

OCTOBER 2024

*Our mission is to raise up disciples of Jesus Christ through Christ-centered Montessori education.
God's Work Done God's Way for God's Glory*

From the Board of Directors

As the President of the Grace Montessori Board, I would like to honor two board members who have recently retired from active duty on the board. Mary Beth Gregory, the founder of GMA and long-time Head of School, and Cindy Beers, parent and board officer since the beginning of the school. Both of these ladies have dedicated 17 years of their volunteer time to helping GMA grow and be successful. They have been instrumental in the path that we have taken and the success we have had. Mary Beth nurtured the lovely culture we have and the challenging curriculum in her position as Head of School. Cindy was instrumental in helping develop new programs and raise funds. Their contributions over the years are too many to mention. Board meetings are different without their presence and input.



As for the current board. We have an amazing group of individuals that are committed to setting the right Godly vision and strategy for the school. We are in the midst of a comprehensive 40 hour training on Great Board – put on by the Gianforte Family Foundation. Each of our board members has committed 40 hours of time to this training during this fall. We are all energized and looking forward to the great things GMA can do over the next years.

We are blessed to have you all in the GMA community. Thank you for your presence and support. The future is very bright for our school.

Sincerely,
Pam Gosda

Thank you to the following:

GMA would like to thank the Fireplace Center for their generous donation of \$15,000 to complete the necessary funding for GMA to purchase a new 2024 Ford Transit All Wheel Drive.

Our Busy Classrooms



Alex is practicing math on his learn board.



Sweet Pea students learning about Infinity Street.



Ladies working on assignment during uninterrupted work time.



Students in upper elementary conducting a community meeting.



Upper elementary students learning how to mix paint in art class!

Volunteer Opportunities

- Moving dirt to areas where grass is not growing
 - Check ALL sinks and recaulk all that need repair, Friday afternoon is preferable.
 - Movie Night volunteers, Friday, November 15th at 5:30 pm.
 - Raking up weeds in the playground area
-

Early Childhood



Greetings from the Early Childhood classrooms! The children are settling in and have spent the beginning weeks of school learning how to be members of our little communities. Montessori recognized children ages 3-6 truly desire independence and our job is to create a beautifully prepared environment and guide them to be just that! We have been teaching every child exactly what he/she would need to know about our classrooms, everything from rolling/unrolling a rug, to raising a quiet hand, to what it means to be loving and kind. When children function

independently, they develop the confidence and capabilities to care for themselves, others, and their immediate environment. But, most importantly, they develop a true love for learning.

Our traditional Montessori curriculum is enhanced with music (Wednesdays) and chapel (Thursdays) enrichment classes for ALL Early Childhood students. We begin every year telling the story of God's creation and memorizing the verse from Genesis 1:1 "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth". A chapel service is held every Thursday morning in the Activity Center at 8:40 AM. It is imperative your child arrives promptly (see times below) to ensure we begin on time!

In addition to the above, Kindergarten students also attend Spanish, cursive, and PE classes on Fridays. Please send your kindergarten child with appropriate tennis shoes on Friday for PE. In the month of September, our Cultural studies included God and Creation, Calendar, Nutrition, Digestion, and Heart/Circulation. The month of October we are learning about Space, Continent Globes, and the names of our Continents and Oceans.

Other friendly reminders:

- Please ensure your child has a labeled water bottle, inside shoes, a cold lunch (full day only), and a backpack everyday.
- We use Transparent Classroom as a way for you to follow your child's lessons and see pictures of him/her at work. If you haven't received your invitation to join TC, please email your classroom's email address to request another invitation.
- Please be conscientious about arriving on time in the mornings. We begin greeting children around 8:10 and finish promptly at 8:30 with class starting immediately thereafter. It is difficult for children to feel a sense of order and calmness when they arrive late!

Warmest wishes from your Early Childhood teachers! Here's to a blessed fall season.



