



Case Prospectus

The hum of quiet activity greets you as you take your first step into Montessori Country School.

You glance around the corner and see a lively classroom filled with students busily working, some with friends, others independently, all focused and concentrating.

You feel a sense of calm joy as these industrious children engage with their classroom environment and with one another.

You know important work is happening here.

This is a place where Dr. Maria Montessori's words come alive, Where "the child is both hope and a promise for mankind."



Our Mission

Montessori Country School is committed to the Montessori method of education in supporting children to achieve self-discipline, self-mastery, and a life-long love of learning. We endeavor to honor individuality, nurture enthusiasm, and encourage independence in a carefully prepared environment where children learn with love, compassion, and respect.

Nurturing Curiosity for Four Decades

The Montessori classroom fosters a thirst for knowledge, a passion to learn, and support for independence at a young age. Founded in Italy by Dr. Maria Montessori over a century ago, this philosophy of education grew out of the need to prepare children for their future – to be citizens of the world. Based on her observations of children and how they interact with the greater world, Dr. Montessori developed a method that was attuned to a child’s developmental needs and learning patterns. The approach is grounded in a deep respect for the innate intelligence of the child, the universality of our desire to acquire knowledge, and the imperative to nurture and facilitate independence and curiosity.

Montessori Country School (MCS) embodies the educational philosophy of Dr. Montessori. For over 40 years, our classrooms have teemed with enthusiastic and inquisitive young people embarking on a lifetime of learning. Founded by Dorothy King and Julie Rynearson in 1972, the School has established itself as a pillar of Montessori education in Kitsap County. MCS has helped multiple generations of children prepare for the intellectual and social challenges that lie ahead. In a rapidly changing world, the Montessori Method remains ever more relevant and appropriate for the social, emotional and intellectual development of children.

Our strong reputation in the community results from the fact that we provide:

-  A Montessori program for toddler through elementary aged children that is true to the principals of Dr. Montessori
-  A beautiful and thoughtfully prepared environment both inside and outside of the classroom, which meets the needs of the children at each developmental phase
-  A strong sense of community among students, parents, and staff, leading to lasting relationships and an on-going commitment to the school
-  A supportive environment for families through parent education and open collaboration with staff
-  A community of MCS graduates who exhibit a passion for learning, respect for others, and the confidence to take on leadership roles

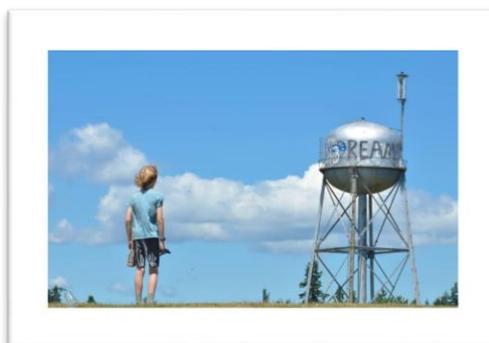
An Exciting New Chapter For MCS

Our 40th anniversary in 2012 brought exciting changes. MCS and Voyager Montessori Elementary combined to provide a cohesive Montessori education for children ages 18 months to 12 years. This change brought together dedicated and enthusiastic parents, gifted and caring teachers, and years of collective experience and commitment to Montessori education. As one school, we have a strong and sustainable foundation to create a model program that will be the only Montessori school in Kitsap County serving children from toddler through the elementary years.

The anniversary also heralded new leadership of the school. Patty Christensen retired after 26 years as Head of School and she confidently passed the baton to Meghan Skotheim. A member of the school community for 19 years, Meghan is building on the legacy of MCS through her demonstrated expertise and passion for Montessori education.

Our Challenges and Our Needs

MCS is currently operating on two separate campuses – the preschool campus (Children’s House) on Arrow Point Drive and the elementary campus on High School Road several miles away. We have significant space challenges at all program levels. Operating on two campuses is inefficient and does not allow for collaboration and connection between parents, students, and staff that is the Montessori model. After careful consideration, the MCS board decided to develop the Arrow Point campus to accommodate all of our needs.



Each year, MCS turns away many students at the Primary level due to insufficient space. In addition, the Preprimary classroom is small and the space is limiting. Two new Primary classrooms will allow us to open a third Primary class and welcome the Preprimary children into one of our larger existing classrooms. Increasing our preschool enrollment will lead to the growth of our elementary program.

