



**St. Joseph  
Montessori School**

*Educating the human  
potential since 1968.*



**St. Joseph Montessori School** is a Catholic Montessori community committed to a learning environment that respects the uniqueness of each child in reaching his/her full potential.





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# OUR PHILOSOPHY

We at St. Joseph Montessori School believe that, as a result of the program provided in our school, each child will become a confident, competent person. They will possess self-knowledge, independence, concentration, inner discipline, and a spirit of joy. They will exhibit care and respect for themselves, for others, and for the world around. Each child will exercise initiative and persistence in completing learning tasks, and will exhibit sensitivity, curiosity, creativity, and a spirit of discovery in his or her approach to life and learning.





## OUR PURPOSE

The purpose of St. Joseph Montessori School is, in the words of Dr. Maria Montessori, “to educate the human potential” by means of a scientifically prepared environment that provides a wide variety of equipment and materials; employs a multi-sensory approach to learning; and frees the child to choose activities according to individual interests, abilities, and talents within certain limits. The opportunity to participate in one’s own education provides the child a context for growing academically, socially, and emotionally. At St. Joseph Montessori School, the child’s ability to direct his/her own learning is guided by the Montessori influence of freedom with discipline.

Our school exists as an educational alternative that values and is committed to serving a widely diverse population with varying needs and aptitudes. We believe our services must extend beyond the classroom. Educational opportunities provided for families enable parents to reinforce and enrich the child’s learning. Staff members are offered the means and resources for professional growth and are provided an environment that encourages initiative, creativity, and collaborative decision making. Respect, cooperation, and mutual support among students, parents, staff, and community members are critically important to a child’s success in school and must be actively fostered by all participants.

# SJMS AT-A-GLANCE

**Our School** was founded in 1968 as a private preschool for St. Joseph Academy. In 1977, SJMS became a private, Diocesan school for The Diocese of Columbus. Our school is accredited by Ohio Catholic Schools Accrediting Association (OCSAA) and affiliated with American Montessori Society (AMS), Columbus Catholic Dioceses, and National Catholic Educators Association (NCEA). St. Joseph Montessori School is pursuing full accreditation through the American Montessori Society and is a Step 6 on the AMS Pathways (out of 10) as of June 2020. SJMS is governed by a Board of Trustees that consists of 12-14 individuals who volunteer their time and offer their backgrounds, diverse knowledge, and talents within our school community and beyond.



**Our Students** join us as early as 3 years old in our Children’s House program. SJMS has 210 students enrolled for the 2020-21 school year. Our student - teacher ratios are low with 1:12 in Children’s House, 1:11 in Lower Elementary, 1:9 in Upper Elementary, and 1:14 in Middle School. Our students commute to SJMS from 42 different Central Ohio zip codes.

**Our Faculty and Staff** includes 43 full and part-time employees. We have 1 teacher with a PhD, 15 with Master’s Degrees, 20 with Bachelor’s Degrees, and 2 employees with Associates Degrees. SJMS employs 14 AMS Credentialed teachers, four with Non-MACTE credentials, and two are currently enrolled in an AMS certification program.