✨Wish List✨

- Portable Whiteboard (48x36) \$110
- Chromebooks: 25, 2 in 1 tablets/laptops, \$9,125
- Scholarship needs: \$23,000
- Funding for Helping Hands Program: This program provides individualized support that will enable students to develop the academic skills and self-esteem they need to foster a strong foundation for future success. The program aims to enhance a child's literacy development, so they become engaged readers and writers; as well as improve mathematics and handwriting skills. \$10,000 is still needed.
- Capital Improvement projects: New Carpet for classrooms
- If you are interested in donating funds, please click on the donate button below. Or you may mail a check to us at 4809 Grand Ave. Billings, MT 59106

[Donate](#)

Lower Elementary

Happy Fall from Lower Elementary! The school year is off to a great start. In LE, we have begun our Reading A-Z book bag program where students receive books and activities to practice their reading skills. LE teachers ask that students read their books three times and complete the activities before returning their book bag to school. We are so excited to have new A-Z books this year. Please encourage your child to treat their books with care and help them return their bags in a timely manner.



Throughout the last few weeks, Lower Elementary students have been enjoying the Great Lessons which are a series of five stories that give students an overall impression of the grand topics of the universe, the earth, and life on earth. These stories form the heart of the Montessori integrated elementary curriculum.

Lower Elementary students learn to resolve conflict through the Young Peacemakers curriculum. An important aspect of the reasoning mind is developing skills to communicate respectfully and resolve conflicts with peers through Biblical principles. Young Peacemakers teaches that “children, like adults, can learn to confess their wrongs in a way that demonstrates that they are taking full responsibility for their contribution to a conflict.”

Throughout the year, LE students learn how to navigate conflict resolution through the Five A's of Confession:

Admit what you did wrong

Apologize for how your choices affected the other person

Accept the consequences

Ask for forgiveness

Alter your choice in the future

Consistent implementation of these principles contributes to a peaceful classroom environment.

Lower Elementary greatly enjoyed their school field trip to Grandpa's Farm Pumpkin Patch!

In the near future, be on the lookout for parent teacher conferences sign-ups. We look forward to meeting with you!

Reminders

- Nov. 5th Eye Screening by Billings Lions Club
 - Nov. 7 & 8th Parent Teacher Conference
 - Nov. 11th PGM Quarterly Meeting at GMA @ 6:30 pm
 - Nov. 15 Movie Night at GMA at __pm FREE Admissions for children whose parents accompany them to movie night.
 - **Nov. 18 Raffle Ticket are due. Raffle drawing will be Nov. 22**
 - Nov. 27-29 Thanksgiving Break
 - Dec. 23- Jan. 3 Christmas Break
 - Jan. 6th PGM meeting at GMA at 6:30pm
-

Absaroka Newsletter

October 2024

What we've been up to

These last couple of months have been so busy! In the last couple of weeks, we've gone on two different field trips. The pumpkin patch was such a fun experience for the class, as we worked together in two groups to complete the corn maze as quickly as possible. Absaroka also got to attend the NILE last week and we learned all about the importance of Montana's largest industry, agriculture! We recently finished our 5 Great Lessons, and are moving on to learning about scientific classification and botany in science. The students have been working incredibly hard on their Wax Museum projects and are so excited to share them with you in a couple of weeks.



Upcoming Events

Wax Museum: October 31, 11-12

Parent-Teacher Conferences: Nov. 7-8

Thanksgiving Break: Nov. 27-29

Learning Topics

- **Math:** review of multiplication and division
- **Language:** word study of homophones, abbreviations, affixes, and more
- **History:** Biographies of historical figures
- **Science:** Classification & Botany
- **Writing:** Friendly Letters-Great Mail Race
- **Reading:** "Tales of Ancient Egypt"

Reminders

Students need to bring their instruments to school every Tuesday and home every Friday. They should be practicing for the Christmas concert.



Upper Elementary reading to younger students.



Upper Elementary practicing with their band instruments.



Upper Elementary receiving a lesson on geometry.

Middle School



Since the beginning of the year, we've really tried to incorporate community building and character development into every aspect of our classroom culture to create a strong foundation for the other collaborative activities Middle School oversees. Academically, students have settled into the routine and are starting to take more responsibility for their individual pacing, work completion, and performance reflection. They have just completed the Let's Go Learn testing which will help us fill-in any gaps, as well as, identify which students need to be challenged more.

Students have established baselines for the greenhouse maintenance, chicken care, and jewelry empire. They have brainstormed together to develop new ideas and plans for improvement. They have also taken on more responsibility with the Pizza Lunches. Students are learning how to use Google Spreadsheets so they can eventually take over full control of the ordering, distributing, and budgeting involved.

