

THE TREEPOST



NEWS & NOTES FROM COUNTRY MONTESSORI SCHOOL | SPRING 2018

How does our learning grow?

New Early Childhood Garden takes bloom

We are thrilled to have a new Early Childhood outdoor learning environment on our campus. This tranquil addition is nestled in the area between the three Early Childhood classrooms and will be used by Ladybug, Bumble Bee and Dragonfly students. The garden includes a large chair (or rather, a fairy tale-like throne). There are also two budding topiaries which will quickly grow into a an elephant and a bear.

The funding for this new outdoor makeover came from two sources: the **Walk-a-thon**, our student participation fundraiser last November generated half the cost, and the **Kinsey Family Foundation** provided the balance of the funds. We have been fortunate recipients of the Kinsey Foundation grants for four years which we have used to create other outdoor learning environments and enhancements to the school grounds. Each year the school provides the foundation with reports and photos of our grant-funded projects and they have been very delighted.

All three of these outdoor environments provide the perfect setting for small group lessons with the elementary working garden specifically dedicated to the lower elementary botany curriculum.



CALENDAR ITEMS

MARCH

- 20 Spring Egg Hunt
- 23 AMS Conference - No School - Childcare available

APRIL

- 6 Pajama Day
- 9-13 Spring Break



[Like us on Facebook!](#)



The Treepost is sent to families four times a year. For weekly updates, photos, and timely reminders, like us on Facebook!

Our Facebook page is also a great way to share CMS with friends and family and prospective families.

HELLO from The Head of School

We have been very busy recently preparing for our visit from the Western Association of School's and Colleges (WASC). In 2015, we received our initial accreditation for a period of three years. We had defined and approved goals and have worked on our self-study over the past three years. The WASC Visiting Team was at the school from March 11-14.

The philosophy of the Accrediting Commission for Schools centers upon three beliefs:

(1) a school's goal is successful student learning; (2) each school has a clear purpose and schoolwide student goals; and (3) a school engages in external and internal evaluations as part of continued school improvement to support student learning.

Accreditation is integral to a school's perpetual cycle of assessment, planning, implementation, monitoring, and reassessment based upon student achievement. It fosters excellence in elementary, secondary, adult, and postsecondary education by encouraging school improvement through a process of continuing evaluation and to recognize, by accreditation, schools that meet



TRIVIA TIME!

Can you answer these questions about this archive photo?

- 1 Identify two people in the photo who are members of staff.
- 2 What year was this taken?
- 3 Where was this photo taken?



Email your answers to: Sheila Walker sheilaw@countrymontessori.org.
First correct answer gets a **\$50 credit for Summer Camp**.

an acceptable level of quality in accordance with established criteria.

In addition to its official title, WASC also means We Are Student-Centered. The entire Self-Study process was an engaging and collaborative experience for the school. It is a validation of all the years of growth and implementation that we have built the school on. **My favorite part of the entire process was working with the staff and the team work and discussions that transpired through the process. The self-study highlights where our strengths are and where there is opportunity to grow.** The WASC team was comprised of four members who all come from WASC accredited schools. Two of the members were Montessorians so that was a bonus.

During their four day visit, they toured the campus, met with some parents and Board members, observed the classrooms, spoke with all of the staff and some students and worked on

their report. They want to ensure that our self-study is accurate with their findings. The team had wonderful things to say about CMS.

The team presents a final report and recommendation that is submitted to the WASC Commission. We should be hearing back from the commission by late May to hear what status of accreditation we will receive. The WASC team has assigned us three new goals to work over the next six years that derived from their findings.

During the summer we will begin work on our new journey. It is truly a group effort and encompasses everyone's specific areas of talent and passion. As a WASC member I have served on two teams and now have experienced the entire process which I am thankful for and looking forward to the next phase.

Ms. Adela Corrales,
Head of School, CMS

Message from the Board President

Every year the board, administration and staff hold a strategic planning session to create a blueprint to align the school's mission with its future endeavors.

About four years ago, the board committed to pursue an accreditation by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). The initial WASC self-study and visit took place in January 2015 and we received accreditation later that same year. During the past three years, key stakeholders at the school have collaborated to study, research and identify opportunities to implement objectives outlined in the WASC Action Plan. The board's strategic focus has been supporting the success of that action plan. This month, members of the WASC committee will visit the school for our re-accreditation process.

