

# THE MIRROR



MONTESSORI  
IN REDLANDS

NOV  
2019

VOLUME 44, ISSUE 3  
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LIC# 360910803-4-5



## Education for a New World

BY JENNY DAVIDSON, Head of School

*"The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. Intelligence plus character--that is the goal of true education." Martin Luther King, Jr.*

Children today are growing up in a globally connected world. The future dilemmas that they will solve will require unprecedented creativity and collaboration. These dilemmas can be sticky, and the answers will probably not be simple or easy.

The good news is that students at MIR seem up for the challenge. Every day, I am encouraged by the spontaneous interest,

creativity, and compassion that our students show at MIR.

In the early 1900s, education was designed to match the current needs of the people in that time and place. School at that time was more focused on learning facts and formulas, and high marks were given if you could recite those correctly.

Although conventional education continues to evolve, remnants of its origins are still present in many of today's schools.

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## MONTESSORI U NOVEMBER EVENTS

PARENT-CHILD NIGHT AND  
GRATEFUL DINNER

**Tuesday, November 5**

See the MIR Scrapbook on page 4 for pictures of this awesome evening.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

**Monday and Tuesday, November 25 and 26**

Conferences are the most important events of the year.

It is time to schedule your Fall Parent-Teacher Conferences. Conferences are

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## Board Report

### Thankful for a broken foot...

BY ALISA EVANS, Treasurer

As we enter the season of Thanksgiving, I try and take a minute (because who has more than a minute?) to reflect on the year that is coming to an end. What hit me profoundly this year is that life is going by so fast that I didn't even realize it was an end of a decade. Did 10 years just flash before my eyes?

As a glass half-full kinda gal, I was somewhat surprised by these thoughts. The reflection this year left me feeling mostly exhausted instead of thankful. Last year was here a minute ago, and I did

none, zip, zero of the things I was going to do for me. I was going to practice some self-care, I proclaimed this time last year. Self-care is any activity that we do deliberately to take care of our mental, emotional, and physical health.

I broke my foot last year and ended up not able to walk or drive for almost 6 months. It certainly wasn't a life changing injury, but it felt more symbolic to me. I felt like it was the literal representation of my body forcing me to slow down. Surely I would have listened and it should have slowed me down, right? I vowed to take the time to heal from surgery, to say "no" to things I didn't need to be doing, to spend more time with the kids while they still want to hang out with me, and to take time for meditation.

As quickly as I formed the plan for this year of **self-care**, the year passed me by. I

raced through my recovery (you may have seen me speeding through school on a knee scooter), and I continued to add more and more onto my plate. I hurried the kids along so I could get things done. I always needed just 10 more minutes and then I could play with the kids. I couldn't call my meditation a practice because that would suggest it was regular and planned. It happened ad hoc most of the time. Mostly when I was frazzled and needed to slow down. Shocking!

Breaking my foot was supposed to force me to slow down, practice self-care, and in turn be a healthier and more available parent to my kiddos. It did not.

Instead of sharing with you all the things I am thankful for, I am here to challenge you during this season of gratefulness.

This is my last year on the MIR Board

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## PTM News

### On the Language of Gratitude

BY LUPINA HOSSEIN, Room Rep

To show gratitude, to thank someone, is an act that is universal. We have 6,500 languages around the world, and all of them contain a form of showing appreciation, though, the history or the etymology of the phrases differ widely. For example, in English the word "thank" comes from the Latin word *tonegere*, with the root *tong* meaning, "to think." Through the concept of "thinking," we get the translation of "thank you," as an act of "thinking" and "remembering" the person to whom we owe our gratitude. In this case, thanking someone is saying, "I will think" or, "I will remember" what you have done for me.

While this Latin root of "thinking" plays a role in the English version of gratitude, Spanish and Italian turn to the Latin phrase, *gratias agere*, which means "to express thanks." It is no wonder that "thank you" in

both languages sound similar, giving us our familiar *gracias* in Spanish and *grazie* in Italian. It is from here, that we get "gratitude" in English. And yet, even as we recognize the similarities of the words, we can imagine the differences of enunciation in each language. Each has its own character and flare as we show our gratitude.

