



# Montessori at Gunston

A presentation for Rising  
Sixth-Grade Parents,  
SY 25-6

# Montessori Trailer Oasis

Please allow our student ambassadors to give you a tour of the trailers, a.k.a. The Learning Cottage, a.k.a. Trailer Town.

Please ask them questions along the way and feel free to explore! We will begin our information session at 5:45

# Meet the Team



Megan McCormick,  
English & Disc. Lit.



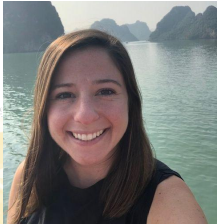
Sarah Stewart,  
Social Studies



Jedd Stein,  
Math & Science



Jason Kiker  
Science



Emily Silverberg,  
English, Disciplinary  
Literacy, Social  
Studies



Claire Rinaldi  
Co Teacher



JoMarie Flores  
Instructional Assistant



# General Information

An overview of the Gunston Montessori  
Program

# Montessori at Gunston

## Our Mission

- To provide opportunities for adolescents to develop into empowered individuals by learning to be: self-confident, academically competent, community-minded, and creators of their future.

## Community Concept

- Emphasize community building daily in academic and non-academic ways. The social curriculum is as important as the academic.

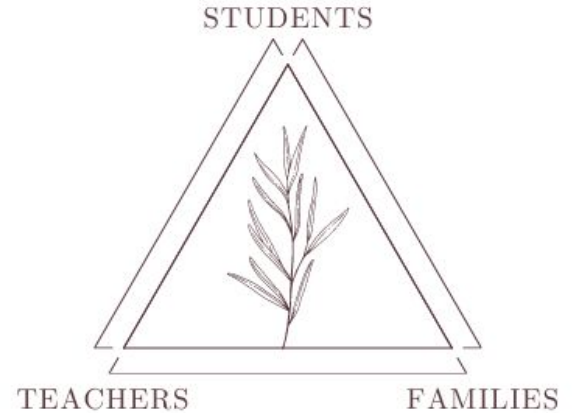
## Cosmic Curriculum

- Subjects are interrelated, and topics are introduced as greater parts of the whole.
- Quarterly themes tie learning together.



# Montessori Environment

- Learner-centered
- Multi-age groupings of 11-14 year olds
- Peer and cross-age teaching
- Content delivered around quarterly themes
- Integration of current research in human development, trends and issues in education, and the Montessori philosophy
- Developmentally-responsive curriculum and teaching team of Montessori teachers with additional adults as resources
- Structured transitioning to traditional programs



# Success in Secondary Montessori

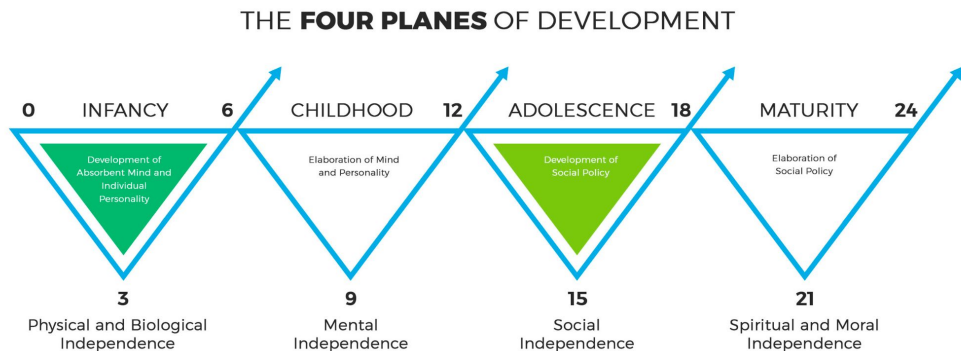
## Montessori students appreciate...

- A self-directed, creative approach to learning
- The ability to work and make choices independently
- Working in multi-age groups
- Various opportunities and methods of demonstrating mastery
- Working at a different pace than their peers
- Peer-teaching and peer-learning
- Being a community leader
- Caring for the environment



# Clustered cohorts

- 6th and 7th grade students are clustered into a mixed-age cohort and generally travel together for most Montessori core classes
- Allows students to collaborate across classes
- Form bonds, friendships, and trust through community meetings



# Valorization

When students are given enough time and guidance to do things independently, their self worth increases, allowing them to grow into the best version of themselves.

