A Letter from the President of the Board of Directors

Initially, I want to briefly introduce myself. My wife, Kathy, and I have two children attending the school. Kameron, the soon-to-be four year old, is in Ms. Ali’s classroom at the Freeman Road Campus and our two year old, Kyle, is in Ms. Henderson’s class at the Lotus Campus. While our children have only been attending the school for the past four years, Kathy and I have been intimately involved in a myriad of aspects of the school’s operation. As many of you know, Kathy is one of Dr. Naghibzadeh’s three daughters (along with Delara and Sara). Being the son-in-law with a law degree, I was naturally drafted to assist the school on business and legal matters since 1993. Enough about me.

Gala Wrap-Up
On Saturday, February 2nd, the school held its fifth annual fundraising gala at the Stonegate banquet facility in Hoffman Estates. This year’s gala had over 225 attendees made up of parents, grandparents, teachers, staff, administration, and friends of the program. There were over 200 silent and live auction items open to bidding from the guests. The overall event itself raised somewhere in excess of $45,000 for the school. While the fundraising aspect of the gala is of great significance to the school, I would also note that the participants at this year’s event had a great time themselves. If you were not fortunate enough to attend this year’s gala, you really need to make an effort to put it on your calendar next year.

Security System
One of the most basic goals of any school, and certainly that of the MSNH, is the physical security of the children. To that end, we are in the process of procuring and reviewing bids for security systems that would be installed at both the Freeman and Lotus Campuses. We have received quotes for systems involving six to eight cameras at each of the locations – each equipped with monitoring devices in the offices. The quotes for this type of system are in the $15,000 range. However, one of the companies is working up a much more sophisticated proposal where individuals picking up the children would need to be identified from a database and matched with the child they are proposing to pick up from the school. The logistics associated with that particular system have not yet been finalized. I am hoping that we have some specific direction on this project in place by the end of this month.

School Expansion
The Montessori School of North Hoffman commenced its operation in 1989. At that time, it served eight children in one 1,100 square-foot storefront facility in what was a strip mall (now the Freeman Road Campus). In the early years, the school expanded quickly, taking up more and more space in the strip mall. The entire building was acquired in 1993. After a 4,100 square foot addition in 1996 (largely the gymnasium), the Freeman Campus was able to effectively serve over 200 children.

In 2004, the Lotus Campus was acquired. That facility was specifically built to handle the needs of the youngest members of our school’s community.

Now, the school has acquired additional real estate on the west side of Ela Road between Algonquin Road and Central. The projected development of that site is an expansion of our programs, including the Erdkinder program. That particular facility would benefit children from 3 to 15 years old.

At present, we are in the early stages of developing the plans for the site and the layout for the facility. Updates on this exciting development for the school should be forthcoming.
Message from the PTO

The PTO would like to extend their thanks to everyone who attended the gala, all who donated items for our auction or our classroom baskets, everyone who made a donation, and all who purchased and sold raffle tickets. The school earned $45,000 on the gala. Funds raised will support the continued development of the educational programs offered by the school and the construction of a new state-of-the-art facility. This facility, located less than 5 minutes from the Freeman campus, will host Primary (ages 3-6), Elementary (ages 6-12) and Erdkinder programs (ages 12-15). Thank you all for your generosity and support!

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Mr. Patrick Pesch & Ms. Patti Drace

“Follow the Child” Donors - $500
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Mr. & Mrs. Todd Collis
Mr. & Mrs. Wojciech Filip
Mr. & Mrs. Doug Hanover

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Mr. Brian Chien & Ms. Jeannie Lou
Mr. Andrzej Ciesielski & Ms. Krystyna Wagenhejm
Mr. Mahmood Motlagh
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Miss Motlagh’s Lower Elementary Class

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Mr. Gregory Sochacki
Mr. & Mrs. Dan Walker
Gala Celebration 2008

Photos by: Mr. David Wiskowski
INTERNATIONAL DANCE 2007

Photos by: Mr. David Wiskowski
Toddlers Entertain at International Day

Mrs. Henderson’s and Mrs. Anees’ Toddler Classes joined to celebrate the diversity of our school at International Day on December 1st with an adorable performance to the classic song “It’s a Small World.” With students dressed in a variety of ethnic costumes, ranging from saris and gagra cholis, kimono and qi paos, to a Hawaiian grass skirt, the toddlers exhibited the diversity of national dress styles in miniature. They also got their first taste of performing on stage. While they certainly entertained the audience with their various reactions to this experience, their time on stage is a lesson that, repeated over the years, will help them to develop into accomplished and poised young adults. Thank you to the parents who brought the delicious food for our wonderful pot-luck lunch. As toddler Isabella DiGioia said to her mother after leaving the stage, “Mommy, I want to go again!” It was a wonderful celebration and the toddlers are already looking forward to next year.
Hanukkah Presentation Delights Toddler Class

Recently, Jeff Seidman, father of Gabriel Seidman, a primary student in Mrs. Ahanchi’s class, took time to present to Mrs. Henderson’s class an entertaining and educational talk on the meaning of Hanukkah. He read the book “Spin the Dreidel” by Alexandria Cooper to the class, and explained the meaning of the dreidel game.