The most surprising however, is the French form of gratitude, that still uses Latin but utilizes the word *merces* with the implication of "wages, fees, and prices." So, there is a financial component, and a sense of debt and an acknowledgement of owing the debt. It is no surprise that the French sociologist Marcel Mauss who studies the concept of "gifts" claims that there is no such thing as a gift. Instead of a gift, we get exchanges and reciprocity. He emphasizes the concept of a circle, with each act of kindness turning into literal exchanges and a return of gratitude. The act of "giving" and the act of "thanking" therefore forms a tight circular connection

between people and stabilizes bonds between families and tribes. Through this circular exchange of giving and thanking, our society grows stronger. If Mauss is correct, if there is no such thing as a gift, then it is understandable why the more modern form of the "thank you" in French is *merci*, which comes from the word *mercit* and means "reward, gift, kindness, grace, and pity." So, if there is indeed an indebtedness to the one who we wish to thank, and if we then recognize that perhaps, there is no gift, then we are—by the act of thanking someone—giving a reward, giving a gift of thank you. It is our attempt to express kindness and grace, and even our own pity towards ourselves, as we recognize our inability to express our utter gratitude to the ones who we owe. We owe, and therefore, we are asking for "mercy." Is it therefore any surprise that it is precisely from the French word of *merci*, that we derive the English word "mercy."

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## Curriculum Matters

### Finding Our Place in the World

**BY MAURA JOYCE**, Head of School, Post Oak Montessori

*This article is being reprinted from November 2009 in honor of GIS Day, which takes place on Wednesday, November 13. Geography and geosciences are incorporated into the following MIR Student Learner Outcomes:*

- **Cultural Subjects:** *MIR children will create a foundation for the appreciation of the humanities and the arts. They will have a sense of historical perspective, an understanding of one's place in the world, and gratitude for the accomplishments of those who came before them.*
- **Sciences:** *MIR children will have a conscious awareness and understanding of the natural world and its order. They will have the ability to recognize and use the basic methods of scientific inquiry.*

Maria Montessori was very concerned about the world that she lived in. She lived through two World Wars and watched people become more and more disconnected from each other and from the earth. When deciding what to bring to children during their development and education, she put great emphasis on orienting them to the world around them. Starting with the tiniest children she created environments that had a strong order to them. Activities were color-coded, complete, and in sequence, so that from the very beginning the child could find their way around the classroom and the materials and build a strong internal compass.

When she designed sensorial materials, she looked for ways that children would practice the discrimination of size and shape. Rather than just using blocks, Montessori designed puzzle maps of the world. If they can identify the shape of a circle and a square, why not the shape of North America and Asia? Montessori used the child's great capacity for language acquisition and gave them the names of all the continents and countries.

Montessori Primary classrooms have lots and lots of map work going on. As they learn the places on the globe, they are then presented the different flora, fauna, and cultures. As they grow, so does their appreciation for geography, both physical and cultural.

In Elementary, the children's work in geography expands into the sciences of the physical world—biology, chemistry, physics, meteorology, geology. Their research extends into the history of different cultures and economic geography (what is produced where).

All of this work serves one purpose—to orient the child to their world and the people in it. Additionally, the children build a strong appreciation for the environment and different cultures. It is also a tremendous amount of fun for the children to engage in this work!

#### Students to Celebrate GIS Day

GIS Day was established by Redlands GIS software company Esri as a worldwide day of education outreach on the value and use of GIS in everyday life. From keeping the lights on to keeping trains running on time to organizing the (seemingly never-ending) road construction, GIS is an important if invisible technology in our lives.

**“All of this work serves one purpose—to orient the child to their world and the people in it.”**

MIR teachers of all levels will organize activities to help students understand the importance of geography as a framework for studying and understand the world, and how GIS can be used in this process.

If you use GIS or work at Esri, check with your child's class to see if they need assistance. Toddler activities are kept simple, and classes will not need help.





