



HORIZON LINE

Montessori for the 21st Century- A place to learn, a Place to belong

Table of Contents

Principal Ponderings

Pages 1-2

Specials

Pages 3 - 5

Leadership

Pages 6 - 9

Before & Aftercare

Page 10

Enrichment & Clubs

Page 11



PRINCIPAL PONDERINGS

by Kresta Vuolo, Principal

I love the start of the school year, as I enjoy reconnecting with our returning students and staff and welcoming those who are new to our community.

One of the most heartwarming aspects of a new school year is seeing just how welcoming our returning students, staff, and families are to those joining us for the first time. One Upper Elementary student recently shared that while she's been here only a couple of months, it feels like much longer because of the close friends she's already made.

Some of our new community members are more like me, though, in that it takes them a bit of time to get a sense of how things work in order to determine where they best fit. If you have not yet found a specific connection, I hope you will join us at one of our upcoming committee meetings and see where you might like to connect. If meetings and committee work is more formal than you desire, we offer plenty of other great opportunities to meet and connect with other families while also providing a wonderful service (and valuable volunteer hours!) for our school. Campus Beautification held last Saturday is a great example.

Whatever your interests, we would love to help connect you with others who share those interests. Regardless, your time and efforts

A Jefferson County
Charter Public School.

Serving children in
Preschool through 8th grades

Office Hours:
7:45 am—4:00 pm

Attendance:
303-231-9801 x300

Website:
FreeHorizonMontessori.org



continued from page 1

make a positive difference in our school, and most importantly, for our students.

My favorite part of my job is visiting classrooms. Truly magical things happen every day as students and teachers engage in lessons, work, and have fun together. Here are some highlights from my visits so far this school year:

One preschooler put their arm around another and assured their friend that “It’s okay. Sometimes I miss my mom, too.” I also saw a similar interaction unfold while visiting our 6th graders at Outdoor Lab. I love that we teach children about their emotions and support activities that build their empathy toward others. My heart sings when I see children putting these things into practice with their friends.

A 3rd grader carefully helped a first grader with a math work, ensuring that she understood at every step. Providing opportunities for children to develop collaboration and leadership skills will help them well beyond their years in school.

As part of their Human Development unit, our Middle School students spend time in our other classrooms each week supporting younger students in their learning. On one morning in September, I watched as an 8th grader patiently helped a kindergartner see the correct formation of letters for practicing handwriting. Remembering back to the student’s younger years and their own struggles with handwriting, I noticed not just teaching, but also incredible kindness and understanding that comes from having been in those struggling moments only a few years ago.

In preparation for Campus Beautification Day, our Middle School students measured all of our outdoor spaces in need of additional mulch in order to determine how much we need to order. Not only did the students need to calculate the surface area of the spaces and add them together, but they also had to account for the various depths needed in the different spaces depending on whether a garden space or playground. Hands-on and work with a purpose helps students remain engaged and understand the value of their classroom work extends into everyday life.



“It’s okay.
Sometimes
I miss my
mom, too.”

FHM
PRESCHOOL
STUDENT TO A FRIEND

Obviously helping students gain academic knowledge is vital and the main objective for most schools. I am grateful to work in our Montessori environment where our entire community values the cultivation of not just knowledge, but of continual physical development, strength of character, pro-social skills, emotional intelligence, and global perspective. Thank you for entrusting your children to us. We are glad you are part of our community.

In Gratitude,

Kresta

Ms. Kresta

SPECIALS

THINKING LIKE ARTISTS

by Heather Smith, Art Teacher

Areas of Study

Primary

Color and Lines

Lower Elementary

European Architecture

Upper Elementary

Asian Art

Middle School

Value and Shading

Use of Form

We are off to another dynamic year in the Studio! Artists have furthered their understanding of the Elements of Art and are applying them to early works.

From the study of line and color in Primary to the exploration of Value and Shading in Middle School; all students are demonstrating their knowledge through artistic perseverance! Thinking like Artists and honoring that Art has purpose is our overarching goal for this year.



Ostinato

"a short, constantly repeated rhythmic pattern"

MUSIC TO MY EARS

by Tony Schiess, Music Teacher

Upcoming

Specials Gala

December 7, 2017

Featured Performances will include:

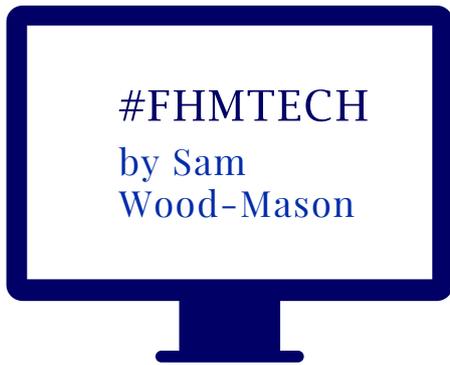
The FHM Choir
Bucket Drumming Club
Middle School Band

Our school is full of musical mastery! Each grade is working on unique projects and concepts:

Primary students have been learning chronology songs to reinforce concepts like day and months and tunes like Pretty Princess that encourage movement dynamics.