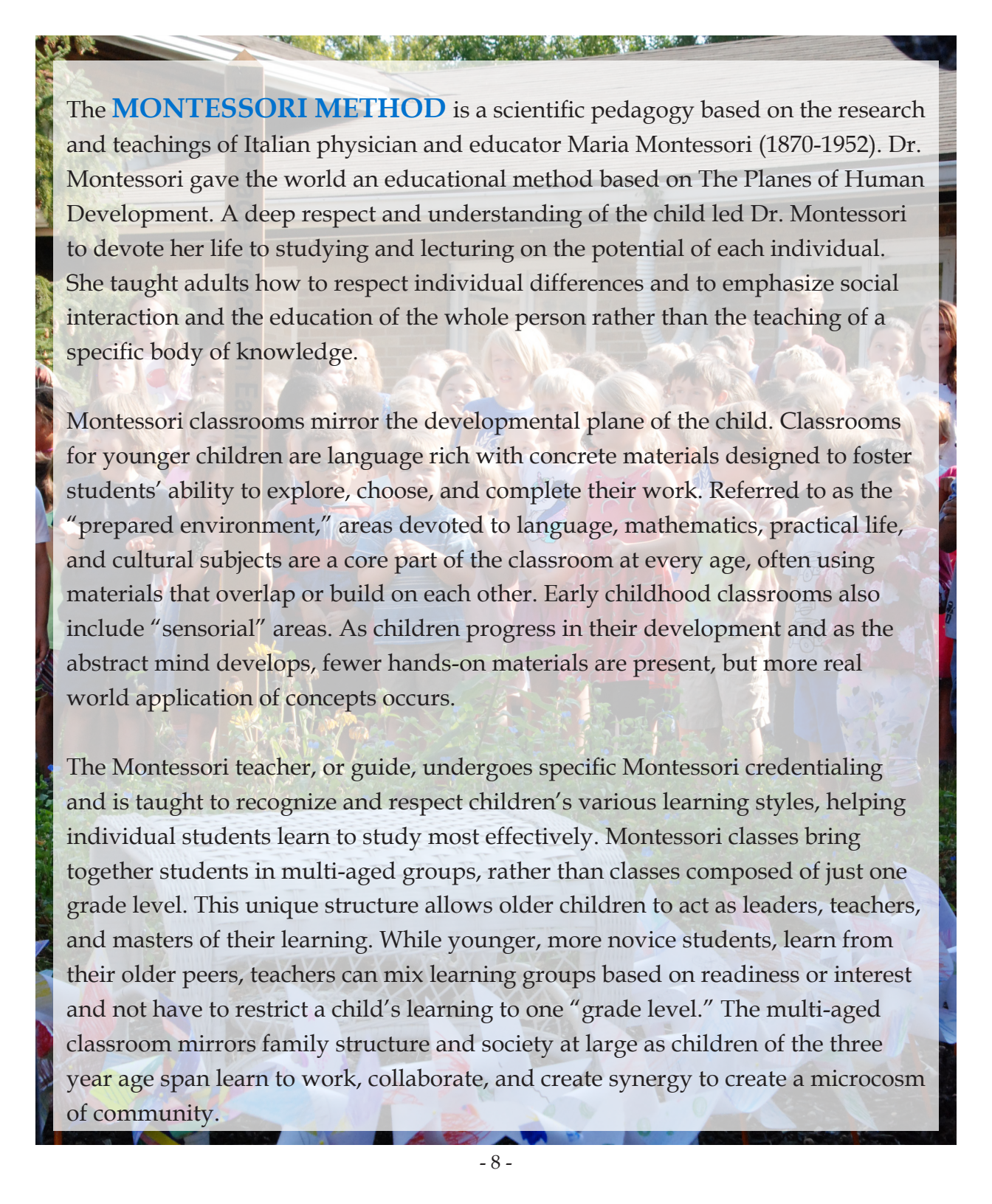
**Our Campus** offers over three acres of land with two instructional buildings. We are home to two honeybee hives, a Native Ohio garden, and a pollinator garden. SJMS shares a campus with Sacred Heart Church. Our campus is centrally located with easy access to parks and museums for walking field trips and Goings Out using free, public transportation.

# 8 PRINCIPLES OF MONTESSORI EDUCATION

by Dr. Angeline Lillard from *Montessori: The Science Behind the Genius*

1. **Movement and Cognition:** Movement and cognition are closely entwined, and movement can enhance thinking and learning
2. **Choice:** Learning and well-being are improved when people have a sense of control over their lives.
3. **Interest:** People learn better when they are interested in what they are learning.
4. **Extrinsic Rewards are Avoided:** Tying extrinsic rewards to an activity negatively impacts motivation to engage in that activity when the reward is withdrawn.
5. **Learning From and With Peers:** Collaborative arrangements can be very conducive to learning.
6. **Learning in Context:** Learning situated in meaningful contexts is often deeper and richer than learning in abstract contexts.
7. **Respectful Teacher-Child Interaction:** Particular forms of adult interaction are associated with more optimal outcomes.
8. **Order in Environment and Mind:** Order in the environment is beneficial to children.