During our most recent strategic planning session in January, we discussed the upcoming WASC visit, progress on the action plan objectives and the self-study report. We also discussed tuition, financial planning, enrollment, facility improvements completed and in progress, technology upgrades and additions, ways to keep improving communications with parents, and opportunities to share the Montessori philosophy and the strength of the multi-age classrooms.



CMS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| President | Nina Kim, Owls |
| Vice President | Joy Hou, Owls |
| Secretary | Chris Zedelmayer, Owls |
| Treasurer | Kathy Rogers, Community Member |
| Owls | Kalyan Kuppuswamy |
| Eagles | Sean Gailey, Beth Zaletski |
| Bumblebees, Ladybugs | Marea Ortiz |
| Eagles, Ladybugs, Bumblebees | Peter Townshend |
| Owls, Eagles, Bumblebees | Roland El Ghazal |
| Staff | Adela Corrales, Head of School Vicki Rehkopf, Owls teacher Wendy West, Bumblebees teacher |

DEVELOPMENT NEWS

Walk-a-thon Success

Thank you to all of our amazing CMS students and the wonderful friends and family who helped CMS raise **\$15,818.99**.

All CMS students did an amazing job with the Walk-a-thon. We want to take a moment to recognize a few students who went above and beyond with raising money and seeking sponsors:

- **Sophia Chavez-Aguilar** had over 60 sponsors for this year's Walk-a-thon.
- **Amaya Alvarez Stephens** and **Peyton Martinez** raised more than \$1,000 each to support this year's event

They were acknowledged in their classrooms and each received a certificate for their hard work. Their



Walk-a-thon winners Sophia Aguilar-Chavez, Peyton Martinez and Amaya Stephens receive awards for their fundraising achievements.

names will be engraved on the Country Montessori School Walk-a-thon plaque in the CMS office.

PTC NEWS

The end of the school year is quickly approaching, but there are still plenty of ways to support CMS! If you haven't completed your hours please contact your classroom ambassadors. If you have the calling to become part of the PTC, it's your lucky day! The PTC will be having elections in April for selecting its new members for 2018-2019. Please contact Gilda Reeves with any questions or interest.

Our children are looking forward to the kick off of the World Wildlife Fundraiser happening at the end of March. Each class gets to support one endangered animal and learn about wilderness preservation and how each of us can reduce our impact on the environment. Parents can help by finding ways for their child to earn extra change by helping around the house!

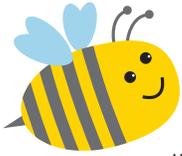
PTC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| President | Gilda Reeves – Bumblebees, Dragonflies |
| Vice President & Outreach | Eva Rayburn – Eagles |
| Ambassador Coordinator | Kerstin Kirchsteiger – Bumblebees |
| Social Chairs | Kelley Swaine – Owls Dragana Kotokovic – Bumblebees |
| Staff Appreciation Chair | Cheryl Schneider – Eagles |
| Ladybugs | Marea Ortiz Anny Kuo |
| Bumblebees | Rebecca Colman Jenni Nguyen |
| Dragonflies | Alaina Beaudette MaryAnn Malvig |
| Eagles | Monica Scott |
| Owls | Lisa Wood Corinne Fond Ana Garza-Beutz |

(...EXCERPTS FROM CLASSROOM NEWSLETTERS...)

BUMBLEBEES

EARLY CHILDHOOD | AGES 2.5 - 6



The Bumblebees have been a bunch of busy bees! Aside from their daily work and activities, they have been gardening in the Bumblebee garden plots. They were super excited to plant new flowers, vegetables and fruit starter plants. They have been tending to these new plants daily learning the responsibilities of nurturing nature.

If you have been hearing food themed songs being sung at home it is because we have been practicing for our Spring Fling! The Spring Fling is when CMS goes to the Po-way Performing Arts Center and puts on a show for their families. Each class has their own songs that they do, as well as group performances,

and songs sung by the entire school. It's a really fun day!

Sewing has been a big part of the Bumblebees daily work due to new sewing boxes, new fabric, and new projects! Sewing is great way to build fine motor skills as well as enhance coordination, concentration, and order. Our afternoon line times continue to be on sequencing with a story and snack, mon-art, acting out fables in the secret garden and virtues. The virtue we have been practicing is unity. Unity is the state of being united or joined into a whole, being at one with someone or something; the opposite of being divided. Upcoming virtues of practice are patience, obedience, and joyfulness.



