

Bruno Blast

Joseph Bruno Montessori Academy

February 2018

Reflections from Ms. Rebecca

**Strategic Planning/School Improvement Plan Update to the Community
February 2018**

Goal 1- Improve student learning through the use of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM)

- One professional development day each year will be devoted exclusively to STEM training – January 3, 2018 STEM professional development (teachers participated in four break- out sessions one each on science, technology, engineering and math)
- JBMA Career Day- February 6, 2018 Invited parents (over 16 participants) and community members in STEM fields to share information with the students
- After school programming 2017 Sylvan STEM- robotics, interactive coding, MathEdge challenges and engineering projects
- Solar Eclipse Viewing 2017
- JBMA Flower Garden (Botany lessons with Ms. Kimberly)
- Chess Club
- Pi Day to be held March 14, 2018
- PTO Fundraising for a Maker Space for Library with STEM Implications
- Upper Elementary Science Fair to be held March 22, 2018 (Scientific writing opportunities)

Goal 2- Maintain and enhance our strong programming in musical, performance, and visual arts and integrate the arts more comprehensively across the curriculum.

- Each level will focus on arts integration based on the countries and cultures represented in the JBMA community- Diwali Celebration held this year in October- sand art was highlighted
- PTO sponsored an International Festival this year on February 24, 2018 that served to highlight musical, performance and visual arts through classroom performances and display of cultural work. Accordingly, each level engaged in Project Based Learning focusing on arts integration based on countries and cultures represented in the JBMA community.
- The Altamont student Orchestra performed at school November 29, 2017 for elementary through Middle School students
- 2017-2018 field trips to Children's Theater and Symphony
- Strings Program 2017-2018
- Individual violin performances in the classroom
- Art Enrichment classes
- Choice art work shelves in classrooms
- Harpist visit in Preschool 2017
- Community project 2017 Painting River Rocks for peace garden
- Painted water barrels used to collect rainwater for garden
- Both Preschool buildings have a set of Montessori Bells (preschool teachers are doing professional development this year on use of the Montessori Bells)

Continued on Page 2.

Goal 3-Identify and prioritize the creation of outdoor classroom extensions to support the Montessori Curriculum and provide rich learning environments for JBMA students.

- PTO added to the preschool environments with seating, roses, flowers, etc.
- PTO added the outdoor classroom and greenhouse
- JBMA Flower and Herb Garden-student participation
- Modifications to Middle School are underway to allow herbs to grow in all weather conditions

Goal 4- Strengthen connections among parents, alumni, and the faculty/administration of JBMA through increased and purposeful engagement of all stakeholder groups

- Restaurant fundraiser at Chick- fil-a in January 2018 (building community ties in support of a common mission)
- PTO Fall Festival October 2017
- Middle School Community Service Day at Oak Mountain 2017
- Book Fair 2017
- PTO Sponsored Movie Night
- International Festival 2018
- New database software that documents the different stakeholder groups and better tracks alumni-used by our development office
- Alumni Function to be held in April 2018
- Coffee and Doughnuts with the Head of School and Administrative Team to be held in April 2018

Goal 5- Grow school's revenue base through a combination of development initiatives, potential rental of facility, grant writing, and expansion of levels that will support additional classrooms, etc.

- Formed an early childhood committee and surveyed current JBMA Toddler and Preschool Parents (during conferences October 27, 2017) to identify how they received information about Montessori education and the factors that influenced them to choose the JBMA early childhood program. **Some of the results were as follows: 63% indicated that they learned about Montessori education from friends, family or colleagues. Similarly, 64% indicated that they learned about JBMA's early childhood program from friends, family or colleagues. 78% indicated that Montessori Philosophy was a strong factor in choosing JBMA early childhood program. 75% indicated that individualized study was a strong factor in choosing JBMA early childhood program. 64% indicated that comfortable classroom environments played a role in the decision to attend JBMA's early childhood program. In reference to convenience factors, 69% indicated that the location and/or campus facilities played a role in their decision to attend JBMA.**
- This information will be used to better define ways to promote early Montessori education and more specifically the benefits of the JBMA early childhood education program.
- Development Director Katie Kirkland- Annual Fund Campaign- 100% of our faculty and 100% of our board members contributed to the Annual Fund Campaign. The appeal to our parent and alumni populations is currently underway.
- A member of our community, Pam Holmes, is serving as JBMA Grant Coordinator and is exploring opportunities to write grants that support the mission of JBMA and the educational structure of JBMA.