Students are also stepping out in the GMA community by reading to the younger children, being an encouragement to "buddy teachers", and developing a newsletter describing all of the fun things happening at GMA. Soon, they will start making more connections in the Billings community and then they will be reaching out internationally to connect with other Montessori schools.

In Math, students successfully completed their first exam and will be taking the second exam this week. Some of them may be bringing home supplemental exercises to address any "red flag" areas of concern. In Civics and Science, students have been exploring some of the hot topics centered around renewable/non-renewable resources. They will be completing a choose-your-adventure style series of assignments that will allow them to have more input in the direction of their learning based on individual interest. History lessons begin after the completion of Civics, November 1, 2024. The upcoming Presidential Election on November 5, 2024 has provided much information on government structure and process.

In Language Arts/Writing students are studying Mechanics and Usage of English, Literary Elements, Reading Comprehension and Vocabulary Development, while keeping an Interactive Notebook for Reference. Students have completed an online journal on the first book of the year, Freak the Mighty. Narrative Writing has been introduced with students writing their own stories. They have completed two exams. The 8th graders are creating and publishing their own school newsletter exploring poultry management, agriculture and entrepreneurship.





Educational Director's Article

Being a Montessori Parent

Being a Montessori parent doesn't mean being a Montessori teacher. Phew, right? We want to encourage you and help you understand that the Montessori philosophy is help to life. We teachers, in partnership with you, aim to understand and live Montessori, which in itself is everlasting. Here are a few key concepts to know that will speak to you as a Montessori parent.

- **Respect for the Child** – Much of the Montessori philosophy stems from a deep respect for children. This involves respecting the uniqueness of every child, their freedom to choose, to move, to correct their own mistakes, and to work at their own pace.
- **Observing** – When I was in my Montessori training, I was instructed to metaphorically “sit on my hands and zip my lips”. We as adults tend to jump in without taking a moment to simply watch and observe a child. What does he love to do over and over? What gives him joy? What does he gravitate towards? These are all clues to us as the observer as it may show us who he is to come.
- **Grace and Courtesy** – “Everything we ask of the child, we do ourselves.” Children see, hear, and absorb everything we do, therefore, everything we ask of the child, we model ourselves. This includes: saying please and thank you, knowing how to introduce yourself, pushing in a chair when leaving the table, cleaning up, etc. Reflect on what you do well in your household or what could be better and make a plan.

- Independence – Montessori education emphasizes independence as much as the child shows interest and readiness – not at the adult’s expectation. Independence is motivated by the child’s natural drive to learn, and this drive ebbs and flows with distinct purposes over time. It’s the adult’s job to respect this drive by carefully preparing conditions which remove obstacles along the way:

- Infancy (0-6)

Functional Independence: In the first period of life, children are fixated on learning what things are and how they work. Infants are adapting to their surroundings in a physical and factual sense, while building their own sense of self as a capable and valued human being.

Catch phrase for this period of development: "Help me do it myself."

- Childhood (6-12)

Intellectual Independence: School-aged children experience a major shift from how does this work? To why are things like this? Independence is no longer just about doing things for themselves, but in thinking for themselves.

Catch phrase for this period of development: "Help me learn it myself."

- Adolescence (12-18)

Social Independence: This third stage is often dubbed the “parallel” to early childhood. In the same way that toddlers and preschoolers are drawn to real-life activities over academics, adolescents experience a desire to experience real-life work beyond the bounds of classrooms as well. This time, it’s in the context of figuring out who they are and how they fit into the world outside of the family unit.

Catch phrase for this period of development: "Don’t tell me what to do."

- Maturity (18-24)

Moral Independence: Montessori found that development is still happening in these years, and that it doesn’t arbitrarily stop at age 18 in the way it is culturally framed. This is a time when the young adult seeks maturity and financial independence in order to discover their place within the world.

Catch phrase for this period of development: "What should I do?"

- Patience and Humility - When teachers embark on their spiritual transformation to become a Montessori teacher, Dr. Montessori asked us to rid ourselves of anger and pride and blanket ourselves with patience and humility. Regardless of being a teacher or parent, we could all use a gentle reminder to practice these both. Ephesians 4:2 states, “Always be humble and gentle. Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other’s faults because of your love.” Let all that we say and do be with love and respect for God’s children.