The **MONTESSORI METHOD** is a scientific pedagogy based on the research and teachings of Italian physician and educator Maria Montessori (1870-1952). Dr. Montessori gave the world an educational method based on The Planes of Human Development. A deep respect and understanding of the child led Dr. Montessori to devote her life to studying and lecturing on the potential of each individual. She taught adults how to respect individual differences and to emphasize social interaction and the education of the whole person rather than the teaching of a specific body of knowledge.

Montessori classrooms mirror the developmental plane of the child. Classrooms for younger children are language rich with concrete materials designed to foster students' ability to explore, choose, and complete their work. Referred to as the "prepared environment," areas devoted to language, mathematics, practical life, and cultural subjects are a core part of the classroom at every age, often using materials that overlap or build on each other. Early childhood classrooms also include "sensorial" areas. As children progress in their development and as the abstract mind develops, fewer hands-on materials are present, but more real world application of concepts occurs.

The Montessori teacher, or guide, undergoes specific Montessori credentialing and is taught to recognize and respect children's various learning styles, helping individual students learn to study most effectively. Montessori classes bring together students in multi-aged groups, rather than classes composed of just one grade level. This unique structure allows older children to act as leaders, teachers, and masters of their learning. While younger, more novice students, learn from their older peers, teachers can mix learning groups based on readiness or interest and not have to restrict a child's learning to one "grade level." The multi-aged classroom mirrors family structure and society at large as children of the three year age span learn to work, collaborate, and create synergy to create a microcosm of community.





## **OUR PROGRAMS**

### **Children's House**

Ages 3 - 6

### **Lower Elementary**

Ages 6 - 9

(1st through 3rd years)

### **Upper Elementary**

Ages 9 - 12

(4th through 6th years)

### **Middle School**

Ages 13 - 14

(7th through 8th years)

# CHILDREN'S HOUSE

In our Children's House program, students learn in multi-age settings of 3 to 6-year-old children. Our environments are filled with scientifically designed manipulatives that engage young learners. These Montessori materials ease students into practical life, beginning reading, mathematics, sustained concentration, sense of order, independence, and further refine motor skills. These language rich environments also develop oral communication skills, define and refine the senses through the use of the Sensorial area, and develop fine motor/pre-writing skills. Students are also exposed to cultural studies, the Spanish language, science, music, art, physical education, and beginning library skills. Students learn individually and in small groups.



## LOWER ELEMENTARY

Our Lower Elementary Program gives 1st through 3rd year children the opportunity to continue to progress at their own pace in a multi-age environment that nurtures the love of learning. Children take responsibility for their own learning and have daily opportunities to make choices in a child-centered classroom. They are exposed to many complex concepts at an early age through the use of concrete learning materials.

At this level, the primary sensitive period for children ages 6 through 9 is the acquisition of what is known as cultural literacy. Students' imaginations are embraced as they show an increase in awareness of the world and an interest in its wonders. Older children want to know the reason why things are as they are in the world. They are oriented toward intellectual investigation and discovery, and they are able to become fully engaged in the learning process. Children at this level are encouraged to think for themselves, conduct their own research, analyze what they have found, and come to their own conclusions. Montessori teaches children to think, not simply memorize. They learn how to learn, and discover that the process can, and should be, as natural as breathing.



Freedom of movement, open work space and uninterrupted blocks of time for individual and group projects all help to support the 6-9 year olds' need to gain control over their growing bodies, as well as their drive toward independence.

