

# An Introduction for Parents to...



**Montessori Educational Centers**

*Where children love to learn...*

# Montessori Educational Centers

Celebrating 50 years of Montessori Excellence

Dear Parent(s) and Guardian(s):

It is a pleasure to introduce you to the Montessori Elementary School of Omaha (MESO).

The Montessori Educational Centers program began in 1967 with one class, ages 3-6, for eighteen children and has since expanded to several early education centers including MESO.

MESO is a private, independent school committed to providing complete and exceptional educational opportunities for children from diverse socioeconomic and academic backgrounds. The school encourages the use of independent, critical thinking skills, time management and problem solving. We have a strong curriculum in math, science and language studies. Uniquely, students contract with the faculty to develop a personalized plan for learning, thereby taking responsibility for their own learning.

Historically, our students progress at a faster rate than in traditional settings. Their achievements are possible because of the approach to learning utilizing the Montessori philosophy and methodology. Students progress at their own pace and are not limited in their activities/studies by grade level. Most important, our students love to learn!

It is a pleasure to watch as our students enter junior high and secondary education levels. Many of our students graduate with honors from their high school classes. Historically, nearly 100% of our elementary students have attended college.

I encourage you to read through these pages to learn more about our excellent program. I hope to meet each of you as you visit our school and choose these opportunities for your child.

Sincerely,

*Julie Roy*

Julie Roy  
President

# Montessori Elementary School of Omaha

## An Introduction for Parents

A private elementary school affiliated with the American Montessori Society and approved by the Nebraska State Department of Education. Montessori Elementary School of Omaha educates children in first through sixth grades.



## There Is A Montessori Difference!

Welcome to the Montessori Elementary School of Omaha. In our Montessori program, your child will experience educational advantages that make our program significantly different from other educational alternatives:

- 1 Individualized learning:** Each child is recognized to be an individual, to have different potentials and different learning rates. The learning environment for each child is adjusted to enable that individual to grow as rapidly as possible, intellectually and socially, and not be confined or controlled by the learning processes of other children.
- 2 Opportunities for learning:** The learning process is not easily compartmentalized into specific segments, but learning occurs most rapidly when a child has an exposure to a broad range of exciting intellectual stimuli. The school is organized to provide a wide array of experiences and a continuous flow of ideas and concepts that both encourage and enhance a child's progress.
- 3 Concrete learning experiences:** While a predominantly paper and pencil approach may have some value, the learning process can be greatly enhanced with concrete learning exercises. In a Montessori classroom, programs and materials are developed specifically to capitalize on the concrete learning concept and enable the Montessori program to be highly effective in addressing the developmental needs of each child. The child understands abstract concepts in concrete examples and relationships.
- 4 Expansive learning:** One of the major functions of the Montessori program is to encourage children to expand their horizons and explore new dimensions beyond the immediate learning situation. While many children are satisfied just to complete a page of an assignment, the Montessori child is encouraged to explore the "why" and "how" and to develop an intellectual curiosity that prepares the child for life.
- 5 Extended learning:** The Montessori program is committed and designed to provide the student with the prescribed and important elements of elementary education. However, the child is provided a more complete program of study with geography, botany, zoology, and art as well as reading, language, and mathematics.