Mr. Seidman came prepared with enough dreidels for each child to play the dreidel game. He showed the children that each side of the dreidel was painted with a different letter in Hebrew, representing four possible outcomes for each round of the game. The dreidel game is commonly played for chocolates, and children can win or lose depending on their luck in spinning. The toddlers were then able to spin the dreidel themselves to test their luck and work on their hand coordination skills.

Mr. Seidman also explained to the class that Hanukkah is a celebration of light, honoring the time when consecrated oil for the altar light in the Second Temple of Jerusalem expected to last for one day managed to light the altar for eight days -- enough time to allow new consecrated oil to be prepared. He showed the class a menorah, and explained how one light was lit for each day of Hanukkah from the middle “worker” light.

Mr. Seidman said, “International Day inspired me to make the presentation. I wanted the children to be aware that there are other holidays that may be celebrated at home. I had a lot of fun spending time with the class – some of the toddlers were able to really spin their dreidels well!”

Toddler Parents Read to Classes

Parents of toddlers in Mrs. Anees’ and Mrs. Henderson’s classes are encouraged to sign up to read to their child’s class. This is a wonderful opportunity to interact with your child and her classmates, and to share the joy of reading a childhood favorite with them.

Monica Kapoor, mother of Rohan, recently took time to read to Mrs. Henderson’s class. She chose two books, “The Very Hungry Caterpillar” by Eric Carle, and the “Diary of a Wombat”, a book her husband had purchased on a trip to Australia. Both books were a hit with the class.

Mrs. Kapoor said, “I creatively told each story at the children’s level of understanding, rather than just reading the text.” She spent about 40 minutes with the class and said, “I had a great time and I would do it again in a heartbeat. I got to know the other kids and be a part of the class. I also got to watch my son interact with his friends.”

If you are a toddler parent and would like to volunteer to read to your child’s class, you can sign-up with Mrs. Anees or Mrs. Henderson. Mrs. Anees requests that parents come at 4:45 pm to read to the class. Mrs. Henderson requests that parents come at either 11:30am or 4:45pm to read. We encourage all members of the family (parents, aunts, uncles or siblings) to come and read to the class. In Mrs. Henderson’s class, some recent Kindergarten graduates have participated. Arnav Batta, big brother to Advitya, and Alexa Mohsenzadeh, big sister to Kian, are just a couple of the many who have volunteered.
Mornings for Maica Update

You may have seen the signs on the front door to Lotus one day each week indicating it was a “Morning for Maica”. As you hopefully know, the Infant and Toddler classes are working to sponsor little Maica, a two-year-old from Brazil by hosting coffee mornings each week at Lotus. Donations can also be put in the “Maica” box in the entry area at Lotus. The organization World Vision will use our donations to help provide Maica and other disadvantaged children around the world with clean water, nutritious food and adequate health care.

Recently, the classes received exciting news about their project. Maica’s mother sent us a letter telling us a little about Maica and saying she would like to hear from us. She wrote that Maica is quiet and tender, and knows how to say “Mom” and “Dad.” Two primary students from Mrs. Ahanchi’s class, Christopher Chien and Maggie Guo (both five years old) composed thoughtful letters in response, calling Maica “little sister” and wishing her happy holidays.

This project is helping all of the children at Lotus to remember that each person is connected to each other as part of our world community, and to encourage a sense of responsibility in caring for those who do not have the advantages we do. We hope that parents and children will continue to donate to our fund for Maica to encourage the learning of these lessons and to make certain we can honor the commitment we have undertaken to help Maica through World Vision. A huge thank you to the parents at our Lotus campus, and especially to Mrs. Ahanchi’s class. They have been cheerfully working hard to make their individual donations.

Dear sponsor,

This is Silvana and I’m Maica’s mother. I’m writing this letter on her behalf, because she can't manage to write by herself yet and is very young.
Maica is quiet and tender. She loves playing. She can’t talk yet, but she can say “dad”, “mom”, and other small words. She is very loved and blessed. I love her very much! I would like to hear from you.

With love,

Above is the translated copy of Maica's mother's letter.

Christopher Chien, primary student in Mrs. Ahanchi's class, wrote this letter to Maica.