JBMA Spirit Night at Chick-Fil-A

On Monday, Jan. 29th students, parents, teachers and friends met at the Greystone Chick-Fil-A for the first JBMA Spirit Night. There was a very good turnout and everyone enjoyed an evening of food, fellowship and fun.

Greystone Chick-Fil-A donated 15% of inside sales and designated drive-thru to JBMA.



2018 Stem Career Day

Tuesday, Feb. 6th was STEM Career Day. Kindergarten through 8th grade students spent the morning listening to presentations from STEM professionals. The Presenters were:

Sandy King, RN
Nurse Saint Vincent's Hospital

Michael Bermudez, CTO
Chief Technology Officer/Software Development

Dr. Pricila Denny, DMD, MS
Orthodontist

Dr. Karol Poczatek, DMD
Dentist

Greg Westerkamp
Carpenter

Holly Hohnstein, CRNA
Nurse Anesthetist

Dr. Alexis McBrayer MBA, PhD
Analytical chemistry & toxicology

Dr. Jessica Grunda, PhD
Molecular biology & pharmacology

Virginia Shubert
Information Security – Blue Cross
Shield of Alabama

Emily Mixon, MPH
Epidemiologist

Dr. Caroline Marshall, MD
Nephrologist

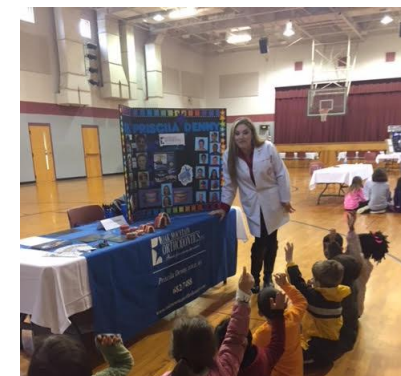
Bernardo De la Pava
Pilot

Karen Burch
Veterinary Radiology Technologist

Iftikhar Rana, PE
Electrical Engineer – Principal
Engineer

Dr. Jason Linville, PhD
Teaching Associate Professor at
UAB - Forensic Science

Renee Peacock, RPh, M.B.A.
Home Infusion Pharmacist



2018 International Festival and Silent Auction

The PTO sponsored International Festival is an event that all our families look forward to. This year it was combined with the Silent Auction. To start students picked up their passports to travel around the world! At each stop they learned about each country's traditions, art, food and other fun facts. They got their passports stamped and moved on to the next country. In the cafeteria everyone got to sample food from many different countries. After traveling the world and enjoying different cuisine the entertainment began. Songs and dances from the different countries were performed; Strings performed 3 pieces, and a few speeches given.

In the meantime a silent auction was going on in the upper elementary. Parents were actively bidding on artwork done by their child's classroom, certificates for different restaurants, spa gift cards, artwork from other sources, sporting event certificates, jewelry, and many other items.

We would like to thank the JBMA PTO who put so much time and work into a fun event for all.



Why Montessori Education Is Priceless

One of my favorite commercials, even though it is simple and sentimental, is the MasterCard ad that shows family time or human interactions and calls them priceless. To me, Montessori education is priceless in the same way. It is beautiful, comprehensive, and, in its most authentic form, a treasure of experiences that leads a child to absorb the wonder and joy of learning.

Montessori education is paced to meet the needs of the child. The teacher encourages the child to master a concept, though it might take a week or a month; the child indicates to the teacher when he is ready to move on to the next skill or concept. This individualized, self-paced form of education comes from understanding that each human learns in a unique way.

Montessori is a form of education that respects the child and her desire to learn. The child is not an empty vessel whose head needs to be filled by the all-knowing teacher. The Montessori teacher respects the child and engages him as a partner in learning. Students are encouraged to explore and discover for themselves. The teacher presents lessons using concrete materials, but the child discovers the rules. Recently, a student of mine had been using the stamp game to do addition, exchanging ten units for a ten stamp. After weeks of doing this, one day she came up to me and announced that she did not need the concrete materials to do this anymore since she had now figured out how to do addition using numerals. The pride and joy that she experienced and expressed at that moment was priceless.