We’ve included some of our teacher’s favorite books for your viewing. If you’d like to delve more into Montessori education, Love and Logic, or Christianity with your child, we hope these can be of service and inspiration to you! Click [HERE](#) to purchase any of these books on Amazon:

In Christ,

Bethany Fuqua

Education Director

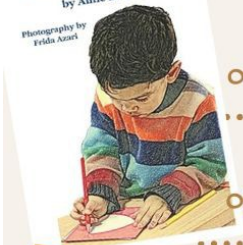
Resources:

Guidepost Montessori. 2024. *Why is Montessori so Focused on Independence?* 10-21-2024

<https://www.guidepostmontessori.com/blog/why-is-montessori-so-focused-on-independence>

Admin's Favorite Books

A Parents' Guide to the
Montessori Classroom
by Aline D. Wolf
Photography by
Kerla Aarst

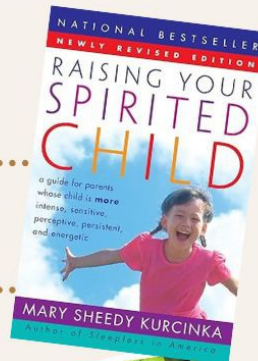


01

A PARENTS GUIDE TO THE
MONTESSORI CLASSROOM
BY: ALINE D. WOLF

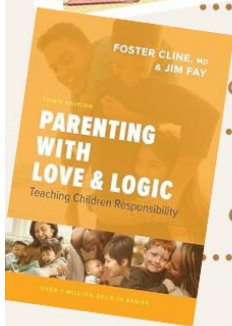
02

RAISING YOUR SPIRITED CHILD
BY: MARY KURCINKA



03

PARENTING WITH LOVE AND LOGIC
BY: JIM FAY AND FOSTER CLINE



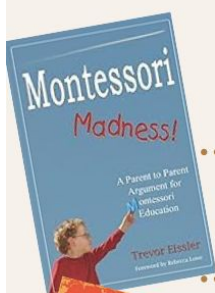
04

ADVENTURE BIBLE
BY: ZONDERVAN



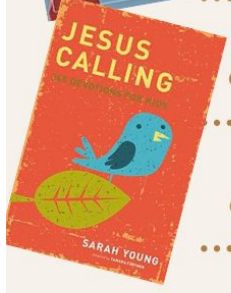
CLICK THE LINK IN THE ARTICLE TO PURCHASE ON AMAZON!

Early Childhood's Favorite Books



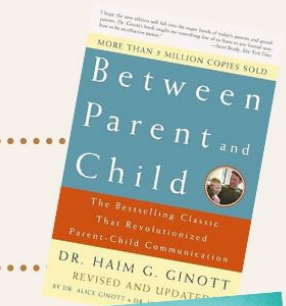
01

MONTESSORI MADNESS
BY: TREVOR EISSLER



03

JESUS CALLING
BY: SARAH YOUNG



02

BETWEEN PARENT AND CHILD
BY: HAIM GINOTT

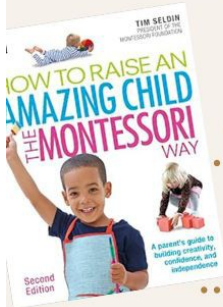


04

KINDNESS IS MY SUPERPOWER
BY: ALICIA ORTEGO

CLICK THE LINK IN THE ARTICLE TO PURCHASE ON AMAZON!

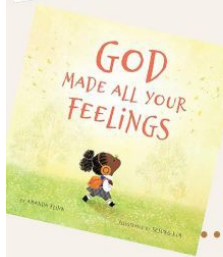
Elementary's Favorite Books



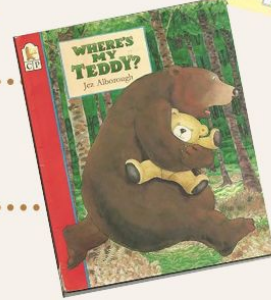
01 HOW TO RAISE AN AMAZING CHILD THE
MONTESSORI WAY
BY: TIM SELDIN



02 365 BIBLE STORIES AND PRAYERS
BY: COTTAGE DOOR PRESS



03 GOD MADE ALL YOUR FEELINGS
BY: AMANDA FLINN



04 WHERE'S MY TEDDY?
BY: JEZ ALBOROUGH

CLICK THE LINK IN THE ARTICLE TO PURCHASE ON AMAZON!

