

## **MONTESSORI FORUM – SMS-PAC LIAISON REPORT**

### **Shannon Staples – February 18, 2013**

*"Our aim is not merely to make the child understand, and still less to force him to memorize, but so to touch his imagination as to enthuse him to his innermost core" -- Dr. Maria Montessori*

#### **DISTRICT MONTESSORI ADVISORY COMMITTEE (DMAC) NEWS**

This Committee consists of: DMAC Chair / Director of Instruction for Choice Programs; Surrey School Board Trustee; Principals; DPAC Rep; SMS Rep; PAC liaisons; and Teacher Reps.

- Latimer Road Elementary's new Montessori program is definitely going ahead with a full + wait list Kindergarten and almost enough for 1/2/3 class. They will promote more and see if registration picks up for 4/5/6.
- There was discussion about bringing back the 4th primary class to Sunnyside, which would help keep two 4/5/6 upper elementary classrooms. This could be a K/1 or 1/2 built from current waitlists and a spring open house promotion. The new school must accommodate all catchment children so feasibility is a consideration.
- Consideration given to coordinating all 3 schools on the same 3 year educational cycles so that students transferring between programs can transition easily and not miss important parts of curriculum or repeat. At Mountainview, there are some classes not even on the same cycle. Timing is good for next school year, as all schools are in transition.
- Discussion about joint Pro-D opportunities and a District-wide curriculum established for public Montessori in Surrey.
- Principals and teachers were given the go-ahead to start planning a Montessori-specific report card. A small group will gather samples from other schools and create our own first draft for the District. This will take some time to develop and needs input and approval from the BCTF/STA. Parents will be included for input later.
- Pre-Reg Montessori Parent Info Night will be moved to December next year; open houses at each school in January.
- The UBC early childhood Montessori course for January was cancelled due to low enrolment; however no information was distributed to various groups in BC to promote it.
- Brainstormed how we can provide more Montessori teacher training & professional development: short term stepped training, mentorship opportunities, revise job description for postings, revise training options for District, Montessori Helping Teacher (curriculum specialist that roams among schools), collaborative Pro-D, University level Field Program development (SFU and Surrey College possibilities).
- Teacher training that is currently available is: 1. The Vancouver School Board Montessori Credentials Program has an online Foundations course for \$500 - Surrey teachers are able to take this, and participate in ongoing collaboration with Vancouver teachers; 2. Montessori Live online Foundations course for \$350. Teachers can apply to SMS for financial support.
- There are plans for a Grade 8-12 International Baccalaureate Program at Johnston Heights. Dovetails nicely with Montessori philosophy. The new IB Program will absorb the Integrative Studies at Johnston Heights. Semiahmoo has an IB program for Grade 11 & 12 only – this will remain in place.
- Brief discussion about possibly moving South Surrey's Integrated Studies program currently at Elgin (created for Montessori and Fine Arts students ten years ago) to the new high school that to be built in Grandview area (at least 5 years out).
- The next DMAC (District Montessori Advisory Committee) will be held Tuesday, Apr 23rd.

#### **SURREY MONTESSORI SOCIETY (SMS) NEWS**

##### **General News**

- SMS would like to fill the following committee positions - please sign up if you're interested:
  - Fundraising committee chair – ideas & coordinate volunteers to help implement
  - Membership coordinator – help promote SMS and keep roster of members

##### **Parent Education**

- SMS is featuring a new Speaker Series presentation on Thurs Feb 28<sup>th</sup> 6:30pm at Sunnyside. There will be a mini-documentary about Dr. Maria Montessori's life and how the Montessori Method started in the early 1900s, followed by a talk by Marian Mahony on practicing Montessori at home.
  - Admission \$5 per family (SMS members FREE). **RSVP to [surreymontessorisociety@gmail.com](mailto:surreymontessorisociety@gmail.com)**. Indicate # of attendees for event and for childcare.
  - Help setting up for the event would be much appreciated. Please email SMS if you can help out.
- The Speaker Series presentations take place every two months, alternating between Mountainview and Sunnyside. Please email SMS your ideas for Montessori workshops or speakers.