Maggie Guo, primary student in Mrs. Ahanchi’s class, wrote this letter for Maica.

This is the original letter in Portuguese from Maica’s mother.
Applying the Nine Montessori Outcomes to Toddler Curriculum:

Understanding How Toddlers Exhibit Confidence/Competence and Autonomy

In the last newsletter, we discussed how infants and toddlers are encouraged through the Montessori Method to exhibit independence. In this segment, we would like to explore how toddlers may exhibit traits for two other outcomes: confidence and competence, and autonomy.

Teachers view the development of confidence and competence as a process; in fact, teachers have noticed that a child’s confidence tends to increase as his independence increases. These two traits are developed by making the child himself more aware of what he knows and can do. In the infant community, teachers observe that children often repeat an activity over and over again until mastery or competence is obtained. However, in the toddler community, children say things like, “I did it.” We often hear this when a work or a task has been successfully completed, like the many steps involved in the process of learning to use the toilet. Toddlers are also given the opportunity to participate in all-school activities such as International Day. While the toddlers may be cute and entertaining, activities such as these encourage their confidence and competence by giving them experiences from which they can develop poise and composure.

Teachers and staff in the infant-toddler community believe that autonomy is first developed through the act of choosing. By working in the prepared environment of the classroom, toddlers begin to develop a sense of purpose. They are able to exercise their own will by choosing to work by themselves or by inviting another child to engage with them in an activity. Teachers are available to guide children towards areas of interest and assist them in their choice of work, if necessary. They are also able to reinforce each child’s emotional security when the children are making decisions about whether to work alone or together. When the toddlers make their spontaneous choices of work with ease and comfort, they exhibit autonomy. As they grow, their ability to intensely focus on work reveals that their level of autonomy is developing.

Anirudh, Narumanchi working in Mrs. Bansil's Infant Class, uses the cylinder blocks, showing his competence.

Maxine Corona from Mrs. Henderson's Toddler Class exhibits the outcome of competence while working with Color Box II.
Book Drive

One of the nine outcomes of Montessori education is to teach children to be socially responsible and citizens of the world. With this outcome in mind, Daniel Ethan Basa, a third level student of Mrs. Haider’s class involved his fellow classmates in a book drive effort to help an elementary school in the remote island of Sibuyan in the Philippines.

This book drive was quite successful. Students from primary and elementary levels donated books for this good cause. Monetary donations were also given for the shipment of the books.

The students were able to collect two boxes of books which will be shipped very soon to Philippines. Montessori inspired blank note cards and bookmarks were also sold by the students to raise funds for this outreach project. A successful effort by Daniel and his Montessori friends.

*Mrs. Haider*

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Japanese Calligraphy

Mrs. Lee gave a beautiful lesson on Japanese Calligraphy and Brush painting in Mrs. Haider’s class. Students came up with a list of words they wanted to learn to write in Japanese. The list contained words of virtue like honesty, truth, beauty, love, etc. All week they enjoyed taking turns practicing this art form. It was so popular that there had to be a sign up sheet!

*Mrs. Haider*

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Elementary Science Fair 2008

Variables, Hypothesis, Scientific Process. Every third, forth, fifth and sixth grade student should be able to tell you what these terms mean thanks to the Annual 2008 Science Fair that took place on February 7. Each Student did research and an Experiment to be performed for students, parents and judges. The topics were very diverse and interesting for all people that attended. The event was enjoyed by all.
Young children learn about life cycles through stories first and then later retell the sequence through drawing.

Vasudha Cidambi Mrs. Sher’s Classroom

Tiffany Chien
Mrs. Anees’ class

Calista Csiky
Mrs. Anees class

Rohan John
Mrs. Henderons’ class
2/4/08

Salamanders

Salamanders are amphibians. They look like snakes, but they are not. They have four little legs—
they are quiet and small—and usually hiding in the daytime—
salamanders are seldom noticed by people. You may find them under stones or within
crevices of logs. The California slender salamander is sometimes
found in burrows dug by earthworms, and salamanders hide in damp places because they
need to keep their skin moist. If a salamander's skin dries out, it may
die from lack of oxygen, since it does most of its breathing through
its skin.

By: Chayanne

Mrs. Haider Class
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Montessori School of North Hoffman & Lotus Montessori School

Our mission is to provide a family environment based on mutual understanding, respect and cooperation. We are committed to fostering independence, joy of learning, academic excellence, and social responsibility, as well as developing body, mind and spirit. We believe that learning must be integrated and comprehensive while focusing on the uniqueness of the individual child.

Our vision is to help each child reach his or her fullest potential in life by fostering individual liberty, joy of learning, and the humanitarian spirit.

"Free the child's potential, and you will transform him into the world."

-- Maria Montessori