



Brookview School

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Brookview School

September 25, 2011

Vol 4, Issue 3



Brookview School Community Newsletter



Brookview School
 An Independent Montessori Community



AMERICAN MONTESSORI SOCIETY
 education that transforms lives

Full Member School

Announcing Brookview's Management Team

Dear Brookview Community:

You may be wondering why the familiar "Message from the Executive Director" is missing from this edition of the newsletter. I'm still here- but I've recently taken on a new role.

The Brookview School Board of Directors has passed a Board action to restructure the Brookview School Administration. This is the result of a desire to put greater focus on development and marketing as well as to reduce duplication of effort.

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In the new structure, the position of Executive Director has been eliminated, and Brookview will be led by a three-person management team:



Sue Dubar, as Operations Officer, will lead the day-to-day operations of the school. She will oversee all programs, and manage teaching faculty and staff.



Suzie Finster, as Financial Officer, will continue to handle all financial aspects of the school.



Jennifer Spikner (that's me) will move into the new role of **Development Officer**, focusing on advancement in order to strengthen Brookview School as we move into the future.

Please join us on Tuesday night at the State of the School address for further details. A note from Katie Kwon, our Board President is below.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Spikner, Sue Dubar, and Suzie Finster- The Brookview Management Team

On the Calendar...

September 27: State of the School Address, 6:00 PM

October 4: Brookview Book Club, 6:00 PM

October 5 & 6: Parent-Teacher Conferences

From the President of the Board

Brookview's Board of Directors spent a lot of time over the summer, assessing where we are and where we want to grow. Many parents may not realize that tuition dollars alone do not cover the operating expenses at Brookview, like most private schools. The time has come to have a full-time staff member devoted to

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the fundraising and development necessary to ensure our continued growth.

Jennifer

Spikner introduced many of us to Montessori through her educational lectures, and we think she'll do a great job convincing many more families that a Brookview education is the right choice for their children.

Of course, we must also make sure that we continue to meet very high standards as a full member of the American Montessori Society. Sue Dubar's extensive Montessori background, both as a Brookview teacher and administrator, will allow her to identify what our teachers and families need to keep the classrooms running smoothly. Susie Finster expects to complete her CPA next month (congratulations!) and will make sure the lights are on, the supply cabinets are stocked, and that every dollar is spent carefully.

Any change in an organization will come with an adjustment period as everyone involved grows into their new roles. We ask your patience in the next few months as we work out the kinks in this new system. If you have any questions or concerns, I invite you to contact me or any other Board member - their contact information is listed below. And we welcome your attendance at the Board meetings - we are always looking for interested members to consider service on the Board.

Katie Kwon

President of the Board

Katie Kwon (President): katiekwonmd@yahoo.com or 269-932-2033

Greg Molter (Vice President): gmolter@trigobread.com or 269-930-3887

Bill Korbel (Treasurer): bill@lostdunes.com or 269-426-3891

David Ryan (Secretary): david@cedltd.com or 614-214-3460

Marc Thurm: marc@thrum.net

Praful Shintre: shintrepraful@gmail.com

Tamara Samuels: 773-251-6444

Leslie Sullivan: atouchofgreatness@hotmail.com or 269 757-1491

The Return of Baaah Humbug

Baaah Humbug, the sculpture created last spring by Brookview students with the help and guidance of David Ryan and Lindsay Gaspari, spent the summer on display downtown St. Joe. The sheep is fashioned after



Ebenezer Scrooge, of Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*. The *Farm Fresh Art* was recently auctioned off on the bluff. Thanks to the generosity of several Brookview families, we were lucky enough to be able to buy good old Ebenezer back! In early October, Baaah Humbug will return to Brookview School for good. Welcome home!

Celma and Desmond Perry visit Brookview School

Brookview was honored to receive a recent visit from Celma and Desmond Perry. Celma is the founder of [The Seton Montessori Institute](#) and is a pioneer of the Montessori movement in the United States. Pictured here are Celma and Desmond with six Brookview teachers, all of whom received their Montessori training from the Perry's during the past three decades!



Parent-Infant Class off to a great start!



Brookview's Parent-Infant class has been meeting every Friday morning at 8:30 in the Great Room. The class is led by Maggie Bischoff and focuses on a different topic in early childhood development each week for six weeks. For more information, or to register for the next six-week session, contact Maggie at mbischoff@brookviewschool.org.

Bonding at Camp Eberhart, by Grace Krsul-Sullivan

At the beginning of the year we always take a trip to Camp Eberhart in Three Rivers, Michigan. This year we did some pretty cool stuff. When we got there we saw our favorite counselor, Shaun. After we got settled in our cabin, he took us on a tour of the camp. First, we went down to the archery and riflery ranges. Then he showed us BCK, which stands for Boats, Canoes, and Kayaks. Then we looked at the island and some of the summer cabins. The tour was pretty fun.

After that we played Ball, Ball, Ball, a fun game including a ball and a sandpit. Then we did Group Dynamics. We do something new every time. This time we had pipes and a golf ball. Everybody had a pipe and the ball had to roll through all the pipes without falling and we had to get the ball all the way across the dining hall and into the basket. Then we did Gone Senseless, where you put on a blindfold and see what it's like to lose a sense.