# MIR Scrapbook

## Child-Parent Night and Grateful Dinner

Child-Parent Night is held twice a year at MIR, once in November and once in April. Children guide parents through lessons they have prepared to show some of the learning that takes place each day. If you had questions about your child's progress following Child-Parent Night, be sure to bring them to your conferences November 25 or 26.



# Cough, Sniffle, Sneeze! Keep Me Home Please!

When your child shows early signs of illness, it's sometimes hard to know when to keep him or her home. It's often tempting to send a child with "only a sniffle" off to school and hope for the best, especially when your schedule is packed.

We at MIR understand the constraints you face. Due to an increase in the number of illnesses spreading around the school, we would like to remind you of our illness policies.

California State law requires that MIR shall be responsible for ensuring that children with obvious symptoms of illness do not attend school. Obvious symptoms include: productive cough, runny nose, sneezing, fever, rash, eye inflammation, vomiting, diarrhea, or sore throat.

We also cannot admit your child to school if one or more of the following exists:

- Illness that prevents the child from participating comfortably in nor-

mal school activities, including outdoor play.

- Illness or injury that results in a greater need for care than teachers can provide without compromising the health, safety, and supervision of the other children in the class.
- A temperature of 99.9 (under the arm) or 100.4 (oral or in the ear) degrees or higher.
- Symptoms and signs of possible severe illness such as lethargy, abnormal breathing, uncontrolled diarrhea, vomiting, rash with fever, mouth sores with drooling, or behavior changes that indicate severe illness.
- A communicable disease, unless we have medical documentation to indicate that the child is no longer contagious.

Parents will be called if a child develops symptoms of illness at school and we

require that you pick up them up immediately. Sick children will be isolated in the classroom until they are picked up.

Children who have had a fever must be kept out of school until they have been fever-free for 24 hours. This policy dramatically reduces the incidence of illness in students schoolwide.

If your child will be absent from school or has any type of contagious disease, such as chicken pox, strep throat, head lice, pink eye, etc., email [attendance@mir.org](mailto:attendance@mir.org) to let us know.

If a child has a communicable disease such as strep throat or hand, foot, and mouth disease, MIR will notify the relevant classroom(s) while maintaining the privacy of the sick child.

We appreciate your help in keeping staff and your child's classmates healthy by keeping your ill child at home. We know it's hard, but adherence to this policy protects everyone. Thank you!

## MIR Scrapbook

MIR's Elementary Running Club participants had the opportunity to run in the annual Mt. SAC Invitational Races this month.





## PTM: GRATITUDE (cont.)

(Continued from page 2)

We are therefore recognizing our indebtedness, forming a connection, attempting to give a gift, expressing our grace, and yet, it is our inability to fully thank someone that leads us to ask for “mercy.” We are truly indebted and at the mercy of the one who we wish to thank.

This state of discomfort implied in the act of thanking, is seen most clearly in the Japanese word for thank you through the word *arigatau*. The Japanese phrase comes from the word *arigatashi*, with the first part of the word, *aru*, meaning “to exist,” and the last part of the word, *katai*, meaning “difficult.” We therefore get the sense that, as we are indebted to the one that we want to thank, we exist in a state of difficulty and discomfort. And it is therefore no surprise that the Japanese use the phrases *aru* and *katai* to express something “extremely uncommon” and “rare and precious.” Because thank you implies a discomfort that arises from the acknowledgement of the beautiful act that is done, and then, the difficulty in which we—the ones who wish to thank—find ourselves. We recognize the “rareness” and the “preciousness,” and almost pricelessness of a beautiful deed. And yet, all

we have to return our indebtedness are these simple words of gratitude. All we have is the act of thanking, and we wonder if these simple words are enough.

As we the PTM members volunteer our time, energy, and effort to the school, perhaps we, too, find ourselves in these predicaments. Through the Latin word *tonegere* we “think,” we remember, and we commemorate acts of kindness. And yet, how do we express such thanks? How beautifully does Spanish and Italian enunciate *gracias* and *grazie* and how indebted do we feel at the kindness of others? In return, we can offer only the words of gratitude and perhaps, a sense of mercy at not being able to give more. With *arigatau* we exist in a state of difficulty as we recognize the preciousness of kindness. Finally, we hope that, like Mauss’ circular act of giving, the “thank-yous” we exchange will strengthen the bonds of our community in our little corner of the world that we call, Montessori in Redlands.