- **Service Learning**

- Currently planning our Service Learning
- In the past, students have enacted change and built awareness regarding water pollution in Four Mile Run, senior citizen needs, food insecurity, rescued animals, Gunston needs, & elementary students

- **Fundraising & Microeconomy**

- Students primarily in charge of creating and executing
- Planned through Teacher Advisory & lunches
- All students working toward creating an herb garden
- 8th grade students raise money for their 8th grade trip to determine where they can afford to go

# Community Events

- Microeconomy & Fundraising Events
- Leadership bonding trip
- Turkey Assembly Line
- Celebration of Light
- Service Learning
- All grade-level trips
- 8th Grade Send-Off
- 8th Grade Culminating Trip



# 2025–2026 Themes

**Quarter 1:** Identity

**Quarter 2:** Perspective

**Quarter 3:** Stewardship

**Quarter 4:** Interdependence



Montessori classes operate on a three-year cycle of themes centered around topics relating to the social and emotional development of the adolescent. We incorporate themes into content wherever possible, and do structured social activities around themes.

# Montessori Classes SY 25–26

- **6th grade**

- Math 6
- English 6 & 7
- U.S. History (SS) 6 & 7\*
- Science 6 & 7
- Disciplinary Literacy 6 (reading)

- **7th Grade**

- Math 7
- English 6 & 7
- Civics & Economics (SS) 6 & 7\*
- Science 6 & 7

- **8th Grade**

- English 8
- Science 8
- World Geography 8

- **Teacher Advisory (TA)**

- All students, grades 6–8

\*In the 26–27 SY, ALL 6th and 7th grade Montessori students will take Civics & Economics

# 6th Grade Elective Wheel

Almost all 6th graders at Gunston take the elective wheel and sample 4 different electives throughout the year, unless a child is in band, orchestra, or has some other unique schedule.

# Scheduling Disclaimers

- **All Grades**

- Gunston is home to three different programs: Spanish Immersion, Traditional, and Montessori
- **Some students may take mixed-age electives, P.E., or be assigned to a different grade level lunch**

- **Sixth Grade**

- Depending on scheduling constraints and enrollment in Math 6 Advanced & Pre-Algebra for 6th Graders, **some students may participate in the 6th-grade elective “wheel,” or some may take electives with mixed-age students**

# Montessori Teacher Advisory (TA)

30 minutes of TA is built into the schedule daily. Montessori TAs have all three grade levels combined.

## **This time allows for...**

- Engaging in, and reflecting on, cosmic curriculum themed activities
- Social emotional learning explicit lessons
- Additional academic support
- Community celebrations and recognitions
- Solo Time
- OUST (Outdoor Unstructured Social Time)
- Sharing meals like TA breakfast
- Creating fundraising opportunities
- Planning and participating in service learning
- Preparing for student-led conferences



# Work Plans

- Students are provided with work checklists for two to three weeks in **each** Montessori class
- They are expected to self-pace through this work in 90-minute classes, with mini-lessons provided by their teachers 2x-3x a week
- Support is offered in small groups and individually, as needed

**Instructions:**  
Complete each assignment you see by clicking on each link. Explore in any order. When you finish an assignment, click and drag an ember to mark it as complete.

Each assignment should be submitted to Canvas with a screenshot or image.

**Due: Thursday, November 9**

[Vocabulary](#)

[Get to Know the Colonies](#)

[Danger of a Single Story Reflection](#)

[Shelf Work](#)

[Hexagonal Thinking](#)

[\(s\)Choice Work](#)

[Further Exploration lies ahead!](#)