Lower Elementary students have been creating their own ostinatos to use with the songs they are learning. Ask your LE student to share an ostinato with you.

Upper elementary students are creating their own melodies utilizing major and minor tonalities!



It has been a busy start to the school year in the Tech Lab. Lower Elementary students have been practicing fundamental computer skills, such as dragging and dropping, typing, and personalizing their backgrounds. Upper Elementary students have researched, made lists on Google Docs, and have demonstrated mastery of Google Earth as a tool to explore our planet.

In Intro to Tech, our Middle School students have been hard at work developing strong typing skills, as well as utilizing tools such as Google Sheets. In Information Technology, Middle School and Upper Elementary students have been exploring different ways to represent ideas and information using computers, such as developing websites using HTML, and creating digital artwork.



Library time is off to a great start with lots of reading going on!

Primary students have been enjoying read-a-loud time and looking at books on their own. This month we are having fun highlighting the fall season. The young readers also enjoy buddy reading with our middle school students on many Wednesdays.

Lower El students have been learning about the Dewey Decimal system for organizing books and its creator Melville Dewey. Upper El students are very engaged in reading and using Chromebooks. We have also enjoyed class discussions about book genres and individual favorites. Students in the elective period are carrying out various responsibilities keeping the library environment prepared for everyone and are also engaged in various projects.

SCHOLASTIC BOOK FAIR

November 3rd - 10th

This is a community wide event that is fun and very supportive of our literacy program here at FHM! There are books for kids of all ages!

Flyers showing a small sample of books have come home in Thursday Folders. The fair will be open daily throughout the day! We look forward to seeing you there!!



PE AT FHM

by Bree Boldt, PE Teacher

WOW! It has been a fun filled and exciting start to the school year in PE. Each class has been busy learning and trying new things. I can't wait for the exciting things to come. Here is what we've been up to:

Middle School electives have been learning about different categories of sports and how you can apply similar game strategies to the games in each category. (Example: Invasion games such as soccer, hockey, basketball, and lacrosse are all similar in strategies.)

Upper Elementary (UE) and Lower Elementary (LE) have been practicing basic skills and how to apply them to games. UE worked on throwing and catching, dodging, chasing, and fleeing. LE worked on ways we move (skipping, running, etc.) and respectful communication. Coming up: UE will be learning about fielding games (softball/kickball) and team building. LE will be working on throwing, catching, and personal responsibility.

Kindergarten has been reviewing ways we move and practicing the ones we have a hard time doing. They have also enjoyed using one of their favorite pieces of equipment: the parachute. Coming up: Kindergarten will be finishing gymnastics and moving into using equipment.

Pre-Kinder (PK) and Pre-School (PS) have been working on moving safely in a space with others in different ways. They have been busy practicing galloping, hopping, walking, running, and skipping. Some have been learning how to skip for the first time! It has also been a lot of fun getting to explore new materials such as the parachute, scooters, scarves, and hula-hoops. Coming up: PK and PS will be learning how to play some of our favorite games and practice gymnastics (balance, rolling, and twisting).

Please remember to have your child bring a water bottle to school every day!

LEADERSHIP

BOARD OF DIRECTORS UPDATE

Jen Stickel, Board President

We would like to start by congratulating Jonathan Spitze and Lisa Cernick for appointment to 3 year terms on the Board of Directors. We would also like to thank Katrina Smolka for her willingness to step into a vacant position.

Over the summer months, we defined our strategic goals for this 2017-2018 school year. We are continuing to support the school's branding efforts and communications enhancements. We are also working to help with the transition of the 6th grade into the Middle School and monitoring how that will be implemented at FHM. Our final strategic goal is facilities planning – right now focused more on the potential opportunity that the Pleasant View campus may offer us. We are actively working through this potential and are waiting for additional communications from the district on next steps. While this would be an exciting opportunity for our school, we are also excited for the future should we stay at our current facility. The play yard initiative that was started a year past has been paused until we have determined which campus the improvements will happen.

The Board of Directors has 4 committees that are active throughout the year. The Finance Committee, Governance Committee, School Accountability Committee (SAC) and Facilities Committee all help to further our strategic goals. All of these committees would welcome additional volunteers if anyone has an interest or expertise in a particular area. Please contact us if you are interested in serving on any of them or just have question on what they do.

Our Board meetings are held the second Thursday of each month pending holidays or other conflicts. We would welcome anyone to come to the meetings and value all ideas and contributions. More information on dates as well as agendas and minutes of past meetings can be found on the Free Horizon website.