## The Staff

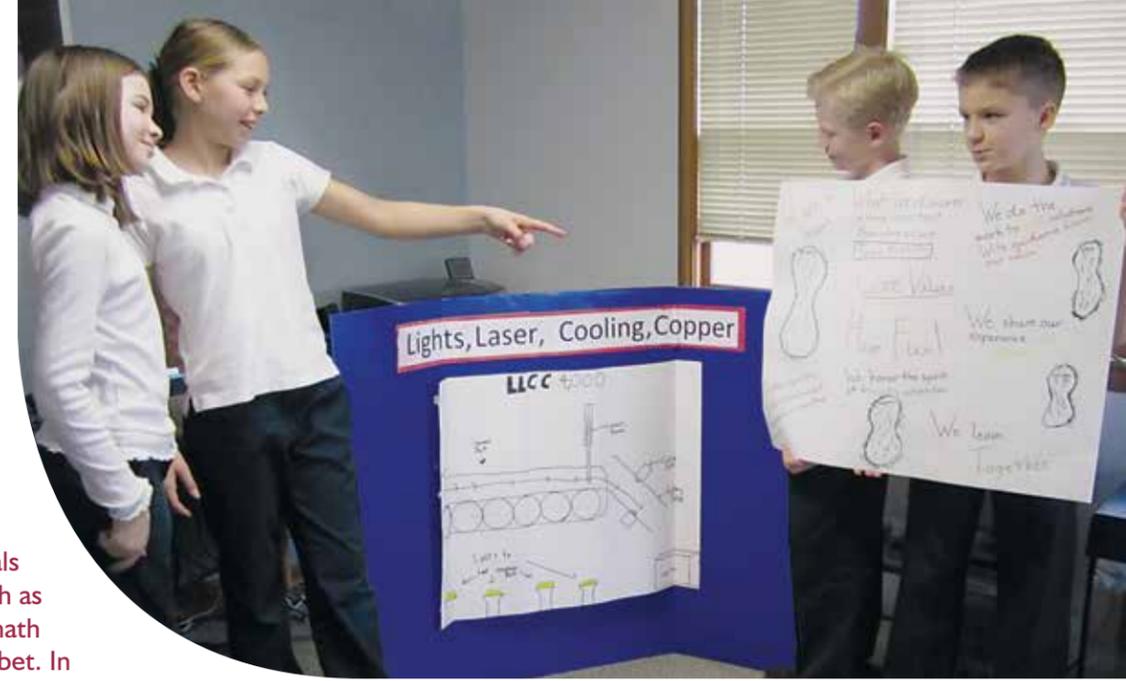
In addition to having university degrees, our teachers are trained in Montessori elementary education and certified by the State of Nebraska. The teachers receive additional training each school year. We like to consider our staff as enlightened generalists. The teachers know the curriculum thoroughly; they are trained point-for-point with the Montessori materials. Concepts are taught repeatedly through an interdisciplinary approach. Drills are not used, the child learns from several vantage points. Children often have the same teacher for more than one year and usually at least two years. The teacher knows the children, how they learn, their strengths, their weaknesses, and what they have learned from year to year.



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## Prepared Learning Environment

Unique to Montessori is the concept of the prepared learning environment. Designed carefully to maximize independent learning and exploration, the classrooms at Montessori Elementary School of Omaha (MESO) contain many familiar materials from the preschool years such as the maps, golden beads for math work, and the movable alphabet. In addition, the elementary environment is a wonderful array of pictorial zoology, live animals, botany cards, collections of natural specimens and spatial timelines. All of the learning materials are carefully sequenced and placed on open shelves for the children's use. Children's work, showing their own individuality and learning style, abounds in the classroom.



## Mathematics and Science

To lead the world in mathematics and science is an ongoing national goal. At MESO the students demonstrate that this goal is a reality. Students in grade one are factoring algebraic equations and exploring geometry. Students in grades 4, 5, and 6 are working on square roots, cubic roots, and calculating the area of circles and geometry.

Science fairs, biology class, and field trips are only a few of the many opportunities to discover the world of science. Our geography program allows children to learn not only the location of countries, but to get to know that country's people and how they live. The geography program utilized at MESO has been reviewed and applauded by the president of the National Geographic Society.

***"It is not enough for the teacher to restrict herself to loving and understanding the child; she must first love and understand the universe."***

***~ Maria Montessori***



## Art, Music, and Foreign Language

The areas of art, music, and foreign language at Montessori Elementary School of Omaha are a vital part of our academic program. When a child studies history, he is able to create a timeline, a song or a mural that reinforces both academic, art, and music skills. His creativity is not limited by art room walls and only 35 minutes per week. Music is integrated into classroom activities through the study of sound in science, group time singing and the study of composers and their music. The children usually participate in a children's opera or a spring cantata, and periodically the students share their love of music with the elderly in our community. Foreign language is taught for conversation, but is also reinforced through materials in the classroom, learning vocabulary, learning about the countries where the language is spoken, and the labeling of common things. Skits written by the children in foreign languages allow them to strengthen their understanding of the language and culture. Opportunities are provided to practice foreign language skills in real life, such as serving as hosts for visiting foreign students.



## Language Studies

At Montessori Elementary School of Omaha (MESO), the child will develop language skills that focus on the language of knowing why — “Where do I come from?”, “Where am I going?”, “How does this work?”, “Why do anteaters have sticky tongues?” Before, language was learning the names of things and the relationship between things. Now, language with the elementary child defines the relationship between the acts, including moral questions of right and wrong. Language exposes the conscious development of human will to the use of reason.

## Other Curriculum Components

Children participate actively in physical education. The curriculum also includes a health and nutrition component. Various all-school activities such as “Jump Rope for Heart” and Presidential Physical Fitness Award testing provide the children with the opportunity to improve themselves and also help their community.