Middle School's Favorite Books

01 **THE BOOK OF VIRTUES**
BY: WILLIAM J. BENNETT

02 **SO THE NEXT GENERATION WILL KNOW - PREPARING YOUNG CHRISTIANS FOR A CHALLENGING WORLD**
BY: SEAN MCDOWELL

03 **PARENTING TEENS WITH LOVE AND LOGIC**
BY: JIM FAY AND FOSTER CLINE

04 **TALKING WITH YOUR KIDS ABOUT GOD**
BY: NATASHA CRAIN

CLICK THE LINK IN THE ARTICLE TO PURCHASE ON AMAZON!

Parent Education Survey

Please complete this very short survey by clicking [HERE](#). Responses will help the school better understand parents' desires for parent education and community building. Thank you so much!

Remarks from the Head of School

Happy Fall! With nine weeks into the school year, we are all settling in and have reached normalization. We have also completed our first testing window of Let's Go Learn, a best-in-class online, adaptive assessment and instruction program that helps teachers pinpoint students' strengths and weaknesses. GMA just tested all students in 1st-8th grade in reading, math, and pre-algebra (8th) and you will receive your child's test scores at the upcoming parent/teacher conferences. GMA will also be testing students again in the spring to see what gains have been made.

This is also the first year to have our Helping Hands Interventionist at the school and Mrs. Wildung is working with students from 1st-8th using the Barton System for Dyslexia. Mrs. Wildung is also

working with students in a one-on-one setting for additional support when a student needs additional support for assignments/projects. We are grateful to have this resource at our school.

As for the spiritual growth of our school and our students, I am always wondering if our light is shining bright enough. I am studying the book of Revelation this year and have just finished reading about the letters to the seven churches. I have been thinking about what letter we, Grace Montessori Academy, might have received as a ministry from John through our God. Would it have been one of praise, one of disapproval or one of mixed reviews? I think it would be one of mixed reviews as we are always in need of praise as well as correction. We are working to be spiritually richer than we were the day before and must always obey the greatest commandment, Matthew 22:37-40 "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind, and Love your neighbor as yourself."

Grace Montessori Academy strives to be a ministry that is raising up disciples of Jesus Christ through Christ-centered Montessori education. This is a process that takes a course of time, not just one school year, as GMA is shaping the hearts, minds and souls of the children who attend the school. ***My prayer for our students and their families is that they stay the course of time, GMA provides an environment which fosters the fullest potential to bear fruit for our Lord.***

We have much to be thankful for and there is much work to be done. Please know that the GMA staff is committed to developing your child into a human that will be kind and will know the difference between right and wrong as well as have a strong academic foundation.

In gratitude,
Regina Griemsman, Head of School

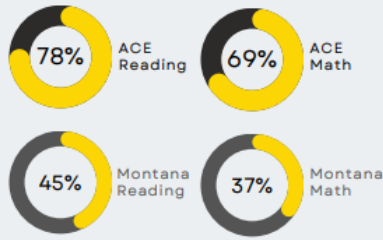
ACE Partner Schools' Academic Performance in Comparison to Public Schools

Grace Montessori Academy is a partner school.

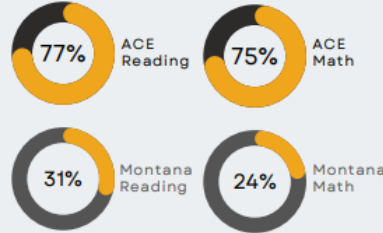


Higher Proficiency Rates

All Students, Grades 3-8



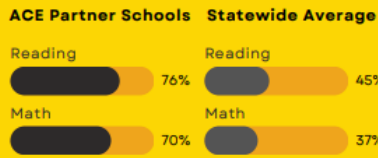
Low-Income Students, Grades 3-8



Attendance



Partner Schools Proficiency



Regina Griemsman

Regina is using Smore to create beautiful newsletters