

The Montessori Schoolhouse

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Dear Montessori Families,

We trust you all had a lovely Winter Break as here in the desert we bask in the 75° sunshine and the rest of the country suffers through snow drifts and 12° below!

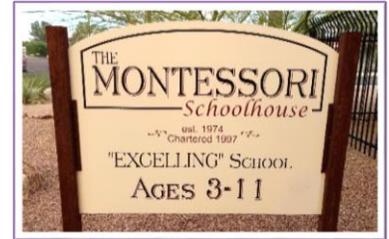
Our classrooms began the longer semester with great eagerness and a variety of subjects:

LOWER ELEMENTARY

The scholars and scribes in Lower El have begun study of the two big Winter / Spring units: **Astronomy & Space** for **Science**, and **Italy** for **Culture**. They are all very excited about these subjects and told their eager teachers that learning about Italy was "a dream come true."

So as we wander the starry landscape of the **Big Bang** and the **Solar System**, we are also preparing to meet **Leonardo da Vinci** and his Mona Lisa, visit the ancient Roman **Colosseum** and even listen to some **Opera** arias sung by our very own Perla Villa.

Simultaneously, the students have been working on prose **Paragraph Writing**, requiring them to organize and order their ideas as well as write in complete sentences. They have taken to this remarkably well. After an appropriate amount of diligence spent on prose writing, we will return to more **Poetry** in the Spring!



Upcoming Events & Information

Rodeo Break

Thur. Feb 22nd – Fri. Feb 23rd
School resumes Mon. Feb 26th

Spring Break

Mon. March 19th – Fri. March 23rd
School resumes Mon. March 26th

Upper El Testing: **AzMERIT**

Tues. April 3rd – Fri. April 5th

AIMS Science

Grade 4 ONLY - Tues. April 17th



Wynn used our cucumber snack to recreate the "Phases of the Moon", yesterday's lesson.
#kidsplayingwithfood



Math is always a hands-on potpourri of processes and geometry; **Column, Row, Array**, reading **Large Numbers** (I mean really large numbers!) and **Parts of a Circle**. Diameter, anyone? We head towards Spring spending and adding money in our **Jewelry Store**, full of tiaras and glowing gems.

We are proud to announce several winners in the **Tucson Festival of Books – Young Authors Poetry Contest: Olivia Renner, Dani Awais, and Eleanor Almond**. Proud congratulations to all the poets! We expect even more winners in the future as we get used to the contests and deadlines available. Please enjoy the poem by **Olivia Renner**, attached to this newsletter.

UPPER ELEMENTARY

Upper Elementary has started our second semester with an exciting unit on **Mexico**. Students have studied the fascinating **History** of the country from the Maya and the Aztec, to the Mexican Revolution, through to present day. We have also discussed the diverse **Geography and Climate of Mexico, Flag and Political Map**, and will be rounding out the unit with **Mexican Art, Music**, and of course, **Food!** Our unit study has included the reading of **Coco: A Story About Music, Shoes, and Family** which has been a huge hit with the class! We look forward to debuting a new geography unit after Rodeo Break!



Upper El students learning about dams and hydroelectric power. These students have created a buttress dam with clay and sticks.

In **Language**, Upper El. has embarked on our study of poetry! This unit features lessons on figurative language, including **Metaphors, Similes, and Idioms**. We will also be exploring the **Structure of Poetry, Types of Poems, and How to Analyze a Poem**. We look forward to the beautiful and creative poems that our students will write as a part of this unit! Furthermore, UE students will once again submit poems to the Sonoran Desert Museum Poetry contest.

Geometry has been the topic of the month for Upper El. 3rd, 4th and 5th graders. Students have been diving into topics like **Perimeter, Area, Angles, and Volume**, to name a few.

The semester **Science** lessons began with a journey of the Earth. Lessons included **Types of Rocks, Weathering and Erosion, The Rock Cycle, Plate Tectonics, and Volcanoes!** We are currently in the thick of our **Energy Unit**. The students have learned about **Types of Energy and Energy Transformations** by making delicious toast—ask your student all about it! At present, we are learning about **Power Plants, Renewable vs. Non-Renewable Resources,**

as well as **Alternative & Sustainable Resources**. The **Energy Unit** will conclude with a thorough look at **Electricity, Magnets, and Electrical Circuits**.

Yearbook design is underway! The class is very excited to create this year's yearbook. Our art teacher, Paige, has done an amazing job guiding this year's art lessons with elements of **Design, Shape, and Color** with many mediums!

In **Choir**, The Montessori Treble-Makers have begun writing an **Opera** based on Shakespeare's **A Midsummer Night's Dream**. So far, the students have completed many scenes and song lyrics. We will begin composing the music this week. Stay tuned; it's going to be an awesome production! The date of the concert is TBD.

Also, thank you for a successful **Winter Concert** in January. The children sang marvelously, and we had nearly-perfect attendance! Congrats to all singers!



“Imagination does not become great until human beings, given the courage and the strength, use it to create.”

– Maria Montessori

NOTES

SECURITY

We have recently taken significant measures to further insure the safety of our students and staff while here at school. A security screen has been put up along the staff parking lot gate and the playground gate, assuring the privacy of our campus while the children are on the playground. We have also installed several security cameras, keeping watch of the front turn-around, the playground, and the staff parking lot. **Thank you, Luis Villa and Doug Helber, for your work in installing the system!**

ACTIVITY FEE/STATE TAX CREDIT

We are still gratefully accepting Tax Credit Donations for 2017: \$400.00 per married couple, \$200.00 single. You can donate up until April 15th to still claim it on this year's tax return. Please contact Rosemary if you have any questions regarding contributions. We use EVERY PENNY for our MINSTREL, CHESS, CHOIR, YOGA, PE and MUSIC lessons. THANK YOU!

PARENTING TIP

When you respond to and focus on your child's excessive crying, you teach your child to cry even more and to be more sad.

Check in on crying. If comfort and solutions don't work, invite your child to come talk with you when he/she has finished crying.

VALENTINE'S DAY REMINDERS ♥

If your child would like to bring in a special treat or a Valentine card for their classmates, please remember: Valentines should be given to every student in their class. Cards should not be addressed to the receiver – only signed by the giver (this saves loads of time during handout). **Thank you and Happy Valentine's Day!**

Wishing you all a happy Rodeo Holiday,

*Regine, Olive, Judi, Perla, Maddy, Paige,
Gabriella, Lano & Rosemary*