Students at MESO receive individual computer instruction twice weekly in the areas of math, language, word processing, typing and programming. The computers are available to the students during the remaining days of the school week.

***“Learning is a natural process that, when placed in its proper perspective, in the right atmosphere, becomes a lifelong trait of loving to learn.”***

~ Maria Montessori



***“To confer the gift of drawing, we must create an eye that sees, a hand that obeys, and a soul that feels; and in this task the whole life must cooperate. In this sense life itself is the only preparation for drawing. Once we have lived the inner spark does not rest.”***

~ Maria Montessori



## Social Development

The child from 6-12 years is group oriented and is extremely sociable. Montessori Elementary School of Omaha is a school where everyone gets to know everyone else. The classrooms are multi-aged. When children are with the same group of classmates for more than one year, the children learn to appreciate one another. The staff of our elementary school is trained to observe and encourage social interaction. Students are free to speak with each other and move about their classroom at will. There are no assigned seats. Work may be shared between students and "ground rules" for each classroom are established through discussion with the entire class, not arbitrarily by the adults.

Parents are encouraged to participate in school activities and observe in the classroom. The school opera, Thanksgiving celebrations in our authentic log cabin, parent potlucks, sleepovers at Henry Doorly Zoo, field trips, parent group fund-raisers, and, of course, sharing parent expertise in various classroom discussions all offer parents the opportunity to become involved on a personal level in the education of this child.

Children enter the Montessori Elementary program either from a Montessori preschool or directly without a Montessori preparation. All children quickly adapt to the Montessori methods and begin to explore their world of knowledge.



***"My vision of the future is no longer people taking exams and proceeding then on that certificate, but of individuals passing from one stage of independence to a higher, by means of their own activity through their own effort of will, which constitutes the inner evolution of the individual."***

***~ Maria Montessori***

## Multi-Age Groups

Children work together in three year age groupings. The child receives maximum stimulation and is able to imitate and internalize the skills learned. Knowledge, as well as "ground rules," are passed on from one level to the next. Older children in the classroom provide leadership, help and friendship that is reliable to younger children. The older child benefits from helping younger children, and the children learn empathy towards each other. As an example, a child who is shy around peers will gain confidence and a better self image by helping other students. When multi-age groups are present, children have more options available to them. There is an open-endedness in a Montessori classroom and no ceiling on what and when the child can learn. All different kinds of learning are taking place at all times. This maximizes the potential of the individual child and provides many opportunities for children to interact with each other.

***"The child experiences the joy of discovery. Thus, the child discovers his own freedom, his own order, his own discipline and his own liberty."***

***~ Maria Montessori***



## Summary

Today's children are entering the most complex living situation that any society has yet devised. It becomes crucial that children be able to cope with and adapt to the ever changing facets of life.

Montessori Elementary School of Omaha (MESO) children receive a well rounded elementary school education. The classrooms are rich in materials as well as opportunities. Because of its individuality, the curriculum allows the child to advance in all levels of work. We guide and direct your child's insatiable curiosity and sensitivity into many areas of knowledge through a feeling of self-discovery. Self-discovery becomes their experience. They feel it, they sense it. They start to become their own person. The child-centered climate at Montessori allows the child to develop his own inner satisfaction.

Children who have had a MESO education are self-confident, independent, and self-disciplined. They have a sound background for pursuing further academic and creative skills and interests.

At MESO we do more than teach...we inspire learning.

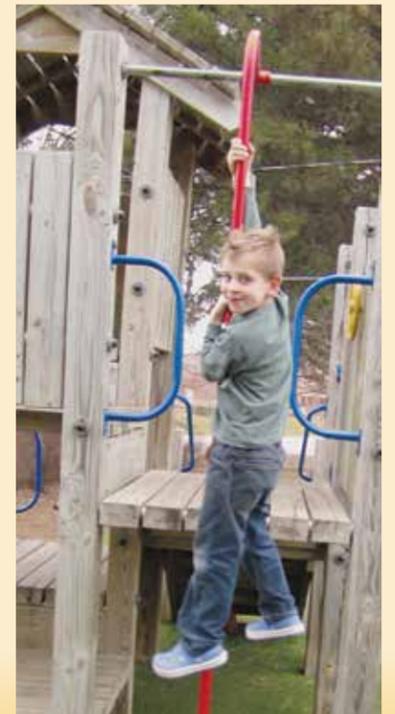
Someday your child will thank you for discovering the Montessori difference!



## Thank you for your interest in the Montessori Elementary School of Omaha

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Discover the  
Montessori difference  
for your family!



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