Rather than present children with the "right" answers, our Montessori trained teachers ask the "right" questions and challenge our students to discover the answers on their own. Why? Because although learning the right answers may help the children in school, learning how to learn will help them in life.



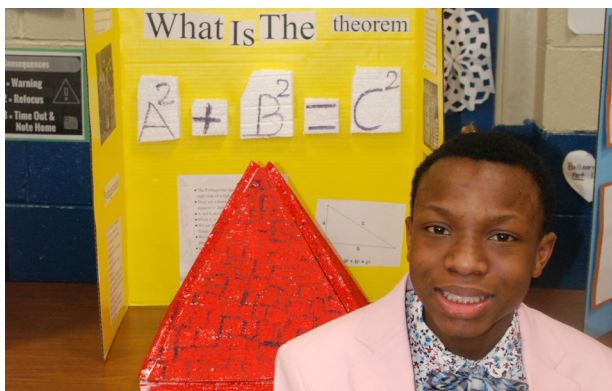
## UPPER ELEMENTARY

In our three-year, Upper Elementary program, 9 to 12-year-old children continue to learn in a multi-age classroom. The Montessori curriculum at this level is designed to support students in their academic growth toward abstract learning. However, because the abstract brain may not be fully developed, students have the opportunity to use hands-on Montessori materials when needed until abstraction can be fully developed. Students learn through collaboration, individual work, small group work, and whole class projects. Areas of learning include reading, mathematics and geometry, language, science, foreign language, cultural studies, music, art, physical education, technology and library skills. Annual projects include an interest fair, book writing, drama productions, and interactive learning experiences.

Children within the Elementary Plane of Development become the explorers of the world and universe. The focus of interest shifts from the “what” of the younger child, to the “how” and “why” of the older child as they seek to define the wonders of the world. The primary tool of this exploration is imagination assisted by reason. Our curriculum offers a wide variety of challenging activities that promote a sense of independence and respect. Several co-curricular activities, such as environmental education and service learning, are integrated into our program to widen the children’s awareness of and social responsibility to the community.

# MIDDLE SCHOOL

In our two-year Middle School program, 12 to 14-year-old adolescents build on a strong Montessori foundation through practical work in the classroom and the community. Middle School young adults' experiment as individuals and alternate academic studies with practical life experiences. They learn to set challenging goals and become masters of their own time in preparation for success in high school. People who encounter St. Joseph Montessori students frequently remark that there is a distinct difference in their ability to assume responsibility and leadership, communicate well, think insightfully, and be resilient. These are the trademarks of a Montessori young adult.



# SPECIAL SUBJECTS

**Art** is an inherent piece of the Children's House curriculum and is integrated into their daily classwork. At the 3rd year Children's House level, SJMS students begin taking weekly 45-minute art classes with an introduction to art basics. New art opportunities are presented as they progress to Upper Elementary and Middle School.

The SJMS **Library** is designed to support the Montessori curriculum and foster a love of reading in every child. With over 10,000 items in the collection, students, faculty, staff, and parents are able to check out and return their own books using the library's self-checkout station.

The **Music** Program is built upon the belief that every child is talented. The curriculum is based upon music literacy, self expression, and an exploration of music from around the world. Instructional methods include Orff, Kodaly, Dalcroze, Conversational Solfege, and Montessori Bells and Tone Bars. Additional music opportunities include an array of activities including band, bell choir, piano and annual musical performances.

**Physical and Health Education** classes begin as early as age 3. Children's House and Lower Elementary curriculum focuses on large muscle activities which build strength, coordination and spatial awareness. In Upper Elementary and Middle School, classes emphasize organized sports, games, teamwork and sportsmanship. All Health classes integrate fitness, nutrition, safety, and lessons on human body systems related to the physical education lessons.

**Spanish** is offered to all students beginning in Children's House at age 3, and continuing through 8th Year. Our expectation is that 8th-year students test out of high school level Spanish 1.