We also rode horses and did an obstacle course race. Then we went out into the woods to look for animal tracks and scat. Next, we had dinner (they have great food!). After dinner, we made s'mores over a campfire and sang campfire songs. Then we were all exhausted and ready for bed.

The next day we went rock climbing, talked about animal adaptations, soil, and

learned how to read a compass. Then we broke into two groups. I went canoeing and saw a turtle! The other group went to archery. We did so many things and had a really fun time at Camp Eberhart! I think we all want to go back soon! Check out the pictures on the [Upper Elementary Update Page!](#)

Montessori at Home

Have you marveled at the remarkable order of the Montessori classroom? Has your toddler told you that at school she pours her own juice? Does your teenager hang or put away all her clothes-without being asked?

Encouraging order, independence, and self-motivation are fundamental to the Montessori approach. Carefully designed classrooms allow students to develop competence in caring for themselves and their surroundings. And from the sense of pride that "I did it myself!" blooms the confidence to take on the world.

Bringing Montessori principles into your home can be a valuable bridge to what your child learns at school. Here are some ways to build that connection.

Create an Ordered Environment

Having a place for everything, on a child-friendly scale, encourages both independence and self-discipline. Children know where to find what they need, and where to put it when they're done. An ordered environment also has fewer distractions, allowing children to focus on the task at hand.

To make things accessible to your young child:

- Provide low shelves or drawers for clothing; lower the rod in the bedroom closet.
- Keep a small step stool in the bathroom and kitchen so your child can reach the sink.
- Arrange toys and games on low open shelves with a particular place for each. Sort smaller items into trays or baskets by category, such as puzzles, art supplies, and blocks.
- Put healthy snacks and foods on a low pantry shelf so your child can help himself.
- Pour drinks into small, manageable pitchers placed on a low refrigerator shelf. Keep cups within your child's reach-along with a sponge to clean up spills.

Teach Real-Life Skills

Montessori students are taught to take care of themselves and their classroom and to be helpful to others. They wash tables, organize shelves, prepare their own meals, and assist younger children. In addition to mastering real-life skills, they come to see themselves as valued members of the community.

Having your child help at home can bring similar rewards. Take the time to teach each skill separately and to repeat the lesson as needed. Each task your child masters adds to his confidence and self-esteem.

Young children, for example, can peel vegetables, fold their clothes, match their

socks, and care for pets. "Tweens" can sort the mail and take out the recycling. And adolescents can prepare the family dinner, read to their younger siblings, help with computer maintenance and home repair, and manage their own bank account.

Promote Concentration

The ability to focus and concentrate is an important skill for learning. You can help develop your child's concentration by observing what sparks her interest. Set her up with the means and materials to explore it, and let her work without interruption.

While your child's work environment should be free of distraction, it doesn't have to be away from family activity. Some children prefer working at the kitchen table or reading in a cozy corner of the living room to holing up in a bedroom or study. Observe your child's response to various environments, ask questions, and make adjustments as needed.

Nurture Inner Motivation

Children are most willing to apply themselves when they feel there's intrinsic value to their work. Some parents use external rewards as motivation, but only pride and pleasure from within has lasting, and meaningful, effects.

Montessori teachers refrain from using traditional classroom rewards such as gold stars and merit-based privileges. Instead, they focus on nurturing each child's personal sense of accomplishment. Even praise is given sparingly-saved to acknowledge a child's effort, rather than the outcome of her work.

By expressing encouragement and appreciation for your child's efforts, you-like her teachers-help nurture an inner motivation that will serve her for life.

This article was reprinted with permission from the [American Montessori Society](http://www.americanmontessori.org/) website.

Community Service, by Nadia Judge

This week in Upper El, we made cookies for The Benton Harbor Soup Kitchen. We learned that some people don't have enough food to feed their families, and probably don't get desserts very often. Sometimes we don't know how lucky we are to have dinner every day, so we want to give to the community because no one deserves to have no food. We hope they enjoy!

The Brookview Book Club

Come join us for the new Brookview Book Club. The first selection is: *Catching Up or Leading the Way: American Education in the Age of Globalization*, by Yong Zhao.

In this book, Zhao compares the United States' highly decentralized, highly individualized educational system to China's highly centralized, test-driven educational system. He cautions us not to glorify or emulate China's system, which has been highly effective at teaching students how to take tests, but sadly

lacking in providing a rich, broad, and happy experience for them. He believes that in education, "What really matters . . . may lie somewhere else . . . such as in the overall philosophical approach to education, the aggregation of all activities outside and inside the school, and how students and teachers treat one another (p. 46)."

Each session, facilitated by Megan Schopf, will review a few chapters, leaving time for discussion of the compelling information Zhao shares in the book.

The book club will meet at Brookview School at 6 pm on the following Tuesday evenings: October 4, November 1 and December 6. Please contact Charlotte to sign up and/or order a book. Books may be purchased individually or through Brookview School.

"Establishing lasting peace is the work of education; all politics can do is keep us out of war."

- Maria Montessori

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