## **Fundraising**

- SMS now co-sponsors singer-songwriter nights at Blue Frog Studios. The next event is an early St. Patrick's Day event, March 9<sup>th</sup> with a Celtic Band. Tickets are \$25. More info on the SMS website.
- Someone is needed to organize a Samosa fundraiser. Not much work involved.

## **Membership**

- Parents are encouraged to become members of SMS. Email SMS if you're interested. We are offering two years of membership for the price of one right now. Your membership fees help SMS to continue offering:
  - Advocacy for maintaining and improving Montessori in public schools in the Surrey School District
  - Parent education on the Montessori Method, including free admission to Speaker Series events
  - Specialized Montessori teacher training
  - Promoting the Montessori program in Surrey
  - Discounted Montessori materials for home use

## **Preschool Liaison**

- Rhona Cizmok, a Montessori preschool teacher and Sunnyside parent, has agreed to fill this position. We need to ensure our Montessori preschool list is up to date and increase communication with the preschools.

## **Promotion**

- Promotion to the community is important to keep our enrollment up.
- Promotion to teachers in the District so they are aware of the program and the ability to take Montessori courses to qualify them for future job openings at Sunnyside, Mountainview and Latimer Road.
- SMS plans to book a table at the Surrey Teacher's Association Conference and Exhibition on Friday May 3<sup>rd</sup>. If anyone is able to come and help, please let us know. SMS might also present a speaker – more info to come.

## **SUNNYSIDE MONTESSORI NEWS**

### **General News**

- Sunnyside plans to do our own open house & presentation after school for Montessori preschool parents and other interested parents from the community (Date TBA - before spring break)

### **Sunnyside Montessori Committees**

- **Material Making** – Laura Rodriguez
  - Laura has been working alone on a huge math card project for intermediate classes. She's only 1/6<sup>th</sup> of the way through it, so please come out to help get this one done and support our teachers!
- **Peace and Outdoor Ed** – Heather Tewfik
  - Intermediate camp info night was held last week. Dates are the week of May 13<sup>th</sup> and May 29<sup>th</sup>.
  - Activities for earth day and oceans day TBA.
  - A Search and Rescue presentation for campers will happen in late April or early May.
  - Fundraising for camp will include a bottle drive, clothing/textiles drive, hot dog sales at Grandview for 2 weeks (sponsored by Thrifty Foods), and two gift baskets to be sold by silent auction at the Adult Social in April.

## **IMPORTANT DATES**

- SMS SPEAKER SERIES: Guest Marian Mahoney – Thur **Feb 28<sup>th</sup>**, 6:30 pm – Sunnyside Library. \$5.00 per family (SMS members free). **RSVP by Sun Feb 24<sup>th</sup>** to surreymontessorisociety@gmail.com. Indicate # attending event and childcare.
- MATERIAL MAKING – **Fridays** 9am – Sunnyside Library. Check with Laura or drop in.
- SMS/BLUE FROG STUDIO MUSIC CONCERT – Fri **March 9<sup>th</sup>**, 7 pm – 1328 Johnston Road
- SUNNYSIDE PAC/MONTESSORI FORUM – Mon **Apr 15<sup>th</sup>** – PAC meeting at 7pm; Montessori Forum 8:00-8:30pm.
- DMAC MEETING – Tues **Apr 23<sup>rd</sup>**, 3:30-5 pm – District Ed Ctr.
- VANCOUVER ISLAND MONTESSORI CONFERENCE – **April 25-27<sup>th</sup>** – Victoria, info on SMS website
- SURREY TEACHER'S ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE – Fri **May 3<sup>rd</sup>** – help needed for SMS booth.

## **SMS CONTACT INFO:**

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