DRAGONFLIES

EARLY CHILDHOOD | AGES 2.5 - 6

As you all know Ms. Bohn has joined the Dragonfly class! The children have all already started to make their own special bonds with her. They have been enjoying their new lessons, fingerplays, and line times. The partnership between Ms. Salas and Ms. Bohn has enhanced the children's sense of community and knowing that their classroom is a good, safe place.

This month we will be studying Reptiles and Dinosaurs, Volcano, Rocks, fossils, and of course St. Patrick's Day! Some of the ways we study these topics is reading books on each subject, having open discussions, as well as doing special activities. During line times we will be focusing on art, sequencing, guided drawing, cooking, and overall grace and courtesy.

In Music, with Mr. Short we have chosen our theme for the Spring Fling, as well as our special Dragonfly songs! We have already began practicing and getting excited about performing at the end of the year. We have also been enjoying Spanish and Sharing!

LADYBUGS

EARLY CHILDHOOD | AGES 2.5 - 6

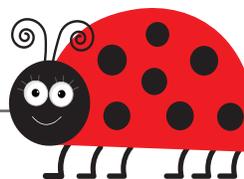
The kindergarteners have been enjoying reading to younger students and practicing being great role models. It's reassuring for the teachers to see the responsible people they are becoming.

We have been reading books about birds and mammals, and learning about how people and animals live on other continents like South America, Australia, and Asia. In April we will be exploring eggs, Earth Day, and Maria Montessori. We are excited to learn all about flowers and insects this month.

We will soon be getting a special delivery of caterpillars that we will watch transform into painted lady butterflies, as we study their lifecycle right in the classroom. Once they are ready, we will release them in our new serenity garden. That's right - we have a new garden being constructed right outside our classroom! This will be a magical outdoor space for lessons and peaceful group activities.

It was sad for us all to see Ms. Lucia leave, but we are happy for her as she begins her new career. Ms. Beaudette has blended beautifully with our classroom and has a warm, peaceful presence. We are lucky to have her join our team.

Karin and Brittany enjoyed meeting with all of you for parent-teacher conferences and appreciates your time to discuss your child's progress.



(...EXCERPTS FROM CLASSROOM NEWSLETTERS...)

EAGLES

LOWER ELEMENTARY | AGES 6 - 9



Spring is in the air and the Eagles classroom is filled with life and enthusiasm!

Currently, so many children are soaring to new heights and show much excitement about learning.

Here are what first levels are doing. Since each lesson is geared to the child's specific needs, some firsts enjoy learning multiplication, and express that it is their favorite work, while others prefer to happily work to master addition or subtraction facts with the strip boards. Yet, there are also those who express that

language is their preferred work and show their joy by saying, "I love this work". All firsts have enjoyed many new lessons in grammar like, sentence analysis and parts of speech.

Second level recently enjoyed a creative writing lesson on following a procedure to make blueberry muffins. They learned it was important to follow the directions in the order they were given and to thoroughly read all of the directions first to familiarize themselves with the ingredients and process. On their own they will pick a simple recipe they know to write down the ingredients and supplies needed as well as detailed directions for each step to take to fictitiously create their masterpiece.

Third level students have been busily working on their imaginary island projects. Before the break, their maps went home so they could begin building their islands out of clay or salt dough. They are also creating a report that includes the flora and fauna, people on the island, types of food, etc. on the island. Earlier in the year the thirds created a myth as to how their island was created. They also researched the closest land nearby to find factual information to put in their imaginary island. Final reports are due on 3/19. They are currently working on the Stock Market Game, as well.

OWLS

UPPER ELEMENTARY | AGES 9 -11

Authored by 4th and 5th Level students



We have learned lots of fun educational subjects this quarter. We started the Stock Market Game with new mentees and mentors as partners. The teachers gave us passwords, but then we got to create our own. We researched and did our calculations on our investing spreadsheet to determine our number of shares. Once you get a calculation correct, every other calculation you need to do is easy. The hard part is picking the stocks though. Once we got our shares, we bought our stocks. We are very excited about our stocks, but we can't tell you what stocks we bought in order to not spoil it for others.

We went to Old Town! It was a fun, interesting and educational field

trip. We stayed for the whole school day. We got to see the Blacksmith Shop, and a whole bunch of others. We got to be students in an old, school house. It was very different than school today; chalkboards instead of white boards, benches not desks, and the teachers were very strict. When we visited the printer, we learned how they made the newspapers in the olden days. After some shops, we ate lunch while watching a comedian show. Then we went to some more shops. We had an exciting field trip!

