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ABSTRACT

These five newsletter issues provide reports from institutions and individuals involved in the Montessori Public School Consortium (MPSC). Each issue contains feature articles, editorials, and field reports on Montessori programs in public schools. Featured topics include: (1) the Montessori Induction Program for new Montessori teachers; (2) Montessori Head Start; (3) the development of the MPSC; (4) Montessori assessment; (5) Montessori 2000, a planning document advocating 18 national Montessori projects; (6) a directory of Montessori public schools; (7) national surveys of Montessori public schools; (8) Montessori adolescent programs; (9) a Montessori Head Start program in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; (10) Montessori instructional materials; (11) Montessori training and materials procurement; (12) the November 1993 MPSC national conference; (13) approaches to Montessori implementation; (14) the Montessori bulletin board on the America Online computer network; and (15) Montessori programs in public schools in Denver, Colorado, and Cincinnati, Ohio. (MDM)

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Montessori Public
 School Consortium

update

MPSC

Vol. 1 No. 1

Winter 1993

REPORTS FROM THE FIELD

BUFFALO • CINCINNATI • DALLAS • DENVER • KANSAS CITY • MILWAUKEE

MONTESSORI INDUCTION DESIGN

Developed by the Montessori Teacher Education Collaborative (with training centers in Washington, DC, and Cleveland, Ohio), the Induction Program is already underway in Lorain, Ohio, and begins in the Cleveland Public Schools in February, 1993. The Montessori Induction Program aims to provide a deeper understanding and maturation of the teacher's knowledge by maintaining interaction with experienced teachers and providing assistance. The goal is to prevent drift from the principles learned in training.

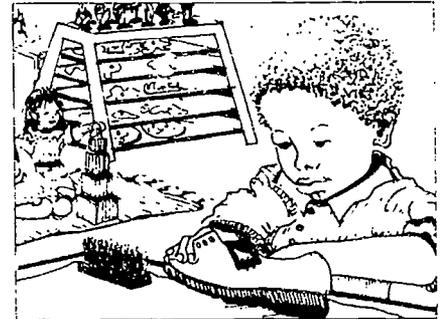
The "period of induction" for any teacher is his or her first year in the classroom after the completion of the requirements for a Montessori diploma, and the need for induction is not unique to the perceptions of the Montessori Teacher Education Collaborative. For example, in a December, 1992, retreat sponsored by Dennis Schapiro with the Center for Public Montessori Programs, twenty Montessori principals emphasized repeatedly that "the district should make a commitment to ongoing staff development in Montessori education."

Joan Bettmann, Mary Boehnlein, and David Kahn of the Montessori Teacher Education Collaborative helped design the Montessori induction year with Lorain public school curriculum implementors. Lorain officials wanted a program that would

not seem to be an evaluation or intervention but rather an extended, supportive consultation to encourage teachers, most of them retrained, to use their newly acquired Montessori expertise. "Even at the early stages, this kind of professional support is indispensable to full implementation," says Boehnlein. "The new teacher must learn how to work the system so that Montessori can take root. Such a task takes mentorship from experienced Montessorians in coordination with training center programming," Kahn further suggests that an induction design component is a necessary part of teacher training and that Montessori implementation would be greatly enhanced if this were part of the training package.

A detailed description of this induction design is available in the new MPSC release entitled *Montessori in the Public Schools: Implementation Basics* (for ordering information, see page 12). In addition, the Montessori Teacher Education Collaborative is eager to discuss induction designs and proposals with training centers and schools. Please send questions or suggestions to this address:

Montessori Teacher
 Education Collaborative
 11424 Bellflower Road NE
 Cleveland, Ohio 44106
 Phone: 216 • 421 • 1905
 Fax: 216 • 421 • 8193



MONTESSORI HEAD START:

A POSSIBLE ANSWER TO FUNDING
 MONTESSORI PRESCHOOL
 IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

Head Start using Montessori methods is not a new phenomenon: it was an integral part of the sixties' "War on Poverty," but it did not then include the kindergarten level. Thirty years later, Alcillia Jones-Clifford's Marotta Montessori Schools of Cleveland, Ohio, represent a bona fide *Montessori Head Start* model that includes the kindergarten level, utilizing a variety of federal, state, and city funding structures. It is conceivable that *Montessori Head Start* could create a whole new demand for Montessori programming in the public sector, with the possibility of significant teacher training expansion over time.

The *Montessori Head Start* project, currently funded by Montessori Development Partnerships, seeks to

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D. Rence Pendleton

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WHAT IS THE MONTESSORI PUBLIC SCHOOL CONSORTIUM?

The Montessori Public School Consortium is a cooperative venture of the Association Montessori Internationale (AMI), the American Montessori Society (AMS), the North American Montessori Teachers' Association (NAMTA), and Nienhuis, Inc., under the auspices of Montessori Development Partnerships, Inc. In its concept, this consortium represents a commitment on the part of the Montessori professional and teacher education community to cooperatively address common problems and concerns of implementation of Montessori education in the public school sector. The consortium is intended to provide a resource, information, and research documentation center for public schools. Its specific goals are as follows:

1. provide Montessori research information useful to public schools by serving as a collector and clearinghouse.
2. propose program evaluation designs for public Montessori programs.
3. foster research of Montessori education in the public-school setting.
4. disseminate Montessori research to non-Montessori educational publications and organizations.
5. provide information and consultation services to public schools that wish to begin or improve Montessori programs.
6. identify standards of quality that can serve as the yardstick for public schools to use in evaluating their Montessori programs.
7. publish informational literature such as brochures, newsletters, handbooks, etc.
8. sponsor an annual conference.

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE MONTESSORI PUBLIC SCHOOL CONSORTIUM

Within the past six years, there has been a rapid expansion of the Montessori approach into the public sector. Currently about one hundred school systems operate Montessori schools or classrooms within their districts with some districts having more than one school. Our experience is that about four to five districts per year are exploring and/or adding a Montessori option. Public schools have deluged training organizations with requests for information to help them find local, state, and federal funding to mount Montessori programs. The requests have been for research results of the effectiveness of Montessori education, assistance in on-site full implementation of the curriculum and instructional aspects of the approach, and assistance in teacher training, parent education, and program evaluation.

In recognition of these needs, the Montessori Public School Consortium (MPSC) was funded by the North American Montessori Teachers' Association (NAMTA) and the Cleveland Foundation for the following purposes: (1) to assess the needs of the public schools, (2) to provide helpful information, and (3) to conduct a national survey gathering baseline data about Montessori in the public schools. MPSC organized the first Montessori Public School conferences, held in Kansas City, Missouri, in 1988; Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in 1989; Denver, Colorado, in 1990; and Washington, DC, in 1991.

In 1988, NAMTA published a summary of research pertinent to public-school needs, *Montessori Research: Analysis in Retrospect*, by Mary Boehnlein. In 1990, the Consortium helped to produce the five-hundred-page volume *Implementing Montessori Education in the Public Sector*, edited by David Kahn and also published by NAMTA. With financial backing from NAMTA, the Cleveland Foundation, Cleveland State University, and Nienhuis, Inc., MPSC also published a *Special Report* which announced the formation of the Consortium and provided information needed by schools to write magnet-school grant proposals. This report is now reissued in expanded format under the title *Montessori in the Public Schools: Implementation Basics*. For ordering information on all three of these publications, see page 12. ♡

Editors
Tim Duax
David Kahn
Renee Pendleton

Layout & Typesetting
Jayne Fitch

For more information contact:
Montessori Public School Consortium
11424 Bellflower Road NE
Cleveland, Ohio 44106
Phone: 216 • 421 • 1905
Fax: 216 • 421 • 8193

published twice yearly

MONTESSORI ASSESSMENT: ASSET OR HAZARD?

Because assessment is so powerful and on-site assessment so pervasive in the classroom, Montessori assessment should be designed with the clear understanding that overuse can be more hindrance than help. Montessori assessment needs to be informal, practiced by the teacher, sensitive to the ambience of the Montessori classroom, and meaningful to the students.

If carefully devised by public-school researchers in universities and school systems in conjunction with knowledgeable Montessorians, not only could a specific assessment program help keep schools on the Montessori

track, but well-defined Montessori outcomes could aid in national research about the success of Montessori implementation.

MPSC's 1993 special-release booklet, *Montessori in the Public Schools: Implementation Basics* (see page 12 for ordering information), discusses the necessary steps in designing Montessori assessment for future development, including making clear statements about student outcomes (academic and non-academic), selecting and developing data collection instruments and strategies, and detailing data collection and analysis procedures. Ideally, an assessment

design should be qualitative, using only those quantitative tests that are necessary to conform to local educational authority mandates.

MPSC welcomes short descriptions, policy statements, or other dialogue on the issue of assessment. If you would like your school's report card to become part of an MPSC compilation, please submit a copy to us. Address comments or submissions to:

Montessori Public School Consortium
11424 Bellflower Road NE
Cleveland, Ohio 44106
Phon. 216 • 421 • 1905
Fax: 216 • 421 • 8193

INFORMAL ASSESSMENT: BEST FOR MONTESSORI

In the private sector, ninety-eight percent of the Montessori elementary schools administer standardized tests, but such testing, according to most national assessment experts, is a form of monitoring, not true assessment. Ruth Mitchell of the Council for Basic Education states that true assessment "takes place in the classrooms . . . [in] many forms: teachers' observations, teachers' appraisals of written and oral work, informal discussions with students about their work, and quizzes or tests designed by the teacher." Unfortunately, however, "to both teachers and students, the word *test* usually means only periodic quantitative evaluations."

Since Montessori training puts at teachers' disposal many of the elements Mitchell mentions, why not reference them and operationally define them as *assessment* in order to counteract any further need to assess by instruments that run totally counter to Montessori pedagogy? The development of Montessori-specific assessment would in fact aid Montessorians in the observation and record-keeping presented in their training. ♥

EDITORIAL: ON THE PRESERVATION OF MONTESSORI IDEAS

by Tim Duax

I have heard it asked, don't Montessori trainers adhere too dogmatically to the original ideas developed in Dr. Montessori's texts and pedagogy? Shouldn't creative educators, schooled in the contributions of numerous modern-day pedagogies, modify Montessori practice to fit the trends of mainstream education? Such questions may indicate a belief that the preservation of original ideas is somehow an infringement on individual creativity which prevents change or adaptation appropriate to the times. This belief, quite simply, is an error—one often committed by innovators who come after original thinkers and seek to claim ascendancy in a given field. Happily, however, this error can be avoided.

