. Jan 26th | Pre-registration Due (for Returning Students) |
| Thurs. Feb 9th | WMS Annual Open House |

You are
INVITED

PARENT INFORMATION NIGHT

- FRIDAY ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS -

WMS SCHOOL

LEARN MORE ABOUT:

Westside Montessori School
Friday Enrichment Programs

Parent Experience

Academic Focus

Peer Group Learning

Orff Music Program

Gardening Program

Enrichment Field Trips

THURSDAY, JANUARY 12
7.30pm – 8.30pm

This is the time to start considering your child's education for the coming year. Westside Montessori School's Friday Enrichment Programs for 4 & 5 year old children is the perfect way for your child to focus on academic and experiential learning with members of their peer group. At this Parent Information Night, hear from a panel of parents who have had their children take advantage of this unique and dynamic program. Learn more about the extra learning-related field trips, the Orff Music program and the specialized gardening programs that enrichment students participate in.



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