### GRACIAS, GRAZIE, MERCI, ARIGATAU

Thank you to everyone who volunteered for the Halloween Carnival. Volunteers are the only way this event can come

together. It was well attended by more than 300 people, all of whom appreciate the work you did to make the event fun for the whole family.

### PTM FAMILY SKATE NIGHT

On Friday, November 22, 5-7 PM we will hold a Family Skate Night at Cal Skate in Grand Terrace. PTM books a two-hour private party, which makes it a safe environment for all ages from beginners to experienced skaters. Buy tickets at a discount in advance for \$6 in the MIR office or for \$8 at the door (tickets include skate rentals). This event is open to MIR and Grove School families, friends, and staff.

### PTM MEETING

Our next meeting is Tuesday, November 12 at 6 PM. Meetings are open to everyone in the MIR community. Childcare is available for enrolled students.

### SUPPORT MIR IF YOU SHOP AMAZON SMILE FOR THE HOLIDAYS

If you like to shop through Amazon on Cyber Monday, consider doing so through Amazon Smile. Amazon will donate a small percentage of the profits from your purchases to MIR.

The key is to get in the habit of using [smile.amazon.com](https://www.smile.amazon.com) (rather than [www.amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)) as your default shopping page. Amazon Smile operates exactly like you expect Amazon to. If you add items to your cart at [www.amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com), simply switch to [smile.amazon.com](https://www.smile.amazon.com) to check out and you’ll find your items still in the cart.

On your first visit to Amazon Smile, you will be asked to select a charitable organization before you begin shopping. Search and select “Montessori in Redlands” and you’ll give back to MIR with every purchase.

If you have any suggestions or questions related to PTM please email Shawnda Zook at [shawndazook@gmail.com](mailto:shawndazook@gmail.com).



## EDUCATION FOR A NEW WORLD (cont.)

(Continued from page 1)

The work of becoming an adaptable, collaborative, and responsible citizen is arguably more challenging than learning the rules of grammar or math facts. Dr. Montessori believed in creating classrooms that offer real-life scenarios for children to practice their problem-solving and people skills. Even young children at MIR care for their environment and their community members and navigate child-sized versions of real-life problems.

Educational researchers are documenting the importance of life skills such as communication, collaboration, focus, growth mindset, flexible thinking, and self-direction. These skills can grow from a young age and emerge with strong modeling and plenty of opportunities for intentional and spontaneous practice. Montessori classrooms are filled with these opportunities!

In Elementary classrooms, children are presented with lessons where all parts of the universe are interconnected and interdependent, which helps them understand the context of their place and time. Subjects are integrated through storytelling including astronomy, chemistry, biology, geography, and history. These lessons help children to make connections and apply problem solving in thoughtful and creative ways.

While we fully acknowledge that academic learning is essential, MIR strives to cultivate a broader definition of education. Our school's mission is to provide an environment where children begin a life journey of self-realization, love of learning, and global responsibility. With Parent-Teacher Conferences on the horizon, I encourage you to listen for a more wholistic assessment of your child's development. This is what makes Montessori unique and what gives me great optimism about the future!

## Getting it 'Done in 31'

Thank you to all the families, board members, and staff of MIR who donated generously to the MIR Fund during our "Done in 31" campaign! With your support, we reached 99% community participation as of October 31.

Donations totaled just under \$50,000. Families who donated \$1,000 or more will receive a paver in our Legacy Garden & Walk. Look for an email from Jessica Bailiff with instructions on submitting your inscription.

MIR is a nonprofit and the MIR Fund is an important source of funding for the school. By running an annual campaign rather than raising tuition, families are able to give according to their means, which lowers the monthly tuition costs for everyone. The funds collected will be used to

- **Refresh teachers' skills** through professional development
- **Revitalize the campus and classrooms** through ongoing improvements
- **Reaffirm our commitment to all students** by providing tuition assistance for families experiencing unexpected

We are deeply, sincerely grateful for your generosity and spirit of giving.