Good Montessori practice is not static and immutable but adapts appropriately to cultures and times. Experienced Montessorians do apply Montessori precepts to unique children and situations, they do personally evolve as teachers, and they do introduce variations based on the needs of the children in their classrooms. In short, they attend to the original Montessori ideas and simply desire the organization, constancy, and collective experience that emerge when a strong framework is maintained.

How, then, should we distinguish the natural and necessary evolution of a practice firmly grounded in Dr. Montessori's principles from the work of innovators who wish to revamp or alter the basic character of the Montessori approach? Look at the history of the psychoanalytic movement as an analogy to that of the Montessori movement.

Sigmund Freud developed a compelling, yet (for some) incomplete, body of thought on the workings of the human

mind. During his lifetime, he drew a circle of followers, some of whom spread his tenets and methodology while others, also creative and deeply reflective thinkers, criticized and modified them. Even while Freud was alive, splits were developing in the movement he founded. And after his death, still others, schooled in Freudian psychology, went on to further develop psychological theory.

Montessorians will recognize in this brief sketch parallels with the history of their own discipline. The significant difference, however, is that the latter Freudian followers, while quick to acknowledge the great debt owed to Sigmund Freud for his influence on their thinking, were at the same time honorable in calling their new ideas, not a *Freudian*, but a *Jungian*, *Adlerian*, or *Rogerian* psychology or methodology.

Striving to modify and develop educational methods can be worthwhile, but to continue to call the products of such revisionism *Montessori* is simply unethical. The British Infant School movement, for example, recognizes this distinction by acknowledging its indebtedness to Montessori's original thinking yet, appropriately, **not** calling its schools *Montessori*, since it has adapted, culled, and modified Montessori practice.

Those in the Montessori public school movement who have learned their practice from trainers well versed in the Montessori pedagogy and who are intent upon adhering to the original materials and practices have a right to call their schools *Montessori*. Those who wish to adapt, cull, and modify, on the other hand, may wish to continue their creativity with the creation of an original name as well. It is within the

limits of the original Montessori framework that we can find an infinity of applications and creative insights, because within those limits lie the keys for understanding children at the highest level of consciousness, not for the sake of innovation, but for the sake of the children themselves. ☺



MONTESSORI PUBLIC SCHOOL CONSORTIUM SELECTS NEW DIRECTOR

Originally endorsed by both the Association Montessori Internationale and the American Montessori Society, the Montessori Public School Consortium has recently become an independent project of Montessori Development Partnerships, Inc., which has nominated Dr. Tim Duax to direct the Consortium. (For more on the history of MPSC, see page 2.)

Dr. Duax earned his Ph.D. in Urban Education and worked in the Milwaukee Public Schools for fourteen years as a teacher and administrator. His publications include several articles on Montessori education in the United States and England as well as research on both Montessori and magnet schools. Trained by the Association Montessori Internationale in Bergamo, Italy, Dr. Duax is currently principal of Ruffing Montessori School in Cleveland Heights, Ohio.

Mary Boehnlein (Professor of Education at Cleveland State University, Cleveland, Ohio) and David Kahn (Executive Director of the North American Montessori Teachers' Association) will serve the Consortium as associates. ☺

FEATURE: MONTESSORI 2000, GRASSROOTS SUPPORT

Projected as an integral part of America 2000 (New American School Development Corporation), *Montessori 2000* is a long-range planning document, proposing eighteen national projects, with a particular focus on public-sector implementation and full Montessori program realization from infancy through adolescence. Funded to date by the Hershey Foundation and Nienhuis, Inc., and directed by David Kahn, *Montessori 2000* has already begun **immediate** planning and implementation for the following projects, many with direct implications for public-sector Montessori:

■ **MONTESSORI PUBLIC SCHOOL CONSORTIUM** conducts research and compiles data from one hundred thirty Montessori public school programs around the country.

■ **MONTESSORI ADOLESCENT PROJECT** is working to provide a national prototype for developing sixty-eight Montessori programs for grades seven and eight.

■ **INTERNATIONAL MONTESSORI TRAINER COOPERATIVE VENTURE** entails sharing costs with foreign countries for the development of teacher trainers.

■ **CLEVELAND (OHIO) HUMANITIES AND EDUCATION INSTITUTE** is a program for teachers combining classical literature and philosophy with pedagogy for implementation in the classroom, including *Meet Us In Alexandria*, a multicultural curriculum approach for classroom and after-school programs.

■ **PARENT EDUCATION** with a multicultural context, directed to urban and

poor families, includes a teacher tool kit, charts, summaries of the planes of education, etc.

■ **MONTESSORI INTERGENERATIONAL PROGRAM** combines all-day Montessori, under the management of Hershey Montessori School, with residential care programs for senior adults at Heather Hill, Inc., in Chardon, Ohio.

■ **KANSAS CITY (MISSOURI) MONTESSORI 2000** works to provide a physical training-center complex for Kansas City's fifteen-million-dollar Montessori public school program.

■ **SEATTLE (WASHINGTON) MONTESSORI 2000** entails a conversion of a private Montessori institution to a public school spanning the infant through secondary levels in cooperation with the Native American community.

■ **CLEVELAND (OHIO) MONTESSORI 2000** provides induction programs for Cleveland's Montessori public

schools and expansion planning through grade eight.

■ **NATIONAL TRAINING OF TRAINERS PROJECT** is designed to evolve "training of trainer" strategies for developing alternative pedagogies using Montessori as a model.

■ **MONTESSORI HEAD START DOCUMENTATION AND IMPLEMENTATION** will focus on connecting Montessori programming (including programs for five-year-olds) to Head Start operations with direct involvement of the Federal initiative (through President-elect Clinton). Head Start programs in Cleveland, Ohio, and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, will be the models. The Conservation Company (Philadelphia) will serve as consultant to the project.

■ **DENVER (COLORADO) MONTESSORI 2000** will assist in the design and implementation of the Mitchell Montessori School's Community Education Project from infancy to adolescence.

If you are interested in making your project part of *Montessori 2000*, write to this address:

Montessori 2000
11121 Bellflower Road NE
Cleveland, Ohio 44106
Phone: 216 • 421 • 1905
Fax: 216 • 421 • 8193

Criteria for selection are related to size of project and funding prospects.

PUBLIC SCHOOL DIRECTORY 1992-1993

Alaska

Denali Montessori Optional Program
148 E. 9th Avenue
Anchorage, AK 99501
907-279-3519
Sus Moore

Arkansas

Madison Montessori School
P.O. Box 170
Madison, AR 72359
501-633-1081
V.W. Chambers

California

I.U.S.D. Montessori Childhood Education
31 W. Yale Loop
Irvine, CA 92714
714-551-1647
Bobbi Mahler

Montessori Early Childhood Education Bilingual
31 West Yale Loop
Irvine, CA 92714
714-551-1647
Feland L. Meadows

Montessori for Development Advanced Students
31 West Yale Loop
Irvine, CA 92714
714-551-1647
Feland L. Meadows

Santiago Hills Elementary
29 Christamon
Irvine, CA 92720
714-544-5364
Bobbi Mahler

Clarence Ruth Elementary
501 North "W" Street
Lompoc, CA 93436
805-737-0046
Dorothy Jackson

Ramona Community School
1710 Montecito Road
Ramona, CA 92065
619-788-5130
Dan Giles

Foundation Center
(19 locations)
1800 J Street
Sacramento, CA 95814
916-447-2087
Antonia Lopez

California (Cont.)

Lagunitas School District Montessori Program
P.O. Box 308
San Geronimo, CA 94963
415-488-9437
Larry Enos

Horrall Elementary School
949 Ocean View Avenue
San Mateo, CA 94401
415-312-7550
Shirley Seitz

Parkside Elementary School
1685 Eisenhower Street
San Mateo, CA 94403
415-312-7575
Joanne Day

Seaview School
2000 Southwood Dr.
San Pablo, CA 94806
415-724-0444
Mary Wong Coe

Colorado
Mitchell Montessori School
1350 East 33rd Avenue
Denver, CO 80205
303-296-8412
Martha Urioste

District of Columbia
Ft. Lincoln School
Ft. Lincoln & Barney Drives
Washington, DC 20018
202-576-6900
Ruth Mitchell

Watkins School
12th & E Sts. SE
Washington, DC 20003
202-724-4712
Mr. Roach

Woodridge Elementary School
Carlton & Central Avenues NE
Washington, DC 20018
202-576-6042
Claudia Thompson

Florida
S. D. Spady Elementary School
321 NW 10th
Delray Beach, FL 33444
407-243-1558
Mavis Allred

Pine Villa School
21799 SW 117th Ct.
Goulds, FL 33170
305-258-5366
Melvin C. Dennis

Florida (Cont.)

J.W. Johnson Elementary School
735 W. 23rd Street
Hialeah, FL 33010
305-883-1357
Joanné Molina

J. Allen Axson Montessori Academy
1221 E 16th Street
Jacksonville, FL 32206
904-630-6880
Janice Hunter

Holmes School
1175 NW 67th Street
Miami, FL 33150
305-836-3421
Jeannette Goa

Joella Good Elementary School
5350 NW 188th Terrace
Miami, FL 33015
305-625-2008
Rosemarie V. Jaworski

Lillie C. Evans School
1895 NW 75th Street
Miami, FL 33147
305-691-4973
Dorothy Magdingall

Martin Luther King School
7124 NW 12th Avenue
Miami, FL 33150
305-836-0928
Beverly Nixon

Orchard Villa Elementary
5720 NW 13th Street
Miami, FL 33142
305-754-0607
Carolyn McCallia

Phyllis Wheatley School
1801 NW 1st Place
Miami, FL 33136
305-573-2638
Diane Paschal

Scott Lake Elementary
1160 NW 175th Street
Miami, FL 33169
305-624-1443
Christell I. Roach

Shenandoah School
1023 SW 21st
Miami, FL 33135
305-643-4433
Sylvia Palenzuela

Golden Glades Elementary
16520 NW 28th Avenue
Opa Locke, FL 33054
305-624-9641
Anna E. Jackson

Florida (Cont.)