The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd is the **Religious Education** program for 3rd year Children's House students through eighth year students and is based on Maria Montessori's principles of the Prepared Environment, respect for the child's capacities, and patient observation of their developmental readiness. Our program provides the guidance and vocabulary to enable children to become aware of their relationship with God and give expression to it.



# AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Our **Extended Day Program** provides fun, recreation, and relaxation to those children who stay for a longer day. Supervised care is available from 7:30-8:15 am and 3:15-6:00 pm. This program allows the child to attend the regular Montessori class, and then to have quality care and activities in a safe play environment. Snacks are provided during the after-school program. Before Care and After Care can be contracted for the entire year or used on a drop-in basis.

Many of our students participate in **Extra-Curricular Activities** such as Lego Robotics, Italian Club, Game Club, Laudato Si Environmental Club, Martial Arts, Music Lessons and Chess. During the 2019-20 school year, SJMS offered 12 clubs with participation from 149 students.

SJMS is proud to offer **Sports** options for our students. SJMS has their own boys basketball, track, cross country, and ultimate frisbee teams. We also partner with other Diocesan schools to offer girls basketball and girls volleyball. During the 2019-2020 school year, 39 students participated in sports.





The program at St. Joseph Montessori School is designed to achieve the following

## **PORTRAIT OF A GRADUATE** Characteristics for our students:

Students will be **life-long learners**. Many of our learning activities are individualized. Each child is involved in work which holds particular interest because it is geared to his or her own pace, repeating a task as often as desired, thus experiencing a series of successful achievements. In this manner, the child acquires a positive attitude toward learning.

Students will be **confident**. At St. Joseph Montessori School, work is planned so that each new step is built on what the child has already mastered, thereby removing the negative experience of frequent failure. Success after success builds up an individual's inner confidence and provides assurance that learning is possible. These confidence-building experiences, in turn, contribute to the sound emotional development of the adult.

Students will be **independent**. At St. Joseph Montessori School, we give each child the gift of independence. This lets them know we value them and know they are capable. Children grow up feeling empowered and safe in their abilities to make sound choices. When we trust them, they learn to trust themselves; ultimately, they become happy and productive members of their communities.

Students will be **curious**. In a rapidly changing society such as ours, we must all be students during our entire lifetime. Providing students with opportunities to discover qualities, dimensions, and relationships, amidst the rich variety of learning situations, we nurture the development of a natural desire to learn in such a way that the child acquires a habit of being curious, an essential element of creative learning.

Students will be **global citizens**. Each child is involved in activities and opportunities which broaden his or her vision of the world. Through collaborative work, care of the environment, global education, and conflict resolution, the child gains an appreciation of personal and social responsibilities and acceptance of human differences.



## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

St. Joseph Montessori School strives to be a **community** where teachers, staff, and parents work together to create an environment of high moral and academic values for our students. Parents are a vibrant part of the academic, personal, and social development of students.

Our **Family Association** is an active volunteer organization whose purpose is to provide support for the SJMS community by designating funds for enrichment or school programming, fundraising to support these initiatives and supporting classrooms and teachers whenever possible. The goals of the Family Association are to strengthen the bond between SJMS and its families and promote public awareness of the school by being positive representatives in the community.

**SJMS Connect** is a networking organization of parents, teachers, administrators, alumni, and supporters of St. Joseph Montessori School who support each others personal and professional endeavors so they can in turn, support SJMS.

SJMS and the Family Association host numerous **community building and fundraising events** throughout the year including a Spaghetti Dinner, Fall Family Fun Night, Winter Festival, Spring Gala, Skate Parties, and Bowling Parties.



This is our school.

Let peace dwell here.

Let the room be full of contentment.

Let love abide here.

Love for one another, love of mankind, love of God  
and love of life itself.

Let us remember, as many hearts build a house, so  
many hearts build a home.



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### **SJMS Racial Nondiscrimination Policy**

St. Joseph Montessori School admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.