Students are finding science interesting and surprising. The 5th levels enjoyed their Chemistry Lab Day. Fifth level student Gus says, "We watched as our teacher mixed

alcohol and water. We had a Yeast Fermentation Experiment. We also made and drank soda. It was fun and exciting." In the Rueben H. Fleet field trip, Raina says, "So first, we did a digestion experiment. After the experiment, we did a little maze. Then the nice lady let us explore the museum. Later, we went for lunch and recess. In the end, some of my friends started building towers out of structural building blocks. Additionally, fourths have been working on science kits. Our favorite kit was Turn Electricity into Sound using a telegraph and Morse Code. Landan shares our opinion that "science is fun and interesting."

YOU'RE INVITED

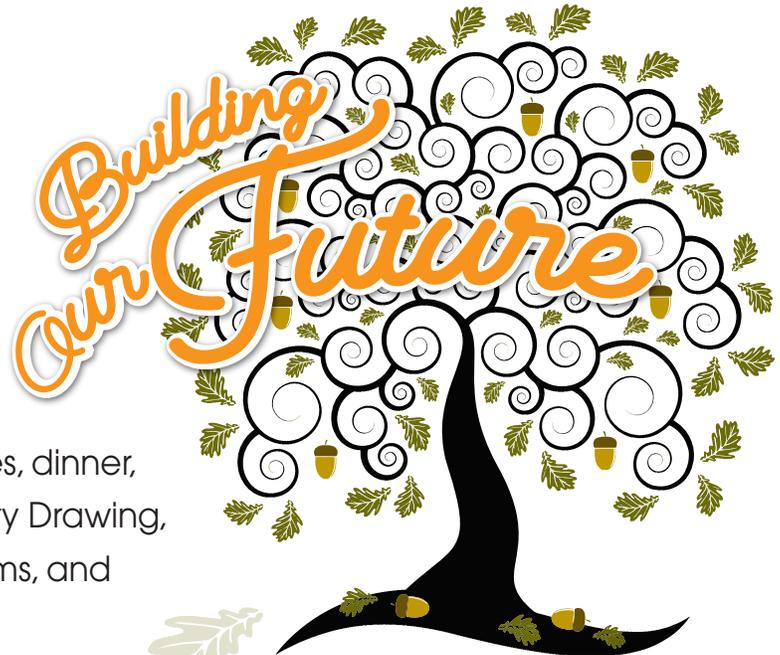


20TH ANNUAL *Auction & Dinner* BENEFIT

Enjoy an evening of hors d'oeuvres, dinner, beer & wine bar, 50/50 Opportunity Drawing, unique Silent and Live Auction items, and our Wine Wall.

EARLY BIRD TICKETS - includes 2 drink tickets!
(now through April 14th)

Adult \$40
Child \$20
Family \$120
(2 adults plus your children)



Saturday May 19, 2018

4:00 - 7:00 PM

CMS Campus

Dressy Casual Attire

Purchase your tickets on the home page of the CMS website

www.countrymontessori.org

CMS ANNUAL AUCTION IS ON THE HORIZON

The school year is flying by and our 20th Annual Auction and Dinner Benefit is right around the corner on Saturday, May 19th from 4:00 – 7:00 pm. We are bundling together all our wonderful auction items and hope that you will join us! Early bird tickets are available online; visit our school website for a link to our ticket purchasing page.

The CMS auction is a great opportunity to come out and support your school, enjoy an evening of food and fun with the CMS community. The event offers a special show for the students as well. Whether you are looking to bid on our **Disneyland family four pack** or interested in a **behind the**

scenes news anchor experience at 10News, our Auction Dinner and Benefit promises to be a night to remember.

If you are looking for opportunities to earn service hours, there are still ways to get involved with the auction. Reach out to your favorite restaurants, vendors or businesses that you frequent for auction donations. Each classroom also sponsors a classroom basket based on a theme. The classroom basket donations will be organized and compiled to create fun filled auction items.

We hope that you will come out to support this wonderful event.

COMPASSION IN THE COMMUNITY

By Ava Zedelmayer, 5th Level

CMS is devoted to giving back to the environment. Rather by cleaning up trash or spreading happiness, the CMS family of students, parents and teachers are ensuring a good tomorrow. Through these events, students learn just how much of an impact a little determination and attention can have on their community.

On alternating Fridays, **the fourth and fifth levels go out near the road to collect discarded trash.** They believe it is important to keep Earth clean. Litter can get out of hand quickly, so it is important that the community pays attention. Along with cleaning the area, they also learn the effects of littering and how they can inspire their families and communities to care about their neighborhoods.