Nathan Young School
14120 NW 24th Avenue
Opa Locke, FL 33054
305-685-7204
Essie Pace

O.J. Semmes Elementary School
1250 E. Texas Dr.
Pensacola, FL 32503
904-444-2775
Otha Leverette

Petree Pre-K Center
916 E. Fairfield Dr.
Pensacola, FL 32503
904-444-2775
Otha Leverette

Spencer Bibbs Elementary
2005 N. 6th Avenue
Pensacola, FL 32503
904-444-2725
Malachi Williams

South Olive Elementary School
7101 South Olive Avenue
West Palm Beach, FL 33405
407-533-6359
Joyce Russell

Georgia
Cities in Schools
1513 Cleveland Bldg. 201
Atlanta, GA 30344
404-761-8118
Douglas Denise

Charles Ellis Elementary
220 E. 49th Street
Savannah, GA 31405
912-651-7357
Anne P. Monaghan

Idaho
Bonneville-Pocatello Montessori
320 North 8th Street
Pocatello, ID 83201
208-232-2872
Donna Looze

Pocatello School District # 25
P.O. Box 1390
Pocatello, ID 83204
208-232-3563
Jill Kina

Illinois

Emerson School
3101 Elm Street
Cairo, IL 62914
618-734-1027
Elaine Bonfield

PUBLIC SCHOOL DIRECTORY 1992-1993

Illinois (Cont.)

Clissold Elementary School
2350 W. 110th Place
Chicago, IL 60643
312-535-2560
Nancy Ruiz

Lincoln Cultural Center
240 Warren Avenue
Kankakee, IL 60901
815-933-0779
James L. Hudson

Montessori Elementary
467 S. Foley
Kankakee, IL 60901
815-933-0709
James Hudson

Julia Lathrop Elementary
2603 Clover Avenue
Rockford, IL 61102
815-966-3285
Jill Coffman

Indiana
Bunche Montessori
1111 Greene Street
Fort Wayne, IN 46803
219-425-7323
Connie Murphy

School 56 Francis W. Parker
2353 Columbia Avenue
Indianapolis, IN 46205
317-226-4256
Joan Harrell

School 67-Stephen Foster
653 N. Somerset Avenue
Indianapolis, IN 46222
317-226-4267
John Airola

School 91-Rousseau McClellan
5111 Evanston Avenue
Indianapolis, IN 46205
317-226-4291
Melissa Kelle

Kentucky
Coleridge Taylor Elementary
1115 W. Chestnut Street
Louisville, KY 40203
502-473-8232
Rosemary Chambers

John F. Kennedy Elementary
3800 Gibson Lane
Louisville, KY 40211
502-473-8280
Jacqueline Austin

Louisiana

Howell Park Elementary School
6125 Winbourne Avenue
Baton Rouge, LA 70805
504-356-0104
Joy C. McElveen

Polk Elementary School
408 E Polk Street
Baton Rouge, LA 70802
504-383-2611
C.E. Jones

Tanglewood Elementary School
9352 Rustling Oaks Drive
Baton Rouge, LA 70818
504-261-3454
Joan Schouest

Audubon Montessori School
428 Broadway
New Orleans, LA 70118
504-862-5135
Jill Otis

Lake Forest Montessori School
8258 Lake Forest Blvd.
New Orleans, LA 70126
504-245-4071
Martha Lane

Maryland
Doswell E. Brooks Elementary
1301 Brooke Road
Capital Heights, MD 20743
301-735-0470
Margaret Williams

Glenn Dale Early Childhood
Education Center
6700 Glenn Dale Road
Glenn Dale, MD 20769
301-464-7935
Judy Hoyen

Matthew Henson Elementary
7910 Scott Road
Landover, MD 20785
301-772-1922
Sheila H. Chapelle

Flintstone Elementary School
800 Comanche Drive
Oxon Hill, MD 20745
301-567-3142
Delores Smith

Massachusetts
Adams Flagg School
Linden Street
Holliston, MA 01746
508-429-0668

Andrews School
School Street
Holliston, MA 01746
508-429-0668

Massachusetts (Cont.)

Miller Elementary School
235 Woodland Street
Holliston, MA 01746
508-429-0668
Anne L. Towle

Morgan Montessori Kindergarten
Program
596 South Bridge Street
Mt. Holyoke, MA 01040
413-534-2083
Donald Gasiorowski

Michigan

Benton Harbor Chapter 1
Montessori Program
636 Pipestone
Benton Harbor, MI 49022
616-927-0704
Christina Wake

Boynton Montessori Magnet
School
1700 E. Britain Avenue
Benton Harbor, MI 49022
616-927-0631
Inez Waddell

Congress Montessori Academy
940 Baldwin SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49506
616-243-8116
Gordon Griffin

Wellerwood Montessori School
800 Wellerwood NE
Grand Rapids, MI 49505
616-771-3220
Carol Davis

Messmore Education Center
8742 Dill
Sterling Heights, MI 48077
313-825-2234
Audrey St. John

Morgan Education Center
53800 Mound Road
Utica, MI 48087
313-781-0410
Tina Viviano

Minnesota

Hall Montessori School
1601 Aldrich Avenue North
Minneapolis, MN 55411
612-627-2339
Joseph Purvis

Mill City Montessori
219 S. 4th Street
Minneapolis, MN 55401
612-338-5766
Agnes Kilpatrick

Minnesota (Cont.)

Seward Montessori School
2309 28th Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55406
612-627-2447
Jean Neuman

Scandia Elementary
14351 Scandia Trail N.
Scandia, MN 55073
612-433-2411
Jack Reese

Nokomis Montessori School
985 Ruth Street
St Paul, MN 55106
612-293-8857
Elonora Battle

Jefferson School
430 3rd Avenue NE
St. Cloud, MN 56304
612-252-2544
Frank Johnson

J.J. Hill School
998 Selby
St. Paul, MN 55102
612-293-8720
Maria Calderon

Mississippi
Northside Primary Montessori
George West Blvd.
Natchez, MS 39120
601-445-2885
Judy Lann

West Primary Montessori
Lewis Drive
Natchez, MS 39120
601-445-2891
Kate Cole

Missouri

Faxon Montessori School
1320 E 32nd Terrace
Kansas City, MO 64109
816-871-6450
Frank Vincent

Harold Holliday Montessori
7227 Jackson
Kansas City, MO 64132
816-871-5350
Douglas Becker

Euclid Branch Montessori
5057 Ridge Avenue
St Louis, MO 63113
314-367-8816
Bessie L. Mosley

PUBLIC SCHOOL DIRECTORY 1992-1993

Missouri (Cont.)

Euclid Montessori
1131 N. Euclid Avenue
St. Louis, MO 63113
314-367-4385
Bessie L. Mosley

Washington Montessori School
1130 N. Euclid
St. Louis, MO 63113
314-361-0432
Bessie L. Mosley

Montana

Central School
402 N. Warren
Helena, MT 59601
406-442-5620
Brad Morris

North Carolina

Amay James Montessori Magnet
School
2414 Lester Street
Charlotte, NC 28206
704-336-2196
Katherine Shealy

Nebraska

Montclair Elementary School
2405 S. 138th Street
Millard, NE 68144
402-691-1295
Mary Duffy

New Jersey

Edgemont Montessori Magnet
20 Edgemont Road
Montclair, NJ 07042
201-509-4162
Aduanni Slackman-Anderson

New York

Bennett Park Montessori Center
342 Clinton Street
Buffalo, NY 14204
716-851-3790
Jan Domkowski

East Islip Montessori Preschool
Craig B. Ganepy Avenue
Islip Terrace, NY 11752
516-581-1600 x 225
Bruce Castka

Enrico Fermi School Montessori
Component
27 Poplar Street
Yonkers, NY 10701
914-376-8460
Edward C. DeFino

New York (Cont.)

Montessori Humanities & Creative
Arts Magnet
132 Valentine Lane
Yonkers, NY 10705
914-376-8455
Kathleen P. MacSweeney

Ohio

Carson Montessori
4323 Glenway Avenue
Cincinnati, OH 45205
513-251-5080
Brenda K. White

North Avondale Montessori
School
615 Clinton Springs
Cincinnati, OH 45229
513-221-3478
Thomas G. Rothwell

Sands Montessori School
940 Poplar Street
Cincinnati, OH 45214
513-421-0863
Rita Swegman

Dike Montessori Center
2501 E 61st Street
Cleveland, OH 44104
216-361-2017
Carolyn Bridges Graves

Hicks Montessori School
2409 Bridge Avenue
Cleveland, OH 44113
216-621-2616
Barbara Booker

Brentnell Montessori School
1270 Brentnell Avenue
Columbus, OH 43219
614-365-6079
Janice Williams

Franklin Montessori School
2617 E. 5th Street
Dayton, OH 45403
513-253-2138
Judith O'Ryan

Jefferson Montessori Campus
Bldg.2
1223 N. Euclid
Dayton, OH 45407
513-276-2147
Therman Sampso

Jefferson Montessori Campus
Bldg. 1
1231 N. Euclid
Dayton, OH 45407
513-276-2147
Therman Sampso

Ohio (Cont.)