**Thank you!**

## BOARD REPORT (cont.)

(Continued from page 2)

after six years, and likely my last board article to write and perhaps my last chance to impact change. I share my own struggles of balancing life and lack of self-care because I care about my MIR community. I know I am not alone in the chaos. I am going to challenge us all (parents, faculty, staff, and anyone reading this) to try and fail and keep trying to take some time for yourself. Google "self-care," find something that works for you, and try it out. It isn't being selfish. Quite the opposite. It might help you to better manage those moments when you feel overwhelmed, overworked, and ready to launch your child's lunchbox into the groves if they ask you one more time to hold it for them. I still might launch the lunchbox, but I will

do it with a smile on my face and calmly.

Let's make this decade ahead about slowing down. There will always be too much to do and too little time, but my hope is that we make a conscious effort to take that extra few minutes for ourselves. Make it a decade we can all look back on and truly be thankful that we took the time to just be.



# PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

(Continued from page 1)

your opportunity to meet privately with your children's teachers to discuss their development and progress in the areas related to MIR's Student Learner Outcomes.

Conferences will be held Monday and Tuesday, November 25 and 26. Some teachers have additional dates and times. If you are unable to meet during any of the available slots, please work with your child's teacher to arrange an alternate conference time.

Sign up online following the instructions sent in an email on November 9. Once you have signed up, you will receive a confirmation email with a link to add your conferences to your calendar app. If you entered a second parent's email address on the forms, they will also receive the confirmation email. Please keep this email. You will need the links inside to make any changes to your schedule.

## CHILDCARE FOR CONFERENCE DAYS

School is closed and childcare is available by reservation for conference days. You can schedule childcare for blocks of time or just for your conference time. Reserve space online using the links in the weekly email.

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# Grove Farmers Market Holiday Craft and Fabric Fair

The Grove School Farmers Market will be hosting a Craft and Fabric Fair on Saturday, December 7, 8 AM-12 PM. Browse and buy unique gifts for the holidays from local vendors and Grove students.

The Craft Fair also offers an opportunity for your children to buy gifts for others all by themselves. Crafts are well made and some will range in price from \$1 to \$5. Let your children browse and select special items for family members, then pay for them all by themselves.

## Enjoy the Farmers Market Every Weekend

The Farmers Market at The Grove School is open rain or shine every weekend in the Heritage Park parking lot across the street from MIR. We encourage you to stop by. Children can run around and play games on the grass field or visit the goats and chickens on Grove's farm campus. And of course, you can buy farm fresh produce and other goodies from vendors at the market, including The Grove School.

# Calendar

## November 2019

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
27 Elementary Dance	28 Soccer	29 Elementary Dance Positive Discipline	31 Done in 31 Ends Sportball	1 Payments due Box Top Friday
4 Elementary Dance	5 Child-Parent Night and Grateful Dinner, 5-7 PM Soccer	6 Make-up/Re-take Picture Day Elementary Dance Positive Discipline	7 Sportball Elementary Math Club	8 Staff in-service. No school, no childcare
11 Veteran's Day. Childcare by reservation	12 PTM Meeting, 6 PM Soccer	13 GIS Day Elementary Dance Positive Discipline	14 Sportball Elementary Math Club	15 Box Top Friday Nikki's class potluck and talent show, 11 AM-1 PM Makerspace
18 Elementary Dance	19 Soccer	20 Kristen's class field trip, 9 AM-3 PM Elementary Dance	21 Emily's class field trip, 8:30 AM-3:30 PM Sportball Elementary Math Club	22 Box Top Friday Bluebird Assembly, 9:15 AM Maria/Jennifer Friendsgiving celebration Kara/Jenny Thanksgiving Feast PTM Skate Night, 5-7 PM
25	26	27	28	29
Parent-Teacher Conferences. School closed, childcare by reservation.			School and childcare closed for Thanksgiving break.	