On the other Fridays, **students of the Owls classroom go to the retirement home up the street, Sunshine Care.** Sometimes Sunshine Care will provide a craft or games and puzzles are brought from the school. Both instances are so the elders and children can figure out problems together. The students are encouraged to socialize with the seniors, may it be by sharing stories, playing games, and even the language of song.

Along with the other subjects they teach, CMS also wants students to learn compassion and kindness, among other virtues. "Our mission as teachers is not simply to teach the 3 R's; it is to instill in children, a deeper love towards all living things," remarks teacher Vicki Rehkopf.

"In keeping with Montessori Philosophy, we give children many opportunities to learn by doing. Learning to be compassionate is no exception; it must be experienced. Volunteering at Sunshine Care gives children the opportunity to 'practice' respect and compassion.



Our hope is that if they then become instruments of peace as their love ripples outward to their homes, community, and someday the world."

Going to Sunshine Care is not just for the students, the elders can get lonely so the kids help lighten the mood. Music can be heard in the spring season as the children recite songs from the Spring Fling, a musical event hosted by the school and music teacher Dennis Short. This time is enjoyed by most students. "At Sunshine Care, it is fun to hear about the grand-

parent's histories and we share stories with them," a fourth level student, Cassia Cromwell, says gleefully. The seniors enjoy company and the students are glad to be there.

Once or twice a school year, **a beach or park clean-up is hosted by CMS.**

Students can sign up to help make the t-shirts worn on the clean-up day. Previous clean-ups have been done at Moonlight Beach and Poway Community Park, and many others. These events provide different scenery for the students and it is very beautiful nonetheless. These clean-ups are optional and hosted by the school and parent helpers.

What state is your neighborhood in? Look around and see. Is there trash everywhere? Take action. You can make your community a better place, just like CMS is doing. **What state are your neighbors in?**

You would be surprised just how much a smile, or a friendly wave can impact the overall mood of a neighborhood. Most people don't think they can make a difference, but they are just plain wrong. One person can change the world through determination. How ever many roadblocks you think there are to your goal, you should go for it. Because, if you don't, nothing will ever change.

I am proud to be part of the CMS family because we are learning to be good citizens and role models for our communities.

"Change for Change" Fundraiser: April 16 - May 11

World Wildlife Fundraiser Global Citizenship is an important initiative here at CMS, where we strive to instill the qualities of charity and community in our students. From April 16 through May 11, we will be hosting "Change for Change" fundraiser which gives students the opportunity to collect any spare change from home and bring it to school every Friday. The classroom that collects the most amount of money each week will gain custody of our beloved panda bear.

The World Wildlife Fund ("WWF") is the largest conservation organization in the world, with a mission to "stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature."

Fletcher Cove Beach Cleanup - April 21

Thanks to our efforts in previous beach clean-ups, a CMS plaque has been erected at Fletcher Cove! Our students should feel proud of the effort that they have put in to this cause, and that their efforts have not gone unnoticed. What better way to celebrate than to host another beach clean up and get-together on the morning of April 21! The kids always have a great time combing the beach and finding all sorts of "treasures", and it's a great way for our CMS families to mingle and enjoy a San Diego beach morning! More information will be emailed to our families in the weeks to come. We hope to see you all there!

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

IN-SERVICE WORKSHOPS BENEFIT CMS STAFF & STUDENTS

By Karin Osterberg, CMS Early Childhood Education Teacher, Ladybugs



CMS takes pride in providing continued education for our staff. In addition to sponsoring teachers to attend the American Montessori Society annual conference, the school hosts in-service workshops on a regular basis.

We had the pleasure of hosting Reena Patel for three informative and engaging classes this year. Reena is a Licensed Educational Psychologist and a Board

Certified Behavior Analyst, as well as a parent of two former and one current CMS student.

The first workshop was held in August, prior to the start of school, on the topic of **Modifications and Accommodations**. We learned the difference between the two, and how to use each in the classroom. This blends perfectly with the Montessori individual approach, allowing teachers

to further personalize a child's curriculum, while staying true to our goals.

In December the topic was **Promoting Positive Behavior In Our School**. We all came away with fresh ideas, including a form to document occurrences. The form is designed to assist with understanding why a child may behave a certain way, and how best to support the child in a positive manner.

The last, in February, was **Preparing for Parent Teacher Conferences**. Reena offer valuable insights into ways we can make our time with parents as productive as possible.