Lincoln Academy
1600 E 31st Street
Lorain, OH 44055
216-277-8186
Timothy Dertch

Palm Academy
3330 Palm
Lorain, OH 44055
216-277-9226
Sylvia Cooper

Reading Hilltop School
Bolser & Sanborn
Reading, OH 45215
513-733-4322
Arnol Elam

Oregon

Hall Elementary School
2505 NE 23rd
Gresham, OR 97030
503-661-6330
Roger Reeves

Lent Elementary School
5105 SE 97th Street
Portland, OR 97226
503-280-6322
Paul Steger

Pennsylvania

Hamlin Elementary School
Rte. 191
Hamlin, PA 18427
717-689-2632
Andrew Falonk

Ben Franklin Elementary School
Cheltenham & Rising Sun
Philadelphia, PA 19120
215-728-5017
Donald Wittenberg

Morton School
63rd & Elmwood
Philadelphia, PA 19142
215-726-6227
Maureen Walds

William Dick
Head Start Program
2500 W. Diamond
Philadelphia, PA 19121
215-236-7145
Nelson Gonzales

Homewood Montessori School
7100 Hamilton Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15208
412-247-7855
Donald Pederson

Tennessee

Parkview Elementary School
905 E. Chester Street
Jackson, TN 38301
901-422-3116
Charles Mercer

Double Tree Montessori School
4560 Double Tree Road
Memphis, TN 38109
901-789-8144
Dora M. Purdy

Texas

Bowie School
Box 2514
Alamo, TX 78516
512-787-6611
Rosario Coplea

Franklin School
900 Birch Street
Alamo, TX 78516
512-787-6761
Irma Cano

Benbrook Elementary
800 Mercedes
Benbrook, TX 76126
817-560-5680
Jonna Murray

Gonzalez Elementary
4350 Coffee Port Road
Brownsville, TX 78521
210-831-6030
Janet Ruth Schooley

Harry Stone Montessori Academy
4747 Veterans Dr.
Dallas, TX 75216
214-302-2180
Myrtle Walker

L. L. Hotchkiss Montessori
Academy
6929 Town North Dr
Dallas, TX 75231
214-553-4430
Torance Vandygriff

Borman Elementary School
1201 Parvin
Denton, TX 76205
317-387-7502
Robert Estes

A.M. Pate School
3800 Anglin Drive
Fort Worth, TX 76119
817-531-6390
Jerry Holmes

PUBLIC SCHOOL DIRECTORY 1992-1993

Texas (Cont.)

Como Montessori School
4001 Littlepage
Fort Worth, TX 76107
817-377-7370
Robert Dick

Daggett Montessori
Elementary & Middle School
958 Page
Fort Worth, TX 76110
817-922-6886
Judy Seymour

E.M. Daggett Montessori
Middle School
1108 Carlock
Fort Worth, TX 76110
817-922-6550
Judy Seymour

Glen Park Elementary
3601 Pecos
Fort Worth, TX 76119
817-531-6380
Pat Coomes

Morningside Elementary School
2601 Evans Avenue
Fort Worth, TX 76104
817-922-6670
Marguerite Johnson

Worth Heights Elementary
519 E. Butler Street
Fort Worth, TX 76110
817-922-6860
Eida Gonzalez

Dodson Montessori Magnet
School
1808 Sampson
Houston, TX 77033
713-225-5620
O.D. Curtis

Whidby Elementary Montessori
Magnet School
7625 Springhill
Houston, TX 77021
713-748-3089
Vivian Harrison

Bena Vides Elementary
P.O. Drawer J
La Joya, TX 78560
512-485-2851
Willie Garcia

E.B. Reyna Elementary
P.O. Drawer J
La Joya, TX 78560
512-581-6222
Aida Benavides

Texas (Cont.)

John F. Kennedy Elementary
P.O. Drawer J
La Joya, TX 78560
512-580-5208
Rebecca Villarreal

Kika de la Garcia Elementary
P.O. Drawer J
La Joya, TX 78560
512-585-1674
Jose Luis Trijo

Leo J. Leo Elementary
P.O. Drawer J
La Joya, TX 78560
512-581-7459
Margot Cadriel

Buell Elementary
218 E. Juarez St.
Pharr, TX 78577
512-787-6291
Eva. C. Martinez

Carnahan Elementary
317 W. Gore Street
Pharr, TX 78577
512-787-6251
Nelia Rodriguez

Ford School
E. Polk Street
Pharr, TX 78577
512-787-4249
Jesus Cerevantes

Longoria School
400 E. Rendon Street
Pharr, TX 78577
512-787-0086
Berta Palacios

Napper School
903 N. Flag Street
Pharr, TX 78577
512-787-4247
Diana Narvaez

Palmer School
703 E. Sam Houston
Pharr, TX 78577
210-787-6151
Salvador Flores

Post Elementary School
200 W. 8th Street
Post, TX 79356
806-495-3436
Dan Rankin

Old Town Elementary School
2001 Old Settler's Blvd.
Round Rock, TX 68681
512-255-9851
Christine Anderson

Texas (Cont.)

Clover School
N. San Juan Road
San Juan, TX 78589
512-787-9471
Diane Mureiko

Garza-Pena Primary School
E. Gasline Road Box 1270
San Juan, TX 78589
512-787-5854
Marcia Garza

Sorensen School
715 S. Standard Street
San Juan, TX 78589
512-787-9571
Angelita Cantu

J. H. Hines Montessori School
1102 Paul Quinn Street
Waco, TX 76704
817-753-1362
Helen Bailey

Virginia
Drew Model School, Montessori
Section
3500 S. 24th Street
Arlington, VA 22206
703-358-5825
Michael Grinder

Frances Scott Key Elementary
2300 Key Blvd.
Arlington, VA 22201
703-358-4210
Kathie Panfil

Glebe School
1770 N. Glebe Road
Arlington, VA 22207
703-358-6283
JoAnne Uyeda

Hoffman-Boston Public School
1415 S. Queen Street
Arlington, VA 22204
703-358-5845
Dr. Grinder

Washington
Jackson Park Elementary
6200 Dowel Road
Bremerton, WA 98312
206-692-3135
Patricia McRae

Graham Hill Early Childhood
Model School
5149 S. Graham
Seattle, WA 98118
206-281-6430
Brigit McShane

Washington (Cont.)

Jefferson Elementary School
South 3612 Grand Blvd.
Spokane, WA 99203
509-353-4444
Claudia Start

Adams School
723 S. 8th Street
Yakima, WA 98901
509-575-3448
Rod Bryant

Wisconsin

Edward A. MacDowell Montessori
School
1706 W Highland Blvd.
Milwaukee, WI 53233
414-933-0088
John Schmuhl

Greenfield School
1711 S. 35th Street
Milwaukee, WI 53215
414-647-2767
Deborah Jupka

British Columbia

Canada
Highglen Elementary
290 Voyageur
Prince George, BC V2M 4P2
CANADA
604-562-5581
Rob Griffiths

Tyee Elementary
3525 Dumfries Street
Vancouver, BC V5N 3S5
CANADA
601-875-8397
Steve Short

Tynehead Elementary
8820 168th Street
Surrey, BC V3N 363
604-589-1193
Jean Bird

BASELINE DATA: TWO NATIONAL SURVEYS OF PUBLIC MONTESSORI SCHOOLS

Two national surveys have been conducted which establish baseline information on Montessori education in public schools. The first was developed through the North American Montessori Teachers' Association (NAMTA) with data collection and analysis completed in 1989 at Cleveland State University (Cleveland, Ohio). The second was developed and conducted in 1991 by Patricia Michelsen and Lea Cummings based in Rockford, Illinois. The NAMTA survey had responses from forty-five districts operating seventy-five public schools. The Michelsen-Cummings survey had responses from sixty-three public schools. Both provide important insights into the recent practice of Montessori education in public schools.

HIGHLIGHTS: NAMTA SURVEY

- Montessori schools are located in urban, suburban, and rural public school systems. At the time of the survey, Montessori education was being provided to approximately 14,000 students in the responding forty-five districts.
- Almost all of the districts begin with Montessori-style preschools, with a third of those beginning with three-year-olds.
- Three-fourths of the districts used multi-grade groupings for their Montessori classes.
- Four districts have Montessori junior high schools. All four use multi-grade groupings.
- Two-thirds of the districts require by contract that teachers have AMI (internationale) or AMS (American) Montessori certification.
- Admission procedures by district:
 - First come, first served ... 17 = 38%
 - Lottery 13 = 29%
 - Selective screening 11 = 24%
 - Other 4 = 9%

HIGHLIGHTS: MICHELSEN-CUMMINGS SURVEY

- Parental demand, desegregation initiatives, and Montessori teachers all play a significant role in the inclusion of Montessori-style schools in public systems, but in two-thirds of the schools, administrators from the school system were seen as providing the real impetus.
- Transportation with no cost is provided to students at 38 of the schools.
- Montessori teachers in the responding schools have a wide variety of training backgrounds and experience.
- Thirty of the districts maintained waiting lists because of the demand for Montessori schooling. Children on waiting lists by district:

# of children on lists	# of schools	per-centage
None	15	33%
Under 50	12	27%
51-100	3	7%
101-200	3	7%
201-500	10	22%
Over 500	2	4%

- Schools use a wide range of standardized tests administered at various grade levels. Unfortunately, there is no one instrument or reporting method which predominates to facilitate collection of achievement data on a national level. The two most commonly used are the California Achievement Test (14 schools) and the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (14 schools). Student assessment also covers a broad range from traditional report cards to Montessori-based progress checks.
- For three- and/or four-year-olds in preschool (primary) programs, tuition, ranging from \$750 to \$2000, is charged in only 11 of the 46 schools which have preschool programs. Use of a sliding scale for tuition is also reported.