Due: November 20, 2024

| Assignment                     | Suggested Due Date | Student Self Check | Tree Pose<br><br><a href="#">NaNoWriMo Planning Slide Deck</a>                    | Headstand<br>                                                                                                                             |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| (F) Plot (20-30 minutes)       | Nov 13             |                    | After our lesson, complete slides 3-6 in the slide deck, or draw and complete a <a href="#">Plot Diagram</a> in your WRN and submit it to the assignment on Canvas. | Complete the <a href="#">Outlining Your Plot</a> document, or the <a href="#">Plot and its Intricacies Lesson</a> to expand your knowledge past a standard plot structure. Submit your document to the assignment on Canvas. |
| (F) Setting (15-25 minutes)    | Nov 15             |                    | After our lesson, complete slides 7-8 in the slide deck document and submit it to the assignment on Canvas.                                                         | Before completing the <a href="#">Setting</a> document, view <a href="#">World Building Lesson</a> to expand your knowledge making setting a prominent part of your novel. Submit your document to the assignment on Canvas. |
| (F) Characters (15-30 minutes) | Nov 19             |                    | After our lesson, complete slides 9-11 in the slide deck and submit it to the assignment on Canvas.                                                                 | Complete the <a href="#">Characters</a> document, and view <a href="#">Creating Interesting Characters Lesson</a> to broaden your knowledge of characters' complexities. Submit your assignment to the assignment on Canvas. |

**Civics Unit 1 Chapter 4: Elections and Voting Rights** Due: November 20  
Directions: Use this slide deck, and/or Canvas to keep track of your assignments for this chapter. Some links on this slide will take you directly to Canvas, others will take you to the assignment in Slides.

| Must Do All                                                                                                                                                                   | Must Choose 2                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Essential Chapter Vocabulary</p> <p><b>VOCABULARY</b></p> <p>Gain the Background Knowledge</p> <p>Expand your Background Knowledge</p> <p>Summative: Every Vote Counts</p> | <p>On Canvas, submit your completed choice work to the assignments Choice 1 and Choice 2</p> <p><a href="#">Document Analysis: Ballots</a></p> <p><a href="#">Political Quiz</a></p> <p><a href="#">2022 Political Quiz</a></p> <p><a href="#">Political Cartoon Analysis: Voting Rights</a></p> <p><a href="#">Challenge Yourself: Take a Deep Dive into Voting Rights</a></p> |

\*If you choose this option, you only need to do 1 choice activity.

# Canvas



Canvas

Learning Management  
System

- Learning Management System
- Assignments are submitted electronically through Canvas or on paper, depending on the subject area
- Assignments are graded through Canvas
- Canvas syncs with StudentVUE/ParentVUE to provide weekly grade updates
- We **currently** use Google Workspace (which integrates with Canvas) for creating assignments. Introducing your child to Google Slides and Google Docs over the summer will help their transition to middle school.
- Give yourself and your student grace at the beginning of sixth grade!

# Lockers and Lunch

- **Lockers**

- Lockers are in the main building
- All students are assigned individual lockers with combinations
- Students go to their lockers at school locker times, then bring materials to Montessori classes

- **Lunch**

- Lunch is either in the cafeteria or outside of the trailers
- Depending on scheduling constraints and balancing the needs of Montessori & other programs, **students have the opportunity to eat lunch with Montessori peers**

# Caregiver Communication

In middle school, students no longer have take-home folders to communicate with parents.

- **ParentSquare**

- Teachers will send individual, and whole-group communications through ParentSquare

# Advanced Academic Services

We have Montessori students who are gifted in all areas, but support looks different in middle school. Jawana Washington, our resource teacher for the Academically Advanced, provides resources, attends meetings, helps with initiatives and opportunities for students.

In Montessori there are no intensified courses. This is different from the traditional, however...

We have high expectations for all students

- all classes are designed to support academically advanced learners
- we provide differentiation to support the academic abilities of all students

# Academically Advanced Services

Work plans are designed for students to select an easier or more challenging way to demonstrate learning

Due: November 20, 2024

| Assignment                            | Suggested Due Date | Student Self Check | <div>Tree Pose<br/><br/><a href="#">NaNoWriMo Planning Slide Deck</a></div>       | <div>Headstand<br/></div>                                                                                                                        |
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# Special Education

## How does it look different in middle school?

- **Support Team:**
  - Co-taught classes.
    - Gen-ed teacher and special education teacher or instructional assistant
- **Transition meetings**
  - If your child has an IEP, their yearly meeting this year will also involve at least two Gunston/Montessori staff members to begin to build a relationship, discuss your child's individual goals, and bridge the gap between elementary and middle school



# Questions?

If you have questions, direct them to Megan McCormick

[megan.mccormick@apsva.us](mailto:megan.mccormick@apsva.us)