The elementary classrooms are currently in portables that are nearing the end of their useful lives. We will build two spacious elementary classrooms with dedicated outdoor space on the new campus. In addition, we look forward to having additional space for our art program.

We know that a complete education does not take place only within the walls of a classroom. We are managing in our current situation, however we desperately need a multi-purpose space to meet our program goals. This space will allow for educational activities such as music, movement, and collaboration between students outside of their classrooms. In addition, it will serve the whole school community for parent education, performances, and rainy day recess. This space will be made available to the larger Bainbridge Island community.

Montessori Country School can only reach its maximum potential with all programs on one campus.

Stronger Together On One Campus

Bringing our programs together on one campus will enhance our overall program offerings and the depth of experiences of our students and their families.

Benefits include:

- ✂ Staff and administrative collaboration across all levels to meet the needs of each student
- ✂ Daily interactions of students across age groups to allow for peer teaching, mentoring, and the development of leadership skills – all fundamental to a Montessori education
- ✂ Easy and spontaneous communication among members of the whole MCS community
- ✂ The opportunity for students, parents, and staff to witness and experience the continuum of a Montessori education – from toddler through the elementary years
- ✂ Ease for families with MCS children enrolled at various age levels
- ✂ Greater financial stability as a result of increased enrollment and reduction of overhead through streamlining administrative support, coordinating campus maintenance, and sharing of education resources and supplies

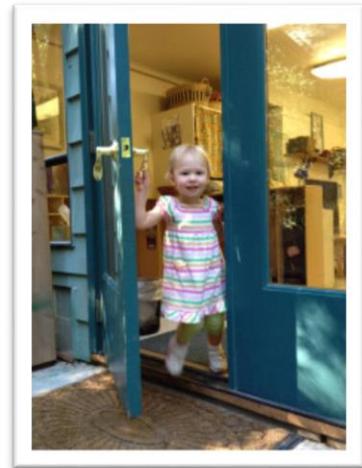
Opening New Doors

Our Campaign for One Campus

MCS is committed to bringing all programs together to create one vibrant school community on our Arrow Point Campus. We are excited to launch our capital campaign – ***Opening New Doors*** to raise \$2.4 million.

This campaign will enable us to:

- ✈ Purchase additional property contiguous to our Arrow Point Drive campus which will allow us to bring our programs and school community together
- ✈ Build-out our “new campus” to include the following:
 - Two additional preschool classrooms
 - Two elementary classrooms
 - A multi-purpose community gathering space
 - A dedicated reception area
 - Redesign of driveway, expanded parking, and landscaping to integrate all spaces



These changes will support a dynamic learning environment for all of our students, expand the ability of MCS to serve families in the community, and place us on the map as one of the few comprehensive Montessori schools in the Pacific Northwest.

Our campaign goal is ambitious! Fortunately, because of our 43 year history and excellent reputation, we have a dedicated and enthusiastic community of families. Together we will work to fulfill our shared vision of offering an excellent Montessori education for children on Bainbridge Island and North Kitsap.

Key Beliefs

We believe that early childhood is the foundation for everything that follows. In the first six years of life, children develop beliefs and attitudes about themselves and their place in the world. They develop confidence and maintain a sense of wonder, joy, and curiosity when they are in an environment that respects their individuality and their limitless capacity as learners.

We believe that children hold the future in their hearts, minds, and souls and that education should be an “education for life.” It must provide the opportunity for children to learn in an atmosphere of respect, kindness, and belief in each child’s potential. Independence and autonomy are celebrated and supported.

We believe the culture of MCS is one of its greatest strengths. It is a culture of respect, inclusion, warmth, curiosity, acceptance, collaboration, and joyful learning. We are a community of adults and children for whom learning is a life-long process. In our school, adults serve as mentors, friends, and guides.

We believe that parents are a child’s foremost teachers and that parent education, support, and partnership play an important role in maximizing a child’s experience at school.

We believe that mixed-age groups provide the optimum classroom environment. Our classrooms promote an atmosphere that is collaborative rather than competitive. Every child is unique and, as such, learns at his or her own pace based upon personal interest. A three-year age span offers modeling for the youngest children and the experience of being leaders for the oldest children.

We believe in the Montessori theory of education. Based on the nature of human development, our authentic Montessori experience offers “a natural place to learn” for every child. This is a place where choice, movement, participation, and self-expression are integral to the child’s experience.