■ Percentage of minority students in Montessori schools:

Minority %	# of Schools
00-10	6
11-20	4
21-30	2
31-40	5
41-50	16
51-60	7
61-70	0
71-80	1
81-90	1
91 +	6
Not Reported	15

Both the NAMTA survey and the Michelsen-Cummings survey provide solid summative data on the extent of Montessori programs in public schools. The Montessori Public School Consortium has permission from the authors of these studies to distribute the full survey results to interested parties. Requests for the surveys, along with \$5.00 for shipping and handling, should be sent to: Montessori Public School Consortium, 11424 Bellflower Road NE, Cleveland, OH 44106. ☛

REPORTS FROM THE FIELD

MPSC contacted several public Montessori schools in order to compile answers to questions often asked about Montessori education. These schools were selected because they represent the largest and broadest of the Montessori schools in the public school system. Here's how they responded:

	Buffalo (Bennett Park)	Cincinnati (North Avondale)	Dallas (L.L. Hotchkiss)	Denver (Mitchell)	Kansas City (Faxon)	Milwaukee (Greenfield)
Year Program began:	'76	'76	'84	'85	'88	'82
Number of children in program:	600	550	560	525+	300	460
Number of children on waiting lists:	100s	1,000+	100s	350		500+
Ethnic/racial make-up of the program: (B-Black; W-White; H-Hispanic; O-Other)	B-50 W-40 O-10	B-40 W-40 H-20	B-50 W-50	B-H-60% O-40%	B-60 W-40	B-50 W-50
Percentage achieving at or above grade level in Reading:	---	79%	74%	---	96%	59%
Achievement ranking within the school system:	middle	Top 1/3	1st/2nd	2nd out of 81	Above Average	11th out of 107

These surveys point to issues important to the establishment and quality of Montessori schools in public school systems. The Montessori Public School Consortium will continue to address these issues through a series of reports on such topics as assessment methods, standardized testing, established programs, full implementation models, teacher training, and induction-year programs. ☛

Continued from Page 1—

HEAD START

Integrate Head Start regulations with the Montessori practices of multi-aged groups of children (three to six), the prepared environment, and parent involvement and education, as well as addressing issues of governance and joint funding. The Cleveland Marotta model with private funding (operated by an independent board) and the Philadelphia Public School model (operated by the school district) together promise to provide useful operational information to aid the development of other programs in the future. David Kahn and Alcillia Jones-Clifford, Executive Director of Marotta Montessori Schools of Cleveland, collaborate on the *Montessori Head Start* project.

Also, in conjunction with the

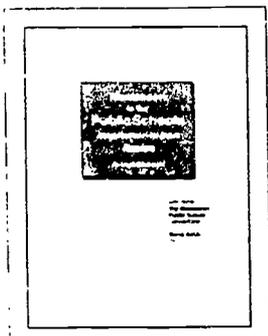
Montessori 2000 fund drive, *Montessori Head Start* will be a major part of proposal design with a look at the possibility of permanent funding for any Montessori operations servicing economically disadvantaged areas. Marotta Schools serve as a model for replication.

With almost two-thirds of Montessori public schools unable to fund programs for their three- and four-year-olds, *Montessori Head Start* may be a viable program for the future. Head Start funding could involve up to \$3000.00 per child and provide for some administrative overhead as well. A detailed "handbook of operations" for *Montessori Head Start* will be published in a future *NAMTA Journal*. ☛



MPSC PRESENTS

MONTESSORI PUBLICATIONS FOR THE PUBLIC SECTOR



NEW —

Montessori in the Public Schools: Implementation Basics

by David Kahn

Published in 1993 as a quick reference for program descriptions from infancy to adolescence, this short manual provides easy-to-read approaches to implementation, training, professional development, assessment, and systemic reform. (\$6.00 + shipping and handling)

Implementing Montessori Education in the Public Sector

edited by David Kahn

This comprehensive, five-hundred-page volume published in 1990 provides historical and current views of Montessori development in public schools, a comprehensive materials list, and curriculum descriptions which establish high expectations for any school.

Also included are special sections on bilingual education, early childhood education, the curriculum mesh, supervision and organization, special education, non-selective admissions, evaluation, magnet schools, and more.

Implementing Montessori Education in the Public Sector gives school administrators and the general public a broad range of documents and alternative strategies for making Montessori work at the maximum level by adjusting bureaucracy and regulations so that Montessori can reach all children. (\$35.00 + shipping and handling)



Montessori Research: Analysis in Retrospect

by Mary Boehnlein

A summary and analysis of significant Montessori research from 1914 to 1988. (\$5.00 + shipping and handling)

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<input type="checkbox"/> \$35 EA	<i>IMPLEMENTING MONTESSORI EDUCATION IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR</i>	(NOTE: We cannot ship to P.O. Boxes)	
<input type="checkbox"/> \$5 EA	<i>MONTESSORI RESEARCH: ANALYSIS IN RETROSPECT</i>	City, State, Zip	
Total Order		School	
Please add 10% for shipping & handling:		Send to: MPSC, 11424 Bellflower Road NE, Cleveland, OH 44106	
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Montessori Public School Consortium

update

MPSC

REPORTS FROM THE FIELD

BUFFALO • CINCINNATI • DALLAS • DENVER • MINNEAPOLIS • PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY • ST. PAUL

MONTESSORI HEAD START GAINING MOMENTUM

The last issue of *MPSC Update* described the *Montessori Head Start* project, aimed at collecting data from model Montessori Head Start classrooms in Philadelphia and Cleveland in order to create a basis for a national information network, including consultation services, follow-up study data, assessment tools, and parent education materials designed for urban parents. Philadelphia's promise lies in its history (as the oldest Montessori Head Start in the nation, founded in 1965) and in the support currently being demonstrated by school district administration. Cleveland's Marotta Montessori Schools, operating outside the school district, represent a unique private-public partnership illustrating the advantages of de-categorized funding.

Since our last report, three events have brought the *Montessori Head Start* project closer to its goal. First, in an unprecedented cooperative plan agreed upon in principle on April 12, 1993, by the Philadelphia Public Schools desegregation office, the Philadelphia Head Start administration, and the principal of Thomas Mifflin School, three-, four-, and five-year-olds would be integrated into two classical Montessori multi-age classes at Mifflin School. This would be Philadelphia's first Montessori integrated pre-K/K

model with Head Start support in direct cooperation with the local district. The project was designed by Montessori Development Partnerships of Cleveland, Ohio.

Second, the Florida legislature has recently opened the door for an advance in the de-categorization of educational funds in that state by passing a bill authorizing the Florida Department of Education to combine state education funding with federal Chapter I monies "for the aggressive and progressive pursuit of learning by students." The language of the bill sets a favorable precedent: "The department is encouraged . . . to consider any program that has been proven effective with children in Chapter I schools, including Montessori programs for children in pre-kindergarten through grade three . . ." In addition, the bill encourages continuity by mandating that "the programs should be carried out for at least three years to stabilize the academic achievement of students."

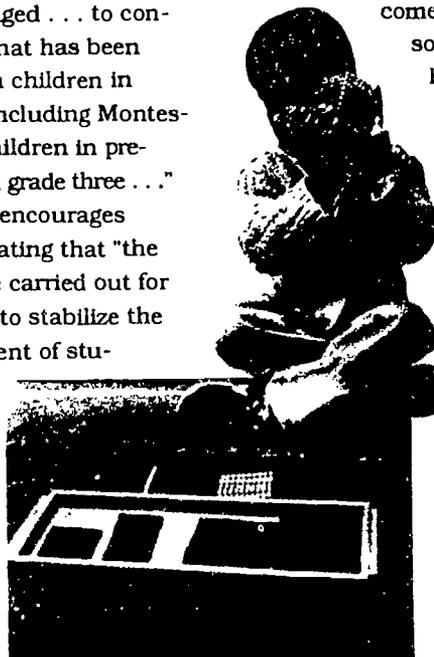
Finally, approximately a dozen representatives from the New Haven (Connecticut) Public Schools made a

privately funded visit to Cleveland in May to look at the configuration of Montessori Head Start feeding into Montessori elementary programs. The New Haven district is considering becoming a third model in the *Montessori Head Start* project and is receiving direct input from Yale University. This location is advantageous because of its proximity to the office of Dr. Edward Zigler, one of the founders of Head Start, who has agreed to speak at the MPSC public school conference in Kansas City, November 12-14, 1993.

Since we first announced *Montessori Head Start*, inquiries have come from St. Louis, Missouri; Dade County, Florida;

Charlottesville, Virginia; Denver, Colorado; Houston and Dallas, Texas; Detroit, Michigan; Albany, New York; Akron and Columbus, Ohio; and Fort Wayne, Indiana. If

you would like more information, contact Montessori Development Partnerships, 11424 Bellflower Road NE, Cleveland, OH 44106.



MPSC JOINS NATIONAL COMPUTER BULLETIN BOARD

In an effort to provide greater connectivity among public Montessori schools and to provide a common source for sharing information among school systems interested in Montessori education, the Montessori Public School Consortium (MPSC) is now on-line in the Teachers' Information Network of America Online. Joining the National Education Association (NEA), the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) and National Public Radio (NPR) as an invited member, MPSC is located in the Resource Pavilion of the Teachers' Information Network.

This new avenue for information sharing promises to alleviate the potential isolation of public Montessori educators spread throughout the country. Subscribers may post information on their own schools, address questions directly to MPSC, or exchange information with other schools or school systems. In addition, conferences, conventions, or professional opportunities may be placed in *America Online's* Convention Center on Montessori Education.

Besides aiding their communication with one another, the computer bulletin board will also give public Montessorians an important means of outreach as Montessori education moves into the mainstream of American schooling. MPSC is developing a file of articles on Montessori and public education for free downloading and hopes to provide other services as well. Please tell us what you would find helpful.

America Online is committed to education and strives to be the best on-line source of information for educators and parents. (It is also the electronic town meeting forum for the Clinton administration.) If your school system is not already connected to *America Online*, inquiries can be made toll-free: 1-800-827-6364. ☛

MONTESSORI PUBLIC SCHOOL COORDINATORS AND ADMINISTRATORS GATHER IN MILWAUKEE

In March, several Montessori public school principals and Montessori coordinators affiliated with the Association Montessori Internationale—USA (AMI-USA) met in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, to discuss issues related to the establishment of public Montessori schools. Represented in this self-led group sponsored by AMI-USA were **Cleveland, Ohio; Kansas City, Missouri; Milwaukee, Wisconsin; and Washington, DC.**

The day-and-a-half session featured informal sharing to foster better communication between schools and to discuss common problems concerning the complexities of curriculum supervision. These topics were covered:

- Curriculum supervision and planning
- Expectations for transition levels
- Parent education and public relations
- Affordable in-service opportunities
- Role of the Montessori coordinator

- Teachers as supervisors of assistants
- Vision, staff renewal, and community

Margaret Stephenson, AMI elementary trainer, opened the meeting with a talk on the importance of vision. She emphasized clarity of vision as an essential ingredient in the growth of public Montessori and suggested specific goals for clarifying vision. Each adult in the school, for instance, needs a vision of the relationship between adult and child, a relationship based on respect for the child's potential. This vision begins even before Montessori training starts, with a focus on quality in the selection of candidates, and it continues to be developed in a training process which allows time for it to unfold in detail.