Board Members

Jen Stickel
President

Lisa Cernick
Vice President

Jonathan Spitze
Secretary

Hilary Hobson
Treasurer

Katrina Smolka
Member at Large, Liaison
to the Governance Comm.

Alex Ramsay
Member at Large, Liaison
to School Accountability
Committee

Roger Pool
Back up to the Secretary

Input?

Each Board meeting agenda includes a time for Public Comment.

Feel free to attend and contribute! The next meeting is November 9th at 6 p.m.

SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE UPDATE

by Dave Wells, FHM Parent and SAC Chair

The SAC (School Accountability Committee) consists of parents, staff, and community members. We have finished the UIP (Unified Improvement Plan) and submitted it to the district. The UIP utilizes all the testing data from student assessments taken throughout the year to build a plan to elevate the areas that the SAC views as areas of improvement.

We have started work on the family survey which will be sent out at the end of November. It will be a little longer than last year's since there is no survey from the district this year. The SAC uses the results from this and other surveys from the community to recommend improvements to administration and the Board of Directors. We hope you fill out the survey. The time you take letting us know how you feel about FHM is very much appreciated.

New members are always welcome. Come to any meeting to see what all the excitement is about.



**Montessori is an education
for independence, preparing
not just for school,
but for life.**

Maria Montessori



COMMUNITY SUPPORT NETWORK (CSN)

by Anna Cetre, CSN President

Participate with CSN

We value everyone's time and efforts, and always try to make all our meetings speedy and effective. CSN meetings are held at the school on the fourth Tuesday of each month from 6:00 to 8:00 pm, unless there is another school meeting planned during that month (e.g., Village Night), and then we do not hold a community meeting that month. The meetings are where we plan events, discuss priorities, and brainstorm about how we can meet the needs of our community.

We want you to participate in whatever way you can! Whether you want to help organize an event or just attend one - We Welcome You!

The Free Horizon Montessori Foundation (FHMF) is also known as the Community Support Network (CSN). Confused? I was too when we started at the school! Basically, the CSN is the school's parent/guardian organization. We are many things to the community, we support community building, manage volunteers and fundraise for FHM. And guess what – every parent and guardian at the school is ALREADY a member of the CSN! Your interest, participation, and volunteerism make a HUGE difference!

As a charter school, our school is responsible for paying for our own building and its maintenance. The CSN's fundraising helps with the school's expenses and results in more money being directed toward our students. All donations to the CSN are tax-deductible.

So, how does CSN fundraise?

We fundraise throughout the year with a variety of 3rd party activities, CSN sponsored events, and an annual gala:

Spring Fling Gala- our largest fundraiser is a fabulous adult-only night featuring a silent and live auction. This year it will be held Saturday, April 21st.

Colorado Gives Day- Each year in December, we join over 2,000 other Colorado nonprofits for the largest giving event in Colorado. This year on December 5th you simply donate online by going to the FHM profile on the Colorado Gives Day web site.

Grub Clubs- We schedule dedicated time at restaurants throughout the year where they will donate a percentage of the food bill to FHM when we dine.

Scholastic Book Fair- The fabulous Scholastic Book Fair will be held this year November 3rd through November 10th in the PE Room, which raised over \$1500 for the library last year! This year students will get to use their book bucks earned through pledges at the Fox Trot Fun Run at the fair.

Pumpkin 5k/10k- Only \$10 to enter, you can run or walk and enjoy pumpkin pie after!

Fox Trot Fun Run- Each year in October we hold the Fox Trot Fun Run for students. So far we raised both school spirit, and over \$11,000.

So much more- We also have lots of "no-brainer" fundraising activities such as Milk Caps for Moooola, Box Tops for Education, AmazonSmile and reloadable grocery cards. Please visit our website to learn more!



Website: fhmcnsn.org
Email: president@fhmcnsn.org

FINANCE UPDATE

by Miera Nagy, Director of Finance and Advancement



The new school year saw four new people joining the Free Horizon Montessori administrative staff. In addition to me, Karen Clough is the new financial secretary, Jill Fricker is the new Enrollment and Communications Coordinator, and Millie Lippert is the new Program and Child Care Director. For each of us it feels as though the first quarter of our school year was a blur as we have learned new systems and processes necessary for keeping our school fiscally sound, maintaining open communications, and creating a fun and safe before and after care environment. So, a big thank you for your patience during the transition into our new roles!

JeffcoConnect

This fall, we are emphasizing the use of JeffcoConnect when paying for field trips, FHM clubs, student fees, etc. and will no longer be accepting cash or checks. This will help increase convenience for you while minimizing the amount of cash and checks our students, teachers and staff are having to manage.