Reena Patel delivers workshops with helpful information, with tools that we were able to utilize right away. Her presentation style is fun and interactive, putting everyone at ease. There was time to ask questions, and she insured all of us had a clear understanding of the material before ending the workshop.

ENGINEERING 101

by Mandy Odenwalder, CMS Elementary teacher, Eagles

Over the summer, the Eagles classroom purchased engineering kits to use in the classroom. Each kit starts with a storybook about a child who uses the engineering design process to solve a problem.

FIRST LEVELS had the opportunity to develop and test different recipes for play dough. They were excited to bring some of their recipes home.

SECOND LEVELS learned the properties of sand, soil and clay to build the perfect mortar mixture to hold up a wall. Teams of three students asked, imagined, planned, created, tested and improved their mortar mixtures to test again. After their first wall was built and dried, they used a wrecking ball (golf ball) held at different heights and released to test the strength of their walls. All walls after the first four tests failed. Students discussed

what worked well, what didn't and how they could improve their design. On their second attempt, all walls improved significantly, some still stood after four attempts to knock down.

THIRD LEVEL students paired up to build different types of bridges and learned the properties of each: a beam bridge, a deep beam bridge and an arch bridge, testing for stability (how many times a toy car could safely cross over the bridge) and for strength (how many weights it could hold). The first attempt by each pair flopped. They used the design process to improve their second design.

Three engineering activities are on the shelf at all times in the classroom as well. When students have finished all of their daily work, they may choose to do one of these three engineering activities:

- **Make the homes of the three little pigs** using Lego bricks, straw, toothpicks, etc., and have a wolf try to blow them down.
- **Build a parachute that will help Jack safely get down the beanstalk**, using several types of cloth, tissue paper, thread, yarn, tape, scissors, etc.
- **Build a bridge** using only popsicle sticks, index cards and clothespins that can hold up at least three weights.

For each activity, there is an engineering design process paper to go with it. Students must plan what they plan to use either in words or a drawing, create the item and then test it. New engineering activities being added include building a zipline for Rapunzel, a bed for Goldilocks and a carriage for Cinderella out of simple items.

MEET THE TEACHERS

TRACY RENDON

ENRICHMENT INSTRUCTOR

Where did you live as a child?

I was born and raised in Houston, Texas.

How many years have you been teaching at CMS?

This is my 11th year at CMS.

What did you do before you came to CMS?

I was an ESL teacher's assistant and a sports coach at Spring Oaks Middle School in Houston. I also waited tables and worked part-time at a gym.

What do you enjoy about teaching Computers and Physical Education?

I love that no matter what we are doing for either class the kids are so excited and ready to go! It really does make me love my job each and every day!

What is your favorite time of the year at CMS? Why?

My favorite time of year is probably the Spring Fling. It is so fun to see the kids dance and sing! They always have a good time and are so talented.

What is a favorite memory from your childhood?

My favorite memory would probably be when I was in the 3rd grade and my parents finally let me have a cat. I must have asked for more than a fish over a million times! His name was Buster and I loved him very much. He lived to be 18 years old!

What are your interests?

SOCCER - watching, playing, coaching! I also enjoy cooking and baking, even though it kind of stresses me out.

What is the most important thing you would like parents to know about a CMS education?

As the PE teacher, I feel movement and physical activity is a very important part in the development of the whole child.

In addition to weekly PE classes at CMS, the classrooms are designed for free movement during group lessons and self-directed activities as well.



DENNIS SHORT

ENRICHMENT INSTRUCTOR

Where did you live as a child?

I was born and raised in Pittsburgh PA

How many years have you been teaching at CMS?

I have been teaching at CMS for 10 years. This will be my 10th Spring Fling.

What did you do before you came to teach music at CMS?

I taught private music lessons, as I still do, and I wrote music, and played music for a living.

What do you enjoy about teaching Music at CMS?

Seeing how much excitement the students have for learning and singing music. And also how valued I feel from the staff and parents.

What is your favorite time of the year at CMS? Why?

The week before the Spring Fling. Because most of the hard-work has been done and it's rewarding to step back and see how everything has come together. Now it's just nothing but excitement to bring the show to the audience.

What is a favorite memory from your childhood?

Wow! There are so many, I wish I could do it all again. I always loved the festivities of Halloween and Christmas.

What are your interests?

Too many :) Mountain biking, woodworking, arts and crafts, travel, football, hockey etc.

What is the most important thing you would like parents to know about a CMS education?

I think the atmosphere and sense of community within the school is something that you can't find in most schools.





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