The coordinators plan to continue to meet in order to pool their expertise as they work toward a common goal: the high standards of full Mon-

tessori implementation. They also agreed to provide MPSC with summaries of their work. ☛

MPSC

update

Editors

Tim Duax
David Kahn
Renee Pendleton

Layout & Typesetting

Jayne Fitch

For more information contact:
Montessori Public School Consortium
11424 Bellflower Road NE
Cleveland, Ohio 44106
Phone: 216 • 421 • 1905
Fax: 216 • 421 • 8193

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REPORTS FROM THE FIELD: MONTESSORI FOR ADOLESCENTS

MPSC, in conjunction with Montessori Development Partnerships (MDP) is pursuing an in-depth approach to defining Montessori frameworks for adolescent education. In April, MDP organized a meeting of a small group of Montessori middle school educators from across the nation. They shared strategies and began planning a two-week, intensive, graduate-level course on Montessori theory and practice at the adolescent level, which will be offered by the North American Montessori Teachers' Association (NAMTA) at the Montessori Academy, July 26-August 6. (For more information on the Academy, write NAMTA, 11424 Bellflower Road NE, Cleveland, Ohio 44106, or call 216/421-1905.)

The Summer 1993 issue of *The NAMTA Journal* will focus on Montessori frameworks for adolescents. In addition, the American Montessori Society (AMS) has initiated its first secondary course under the direction of Dr. Elizabeth Coe in Houston, Texas. For information, call 713/465-7670.

MPSC collected the following data in telephone interviews with representatives of the Montessori middle school or junior high program at each of the seven identified public school districts. Future adolescent projects will need to consider rapid enrollment increases, availability of strong faculty, and the need for curriculum enhancement that is uniquely Montessori.

	Existing Schools			Proposed Schools			
	Buffalo (Bennett Park)	Dallas-Ft. Worth (Daggett)	Minneapolis (Seward)	Cincinnati	Denver	Prince George's County, MD	St. Paul
Years in Operation or Projected Opening Date	10	10	1	Fall, 1994	Fall, 1993	Fall, 1993	Fall, 1993
Number of Children Served	86	160	75	200-250 1st year (in two locations)	30-35 (7th graders) 1st year; 60-70 (7th & 8th graders) 2nd year	20 (7th graders) 1st year; 95 (7th & 8th graders) 2nd year	13 in 1st year; 200+ in 5-7 years
Age Clustering	Ages 11-13	7th & 8th grades together part of day	7th & 8th grades together	7th & 8th grades together	7th & 8th grades together	7th & 8th grades together	7th & 8th grades together
Building in Which Programs Housed	One wing in a K-8 Montessori building of 600 children	Separate Montessori middle school building	Housed with Montessori elementary	1. A K-8 Montessori school 2. New "Middle School Academy" (in a formerly closed building); to house all alternative middle school programs	An auxiliary building of an existing middle school	One wing in an established middle school building	Existing junior-senior high school complex
Required Teacher Preparation	3-6 Montessori training; any affiliation	No Montessori diploma required. District in-service. "Talents Unlimited" in-service done by Gifted & Talented Program	AMI or AMS primary or elementary diploma, or working toward one	Probably AMS through Xavier University; 3-6, 9-12, or maybe a new 12-14 program.	9-12 Montessori diploma plus in-service at middle school level for lead teacher.	District in-service	9-12 Montessori training—any affiliation
Criteria for Admission	Open to children with prior Montessori background and their siblings	Admission based on teacher recommendations, test scores, grades, writing sample. Preference given to children with prior Montessori experience and their siblings	Preference to children with prior Montessori background	Hoping for a stipulation of previous Montessori experience	Previous Montessori background required	Hoping for a stipulation of previous Montessori experience	Open admission
Measures of Achievement Used	SAT, CTBS: Math & Reading; New York State Pupil Evaluation (to assess need for remediation)	Texas Assessment of Academic Skills	California Achievement Tests (7th grade only) Accelerated Placement Tests (8th grade)				
School's Ranking in District	About middle	Above both district & state average	No ranking done in district				

THE FOUNDATIONS OF VISION

This article has been prepared for Montessori teachers to share with interested administrators and parents in order to promote fuller realization of the Montessori vision.

The Montessori vision is about a complex continuum of education that strives to meet the needs of the child at each successive developmental stage. It is about respect for the individual child's own pace, timing, and personality. It goes beyond the highly visible characteristics of specially prepared materials and periods of independent work to embrace an entire philosophy of child development.

As elevating, profound, and true as these ideas are, however, the day-to-day work of the public school takes place on a practical plane, a hands-on plane. How is it possible, then, to translate the high ideals of the Montessori vision into the kinds of practical terms that public schools need? One way is to seek out exemplary public schools based on Montessori practice and then determine what practical components they use to support the overall vision.

National groups have often visited Greenfield Montessori School and MacDowell School, both in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, because these schools have made significant strides in making available to public school parents a full-spectrum approach to Montessori schooling. The specific practices that

underlie these schools' grasp of the Montessori vision were formulated in grant writing, fundraising efforts, and numerous meetings of the school board, administrators, buildings and grounds personnel, and the teachers' union over a period of several years. This is the nucleus of practice that allows these two schools to maintain the vision:

- Children generally enter the Montessori program at age three.
- Children are selected by city-wide lottery.
- Children reflect all social and economic communities in Milwaukee.
- No tuition is charged for children of any age.
- All transportation costs to and from school are paid for all children.
- If vacancies occur, four-year-olds are admitted in order to maintain a balance of age group
- Multi-aged groupings are maintained as follows:

Children's House Primary: ages 3-6 (with three- and four-year-olds attending morning sessions only and five-

year-olds staying all day with the same teacher).
Lower Elementary: ages 6-9.
Upper Elementary: ages 9-11.

- Full-time assistants work in the Children's House Primary.
- An art specialist or music specialist is available to work with elementary-aged children either in the classroom or in studios at the discretion of the teacher.
- A library/research room is available.
- Uninterrupted work periods for children are maintained. Morning and afternoon recess pauses are not necessary.
- Every classroom is equipped with standard Montessori materials from approved Montessori manufacturers.
- Report cards are designed by Montessori staff and are based on individual progress. Letter grades are not given.
- Each school has a certified (AMI) Montessori coordinator whose role is to insure continuity within each program and to assist in the full development of each class.

Through these two schools, the Milwaukee Public Schools have continuously provided a Montessori option for the families of approximately one thousand children. ☛

MPSC RECOGNIZED BY EDUCATION COMMISSION OF THE STATES

The Education Commission of the States (ECS) has listed the Montessori Public School Consortium as one of ten major educational restructuring initiatives nationwide. The Commission is a non-profit, interstate compact formed in 1965 to help governors, state legislators, and state education officials develop policies to improve the quality of education at all levels. MPSC has been listed in the ECS publication *Restructuring the Education System—A Consumer's Guide*, a listing of programs which have received recognition by policy makers, business leaders, and educators in discussions on improving education systems. Copies of the guide are available from: Education Commission of the States, 707 17th St., Suite 2700, Denver CO 80202. ☛

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Montessori Public
School Consortium

update
MPSC

REPORTS FROM THE FIELD

Vol. 2, No. 1

MONTESSORI AND THE 100 LARGEST U.S. SCHOOL SYSTEMS

October, 1993

THE PHILADELPHIA STORY: MONTESSORI HEAD START

Our last two issues have updated you on the *Montessori Head Start 2000* project, aimed at collecting data from model Montessori Head Start classrooms in Philadelphia and Cleveland, which show innovations in mixed funding and multi-age grouping. The data collected would create a basis for a national information network, including consultation services, follow-up study data, assessment tools, and new parent education materials. Now we would like to profile the Philadelphia pilot program.

Philadelphia has the oldest Montessori Head Start in the nation, founded in 1965 and operated within the public school district. Until now, the program has been funded solely by Head Start monies, with the result that three-year-olds could not attend. Since five-year-olds attended a district-operated, non-Montessori kindergarten, the Montessori ideal of the multi-age classroom could not be attained.

Last spring, however, in consultation with *Montessori Head Start 2000*, the Philadelphia Public Schools earmarked desegregation, district, and Head Start funds for the establishment this fall of the district's first combined pre-kindergarten/kindergarten classrooms. Nationally, this is the first classical Montessori integrated pre-K/

K model which is Head Start supported under local district auspices.

In addition, the district now has its first Montessori lower-elementary (grades one through three) classroom. Children graduating from the two Montessori Head Start classrooms will feed into this lower elementary classroom, and all three classes are located in the same building, Thomas Mifflin School.

Head Start and desegregation monies were earmarked for assigned budget line items, resulting in joint expenditures which included \$50,000 in capital improvements for the Montessori classrooms, \$61,500 in Montessori materials, and \$224,000 in operational funds. This earmarking of funds indicates a strong commitment to the project on the part of the school district.

The positive effects of the mixed funding are already being documented. Gender, racial, and economic balance has been maintained because of the inclusion of desegregation and Head Start funds. The most noted accomplishment of the Philadelphia project is the impact of the desegregation funds on the Head Start program. The classroom economic mix indicates 50% children of low socio-economic background,



compared with a national average of 90% to 100%. In addition, mixed funding allows the program enrollment to be one-third three-year-olds, one-third four-year-olds, and one-third five-year-olds.

With the mixed funding mechanism already in place, the program awaits the technical assistance, planning, assessment, and program design mechanisms necessary to meet the increasing demand for its expansion. A waiting list of approximately fifty children has accumulated even in the absence of any active promotion of the program.†

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AMERICA ONLINE: A RESOURCE FOR MONTESSORI PUBLIC SCHOOLS

After three months online in the Teachers' Information Network of *America Online*, the Montessori Public School Consortium (MPSC) has now expanded to the Parents' Information Network as well. MPSC joined the National Education Association (NEA), the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) and National Public Radio (NPR) as an invited member of *America Online* last June.

The Montessori bulletin board is intended to allow greater connectivity among public Montessori educators who are spread throughout the country and may feel

isolated. In addition, with Montessori moving into the mainstream of American education, the bulletin board provides an important outreach platform for Montessori educators and a source of information for school systems interested in starting a Montessori program.