JeffcoConnect no longer charges a \$2 processing fee, as it did a few years ago. If you forgot your password or username please contact mmwells@jeffcoschools.us.

If you have questions about fees or paying online contact kclough@jeffcoschools.us.

We successfully completed our annual independent financial audit for last school year (FY17). At the close of our 15th year of operation, the revenues of Free Horizon Montessori exceeded its expenses, resulting in a net gain of \$113,120. The entire audit will be posted in mid-November on the FHM website under the Financial Transparency link.

Now, it is time to begin planning the budget for the 2018-19 school year. If you're interested in the annual budgeting process or being a part of the long-term strategic financial discussions, we encourage you to attend Finance Committee meetings and/or submit finance and budgeting thoughts, questions, or suggestions to Miera Nagy, FHM Director of Finance and Advancement, at mnagy@jeffcoschools.us or Hilary Hobson, Board Treasurer, at hhobson.fhmboard@gmail.com.

OCTOBER COUNT

Each spring when the Board builds its budget, the amount of revenue provided by the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) is an estimate based on an estimated number of students that will be enrolled in the school for the upcoming year. October Count is the time frame when the actual number of students are counted and CDE finalizes its allocation amount to each Colorado school based on the number of students present during the timeframe. If we overestimate the number of students in the spring, then the school will have to update its budget based upon the reduced allocation. Good news for us, we underestimated which means we will receive an increase in revenues. The Board, utilizing its strategic plan, directed that these additional funds be utilized for staff benefits.

ENRICHMENT, CLUBS, BAC

BEFORE & AFTERCARE PROGRAMS

Millie Lippert, Childcare Director and Program Coordinator

My name is Millie Lippert and I am the new Director for the before and after care programs as well as the Program Coordinator for FHM. As a FHM team, we strive to provide learning activities that will promote creativity and guide students along their educational journeys.

Before and after care is a time where children can expand their learning, have fun and explore many different avenues of interests in a safe and stimulating environment. There are four aftercare classes currently underway filled with science experiments, arts and crafts, music, dance/yoga, and more. This year we are starting to create a “Book Buddy” session every Wednesday during aftercare for older children to promote the love of reading in our younger students. Our AC3 and AC4 students will be paired with AC1 and 2 primary kids during the “Book Buddy” sessions!

As you walk into FHM, there is a before/aftercare wall, where you can find quick information in regards to your child’s aftercare program. Snack will be provided during aftercare, which will include two components for nutritional purposes (example: Cheese and meat or fresh fruit).

Aftercare families should be receiving monthly newsletters to be more informed and get a glimpse of our aftercare lessons and adventures. Each month, aftercare staff prepares themed lessons for your children which will also be found on the newsletter. If you are not receiving these, please email Millie Lippert right away at mlippert@jeffcoschools.us.

Before care begins at 7:00 a.m. and runs to the start of the school day. Various themed materials will be available at this time as well as morning snack, if arriving prior to 7:30a.m.

After care begins at school dismissal each day and ends at 6:00 p.m.



Drop-Ins

We offer DROP INS for before care and aftercare, but there are limited spaces available.

We cannot guarantee a spot, so please contact Millie Lippert to confirm that there is space. Please keep in mind that FHM is under Colorado Child Care Licensing that has very specific rules and regulations that must be followed, therefore it sometimes restricts our ability to accommodate our community on short notice drop-in requests.

ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS & CLUBS

Millie Lippert, Childcare Director and Program Coordinator



In addition to BAC programs, we offer enrichment programs and clubs throughout the school year. Clubs are developed and delivered by FHM staff and Enrichment programs are those that are sponsored at FHM by outside entities. Session 2 is just around the corner:

Thankful
Adventure
Camp

Session 2 (Monday Nov. 13-Feb. 9)

No clubs/enrichments from Nov. 6-10, 12/21-12/22, 12/25-1/5, and 1/15

Nov 20th - Nov 22nd

Session 3 (Monday Feb. 26-May 4)

No clubs/enrichments from 3/22-2/23, 3/26-3/30

Sign up for
Full or Half Days

Registration forms are available in the front lobby and due by November 14th.

Please refer to our FHM website page to see details on current clubs/enrichments as well as to find links for enrichment registration. Please print the registration form for FHM clubs and turn in at the office. Registration for sponsored programs held at FHM should be done directly with the provider.



Kid's Night Out (KNO)
6 - 10 pm

There are 4 Kid's Night Out programs per school year.

Each KNO are themed and dinner will be provided for all participants.

There will be games, crafts, food and a planned movie during this program for all students.

We welcome suggestions and input and value open communication between parents, staff and students. If you have any recommendations for specific types of programs or if you own a program and would like to see it at FHM in the future sessions, please let me know.



Lost and Found

There are a lost and found in the front entry way of the school. Please check there for any missing belongings.