Montessori is a holistic form of education. The physical, social, emotional, and spiritual growth of the child is valued as much as academic progress. A quality Montessori program creates an environment that encourages the development of all these areas. I've heard people say that it is a waste of time for teachers to be teaching art to students when they could be teaching reading or math. I disagree; art supports (among other considerations) concentration, fine motor skills, an eye for aesthetic quality, and stress reduction. A relaxed child learns better and is more receptive to new ideas. Tools that help children learn to manage stress will help them be healthier and happier adults.

Montessori education provides children experiences in learning how to learn. I recently spoke to a parent who was dismayed that her child was not using a textbook at school. I asked her why it upset her so much. Did her child know how to learn? Starting at the Early Childhood level, a Montessori child learns to ask the right questions to learn more about any topic he is studying or in which he is interested. For example, while researching biology at the Elementary level, the child asks how the animal meets its fundamental needs. Through this lens, the child can research any other life-form. In math, the child asks the question, What is the rule that I can discover with this operation? Will this rule be the same with all numbers? Once the Montessori child knows the right questions to ask, she needs only the guidance of the teacher and the support of the environment to affirm that she is on track. Learning how to learn is a lifelong skill far more powerful than regurgitating

facts that may be forgotten after a test.

The greatest gift that a Montessori education gives to children is the joy of learning. A quality program is one where students come to school eager to learn, not because the teacher is going to lecture to them, but because in the environment there are many opportunities to learn and discover. In my class, students have a checklist to keep track of what they are learning each week, but there is no sense that learning is a chore after which they can go have fun. Instead, we celebrate learning by asking the question, what else can I learn or how else can I learn when I have finished my checklist? For one child, art might be her choice; for another, it may be more mathematics.

When you have a quality Montessori program, the child, the family, and the school will work as a cohesive unit, and this program is priceless!

*SUNITHA PAILOOR, MEd,
teaches at
Maltby Elementary School in
Snohomish,
WA. She is AMS-credentialed
(Elementary I-II).*

Joseph S. Bruno Montessori Academy

Mission Statement

The community of the Joseph Bruno Montessori Academy provides the opportunity for all students to grow to their fullest potential:

- Cognitively
- Socially
- Emotionally
- Spiritually
- Physically
- Aesthetically

Vision Statement

The vision of Joseph Bruno Montessori Academy is to provide children and families with an education according to the Montessori philosophy and curriculum. Our focus is not only to provide cognitive education for our students, but to also model a commitment to creating peace and care for the environment for years to come. In theory and practice, we will explore how the traditional Montessori curriculum can be combined with current best practices in education as well as technological advances in order to develop a successful group of 21st century learners. At JBMA we treat each child as an individual, building on their strengths and abilities to become life-long global learners.

The Joseph S. Bruno Montessori Academy's Core Values Statement:

Respect- We embrace with respect all students regardless of racial, cultural or religious background, gender or the physically or mentally challenged.

Peace- We create an atmosphere that will promote the development of peaceful individuals. All students will become committed to creating peace, and taking care of the environment in their homes, school, and communities.

Collaboration- We provide each child a foundation for a lifetime of learning by having multi-age classrooms and multi-level collaboration.

Independent Thinker- We foster students' development of positive self-esteem; so they will become independent thinkers and accept leadership roles in the world of tomorrow.

Joseph Bruno Montessori Academy

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We're on the Web!
www.jbma.education

Upcoming Events in March

- 2 Play, *Jack and the Beanstalk* 6:30 PM
- 6 PTO Meeting 6:00 – 7:00 PM
- 9 Toddler & Preschool Parent/Teacher Conferences
No Toddler & Preschool Classes
- 15 & 16 1st – 8th Parent/Teacher Conferences
1st – 8th Dismiss at 1:00
- 20 1st – 8th Spring Program 7:00 PM
- 23 Dismiss at 1:00 No Aftercare
- 26 – Apr. 2 Spring Break