Individuals and schools may use the Montessori bulletin board to post information on their own schools, address questions directly to MPSC, or exchange information with other schools. Conferences, conventions, and professional opportunities can be announced in *America Online's* Convention Center on Montessori Education. And MPSC is developing

a file of articles on Montessori and public education for free downloading. Other services may be added later.

America Online is committed to being the best on-line source of information for educators and parents. (It is also the electronic town meeting forum for the Clinton administration.) If your school system is not already connected to *America Online*, inquiries can be made toll-free: **1-800-827-6364**. If enough public Montessori schools participate, the MPSC bulletin board could become an organized data bank on public Montessori implementation. +

MONTESSORI HEAD START NATIONAL CLEARINGHOUSE SLATED

On January 1, 1994, the Marotta Montessori Schools of Cleveland (Ohio) will open a clearinghouse for Montessori Head Start information. The Montessori Head Start National Clearinghouse, a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization, will coordinate speakers and consultants necessary for assisting new Montessori Head Start proposals and will disseminate documentation and formats currently used by the Marotta Schools. Alcillia Clifford, executive director of the Marotta Schools, will direct the project.

The Marotta Schools have collaborated with Montessori Development Partnerships (the funds development organization that sponsors MPSC) to develop the *Montessori Head Start 2000* proposal. This multifaceted proposal supports the full documentation of two pilot Montessori Head Start projects, the Marotta Schools and the Philadelphia Montessori Head Start project at Thomas Mifflin School (see related story on page 1). In addition, the proposal calls for an urban-oriented parent education tool kit providing a Montessori perspective on child development and diversity. If *Montessori Head Start 2000* is funded, these materials will be developed over the next two years for the Clearinghouse to distribute. +



KENISON INITIATES MONTESSORI RESOURCE CENTER

Monte Kenison of Nienhuis Montessori USA is heading up a new information center specializing in general Montessori promotion. The Montessori Resource Center will be devoted to promoting good Montessori education in both public and private sectors with a referral system for services, publications, and information on associations. The Montessori Resource Center's aim will be to promote awareness of Montessori benefits to the larger public through media advertising, editorial coverage in media, direct mail campaigns, and public service broadcasts. The Center will work closely with Montessori schools and associations in designing new strategies for communications and development. +

THE MONTESSORI BROKER: LET THE BUYER BEWARE

by David Kahn

To anyone making decisions regarding training and materials for a new Montessori program, the array of options may seem overwhelming. Historically, public school districts starting Montessori programs have sought advice from local Montessori schools, training centers, and national Montessori associations. Although these institutions initially had little experience in the large-scale operations of public ventures, they would help without charge and with the best interests of Montessori education at heart.

Currently, however, the increase in funded Montessori programs in the public sector is creating a new species of consultant, the Montessori broker. Although several different brokering approaches are taking shape across the nation, the basic idea is to fit the available Montessori

training and purchasing options to the needs of the district. Some brokers charge the districts fees for their services while others take a sales commission from vendors. The common denominator, however, is the promise of both convenience and cost savings. But the unfortunate outcome is that these promises may influence districts to take shortcuts in order to simplify implementation and minimize the demands on trainees.

The shortcut mentality leads to the adoption of training approaches about which the broker may not even be knowledgeable. For instance, the broker may inadvertently sell a short, evening training course which divides Montessori insight into segmented bits of information, usually about the materials alone. In this kind of course, lecturers in each subject area are often flown in sequentially. The essential overview, which requires one anchor trainer for its coherence, is missing. This overview is vital because it integrates psychology and philosophy across the curriculum and makes up the trainees' belief system about children and how they learn.

Sometimes districts, encouraged by the broker, eliminate the field practice teaching and observation in established Montessori environments outside the trainees' own classrooms and school system. Especially with a new Montessori program, field experience in good Montessori classrooms gives trainees a mature picture of how Montessori might be actualized in

their own program. But the broker who markets a package based on economy causes the district to frown on the cost of substitute teachers and the inconvenience of having the trainees out of their buildings.

In the final analysis, brokers looking to cut costs while increasing sales tend to depict the established training center's longer timetables and higher expectations as inflexible, unnecessary, and needlessly expensive. Often omitted is the fact that a regional training center is equipped to support the whole of implementation beyond the period of training. A district that opts for a training program without a thorough and committed implementation plan and ongoing supervision can drift into compromise and dilution in a very short time.

District administrations must look beyond convenience factors and realize that initial compromise will not deliver the comprehensiveness and academic results which attract many to the Montessori method in the first place. *The quality of Montessori implementation and its viability beyond the initial years depend on commitment to in-depth training at the outset.* Good training is economical in the long run because it endures.

Finally, the worst disservice of the broker mentality may be to overstimulate the Montessori market beyond the supply of qualified trainers, producing a state of diminishing returns as quantity outstrips quality. While the broker wins the short-term profit, the children lose the true promise of quality Montessori education. †

MPSC

update

Editors

Tim Duax
David Kahn
Renee Pendleton

Layout and Typesetting

Donna Byers
Jayne Fitch

For more information contact:

Montessori Public School Consortium
11424 Bellflower Road NE
Cleveland, Ohio 44106
Phone: 216 • 421 • 1905
Fax: 216 • 421 • 8193

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The Montessori Public School Consortium is a cooperative venture of the Association Montessori Internationale (AMI), the American Montessori Society (AMS), the North American Montessori Teachers' Association (NAMTA), and the Hershey Foundation, under the auspices of Montessori Development Partnerships, Inc.

WHAT IS MPSC?

The Montessori Public School Consortium is a collaborative venture of the Association Montessori Internationale (AMI), the American Montessori Society (AMS), the North American Montessori Teachers' Association (NAMTA), and Nienhuis, Inc., under the auspices of Montessori Development Partnerships, Inc. The consortium is intended to provide a Montessori resource, information, and research documentation center for Montessori public schools. This newsletter is one of its outreaches.

WHAT IS AMI?

The Association Montessori Internationale (AMI) was established in 1929 by Dr. Maria Montessori and was guided for more than fifty years by her son and close collaborator, Mario M. Montessori. AMI's objective is to uphold and safeguard the quality of Montessori training and the passing on of Maria Montessori's heritage through her educational philosophy and methodology including the materials and their presentation.

WHAT IS AMS?

The American Montessori Society (AMS) is a nonprofit education society founded in 1960 whose purpose is to help children develop their fullest potential through the educational principles of Dr. Maria Montessori. This includes the following: developing Montessori programs, accrediting schools, granting credentials, encouraging research, organizing seminars and symposia, and all other areas which relate to the dissemination of Montessori philosophy.

••• INTRODUCING THE NEW •••

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MPSC UPGRADES SERVICES

Momentum continues to grow within the Montessori Public School Consortium.

Newsletter Increases Publication

This year, MPSC's newsletter, *MPSC Update*, will be published four times—up from twice in the 1992-93 academic year—and sent to an expanded mailing list. Additional funding has allowed for substantial effort in gathering and disseminating information on the national level.

Computer Bulletin Board Expands

We now have a message board so that interested *America Online* members can respond, ask questions, and give opinions. We would like to hear from you!

Support Hotline Planned

By January, 1994, MPSC will establish a public school support hotline for school systems interested in exploring the Montessori option and receiving information from the two largest training organizations, the Association Montessori Internationale (AMI) and the American Montessori Society (AMS).

Consumer Reports to Be Issued

In November, the North American Montessori Teachers' Association (NAMTA) will begin gathering data for a consumer research report. Montessori materials from major manufacturers will be evaluated by an impartial committee of AMI and AMS experts on these criteria: durability, workmanship, authenticity to original designs, and quality control. The finished report is due to be released early in 1994.

Guidebook for Public Schools Now Available

As a service to public school systems, MPSC will provide, free of charge, a guidebook entitled *Montessori in the Public Sector: Implementation Basics*. The guidebook will be available December 1, 1993. To get your free copy, call 1-800-942-8697, extension 12, or write to the Montessori Resource Center, 320 Pioneer Way, Mountain View, CA 94041.

REPORTS FROM THE FIELD: 100 LARGEST U.S. SCHOOL SYSTEMS

In this list of the one hundred largest school districts in the United States, *M* indicates the twenty-nine districts with Montessori programs. *

District	Student Population		District	Student Population			
1	New York City, NY	943,000		51	East Baton Rouge Parish, LA	61,600	M
2	Los Angeles Unified, CA	625,000		52	Atlanta, GA	60,700	
3	Chicago, IL	408,000	M	53	Boston, MA	60,500	
4	Dade County, FL	292,000	M	54	San Antonio Independent, TX	60,000	
5	Houston Independent, TX	194,000	M	55	Denver, CO	59,000	M
6	Philadelphia, PA	190,000	M	56	Jefferson Parish, LA	58,000	
7	Detroit, MI	168,000		57	Brevard County, FL	56,600	
8	Broward County, FL	161,000		58	Tucson Unified, AZ	56,000	
9	Hawaii Dept. Ed., HI	159,000		59	Davis County, UT	54,500	
10	Dallas Independent, TX	135,000	M	60	Portland, OR	53,000	M
11	Fairfax County, VA	128,000		61	Oakland Unified, CA	52,000	
12	Hillsborough County, FL	123,000		62	Greenville County, SC	51,400	
13	Clark County, NV	122,000		63	Caddo Parish, LA	51,300	
14	San Diego City Unified, CA	121,000		64	Cincinnati, OH	51,000	M
15	Duval County, FL	111,000		65	Knox County, TN	50,700	
16	Prince George's County, MD	108,000	M	66	Northside Independent, TX	50,000	
17	Baltimore City, MD	108,000		67	Ysleta Independent, TX	49,900	
18	Memphis, TN	107,000	M	68	Sacramento City Unified, CA	49,500	M
19	Palm Beach County, FL	106,000		69	Seminole County, FL	49,000	
20	Montgomery County, MD	104,000		70	Newark, NJ	48,500	
21	Orange County, FL	103,000		71	Valusia County, FL	48,400	
22	Pinellas County, FL	94,000		72	Indianapolis, IN	48,000	M
23	Milwaukee, WI	92,000	M	73	San Juan Unified, CA	47,700	
24	Jefferson County, KY	91,000	M	74	Buffalo, NY	47,300	M
25	Albuquerque, NM	88,000		75	Wichita, KS	47,200	
26	Baltimore County, MD	87,000		76	Santa Ana Unified, CA	45,900	
27	Orleans Parish, LA	82,000	M	77	Arlington Independent, TX	45,000	
28	Washington D.C.	80,000	M	78	Cumberland County, NC	44,600	
29	Granite, UT	78,000		79	Chesterfield County, VA	44,500	
30	Mecklenburg County, NC	77,000	M	80	Charleston County, SC	43,600	
31	Jefferson County, CO	76,000		81	St. Louis, MO	43,300	M
32	Dekalb County, GA	74,000		82	Lee County, FL	43,200	
33	Fresno Unified, CA	72,000		83	Escambia County, FL	43,000	
34	Long Beach Unified, CA	71,000	M	84	Anchorage, AK	42,000	M
35	Virginia Beach, VA	70,500		85	Fulton County, GA	41,900	
36	Cleveland, OH	70,000	M	86	Prince William County, VA	41,800	
37	Cobb County, GA	69,500		87	Corpus Christi Independent, TX	41,800	
38	Fort Worth Independent, TX	69,000	M	88	Birmingham, AL	41,700	
39	Nashville-Davidson County, TN	68,000		89	Omaha, NE	41,700	
40	Mobile County, AL	67,000		90	Aldine Independent, TX	41,300	
41	Austin Independent, TX	66,000		91	Cypress-Fairbanks Independent, TX	41,100	
42	Polk County, FL	65,500		92	Minneapolis, MN	41,000	M
43	Anne Arundel County, MD	65,200		93	Seattle, WA	40,900	M
44	Jordan, UT	65,000		94	Jefferson County, AL	40,800	
45	Gwinnett County, GA	64,900		95	Tulsa, OK	40,700	
46	Columbus, OH	64,300	M	96	San Bernardino City Unified, CA	40,500	
47	Wake County, NC	64,200		97	Toledo, OH	40,400	
48	El Paso Independent, TX	64,000		98	North East Independent, TX	39,900	
49	Mesa Unified, AZ	62,000	M	99	Pittsburgh, PA	39,800	M
50	San Francisco Unified, CA	61,700		100	Alpine, UT	39,700	

CONSUMER TIPS: MONTESSORI TRAINING AND MATERIALS PROCUREMENT

When magnet school monies or other large grants are confirmed to establish Montessori programs in a public school district, the purchasing of materials and teacher training may seem complex to public school administrators eager to make responsible decisions. Depending on the size of the Montessori program to be implemented, thousands of dollars are to be committed—up to \$23,000 per classroom and \$4,000 to \$5,000 per teacher to be trained.

The Montessori Public School Consortium wishes to advise districts to respect the practices of existing Montessori associations. With special expertise and forethought, *Montessori training conventions can be made flexible to meet the needs of districts*, but pedagogical design decisions should be worked through the association's authoritative, internal processes. Furthermore, the selection of training and materials is a curriculum decision, not simply an administrative process, to be subjected to the typical limited criteria of the contract negotiation process.

Here are some guidelines to aid in the search for quality Montessori training and materials:

1. Procure Montessori training from a proven training center certified by the Association Montessori Internationale (AMI) or the American Montessori Society (AMS). Look for commitment to pre-service training (at least 400-600 contact hours), a clear sense of program aims including continuous summer/academic year programming, support of implementation beyond the training period, and a long-range vision that includes program evaluation. There is no royal path to implementation, so make sure the training center is willing to help with troubleshooting in the areas of staff turnover, principal turnover, and implementation irregularities.
2. Understand the emerging role of the new Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education (MACTE). Many of the charter members of MACTE have yet to go through the accreditation process. Make sure that any MACTE accreditation claimed is really completed; otherwise, there is no assurance that the training center under consideration is in compliance with the essential standards and criteria of MACTE. Also, keep in mind that there is a wide range of training quality within the MACTE organization; in fact, MACTE standards and criteria are lower than those of some Montessori associations who certify training and award diplomas. Each association has its own review committees and standards specific to its training credential, and it is the association credential that insures the ultimate pedagogical quality, not the MACTE seal of approval alone. AMI and AMS have some of the highest standards among training programs.
3. Buy Montessori materials as an enlightened consumer. Different manufacturers show wide variation in formats, quality standards, color schemes, and workmanship. Beware of any broker or bidding approach which suggests a mix-and-match strategy by price alone. Often the training center can help in the purchase of materials of superior design and durability, but only if the district agrees that better quality sometimes carries a higher price tag. Most important, avoid a "uniform list" that dictates a classroom package. Some brokers appeal to the district's need to encumber the monies as soon as possible by suggesting a convenient "universal classroom" strategy without regard for the developmental appropriateness of the materials. These classroom packages seldom conform to the district's specific timetable for implementation and often contain more materials than are necessary.

The bottom line: Redefine cost-effectiveness in terms of program effectiveness. *Montessori is a long-term educational process, not just another curriculum product in a package.* Quality manufactured materials have a very long depreciation life. Good Montessori training and professional development mean that the program assumes a powerful identity which empowers the teacher and fortifies the program against future dilution or even dissipation. †

Get the Answers You Need!

- *How can Montessori and Head Start be combined to form a fully integrated pre-K/K program?*
- *What alternative assessment tools are available for Montessori programs?*
- *Can assessment be Montessori-appropriate and still meet district mandates?*
- *How can urban children benefit from Cosmic Education?*
- *How can public and private schools create partnerships that win?*
- *Can teachers within a school agree on Montessori standards—even with different training?*
- *How does the Montessori vision enhance teacher morale and program cohesion?*
- *What different approaches are there to planning and budgeting a Montessori start-up?*
- *What about reading and writing readiness, especially for children with limited language background?*

Montessori Public Schools for the Twenty-First Century: Keeping the Vision

a conference sponsored by the North American Montessori Teachers' Association
and the Montessori Public School Consortium

The Plaza Hilton • Kansas City, Missouri • November 12-14, 1993

Featured Speakers:

Ruth Mitchell, PhD, Associate Director of the Council for Basic Education.

Robert Peterkin, EdD, Director of Harvard's Urban Superintendents' Program.

Edward Zigler, PhD, co-founder of Head Start and Sterling Psychology Professor at Yale.

Plus fifteen noted Montessorians!

Program Highlights:

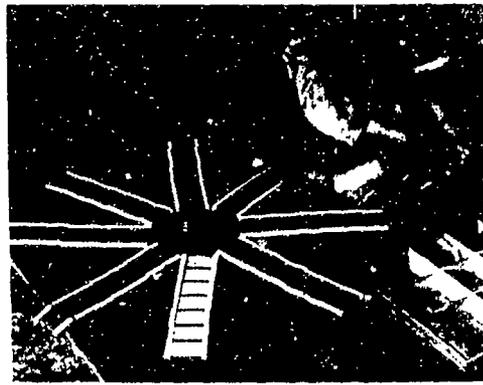
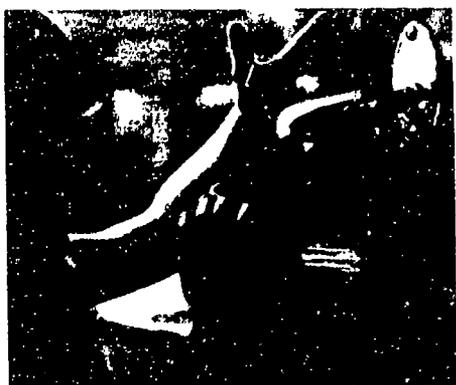
Specific schedule information is available from NAMTA: (216) 421-1905.

- Registration:** Thurs., Nov. 11, 7:00-9:00 pm; or Fri., Nov. 12, 8:00-9:00 am; or Sat., Nov. 13, 7:30-8:00 am.
- Friday, Nov. 12:** All day: Tours of Kansas City public Montessori schools.
7:00 pm: Keynote by Dr. Peterkin, followed by reception.
- Saturday, Nov. 13:** Morning: Address by Dr. Zigler, followed by panel discussion.
Afternoon: Luncheon, followed by workshop options (see registration form).
7:00 pm: Banquet.
- Sunday, Nov. 14:** Morning: Address by Dr. Mitchell, followed by workshop options (see registration form).
Afternoon: Luncheon, followed by concluding remarks. Conference ends at 2:30 pm.

Hotel Information:

You must make your own hotel reservation. Group rate is \$89.00/night for either single or double room. Group name is NORTH AMERICAN MONTESSORI TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION. Room block will be held until **October 20, 1993**. Register by phone or mail: The Plaza Hilton, One East 45th Street, Kansas City, MO, 64111; 1-800-445-8667.

For conference registration forms, write to NAMTA, 11424 Bellflower Road NE, Cleveland, OH 44106.



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Vol. 2 No. 2

February 1994

Montessori Public
School Consortium

update

MPSC

REPORTS FROM THE FIELD

NATIONAL PUBLIC MONTESSORI SUPPORT NETWORK

MPSC KANSAS CITY CONFERENCE: THINK NATIONALLY, DO LOCALLY

Participants from thirty-nine states gathered in November to discuss the Montessori vision in the public schools. More than 180 educators, most of them public school teachers and administrators, toured the public Montessori schools of Kansas City, Missouri; listened to keynote addresses on leadership, Head Start, and assessment; attended a variety of workshops; and renewed a commitment to foster the development of public Montessori schools around the country.

One significant success of the conference was the combined participation of the American Montessori Society (AMS) and the Association Montessori International—USA (AMI). Dr. Elisabeth Coe, of the AMS national board, and Mr. Steve Huffman, of the AMI-USA board, jointly addressed the conference, pledging cooperation in furthering the Montessori vision in the public schools.

Mr. Frank Vincent acted as host in welcoming participants to Kansas City and to the three Montessori schools in the Kansas City district. Mr. Vincent, principal of Montessori Elementary II, took on the task of arranging school tours for conference participants. Kansas City, with a Montessori vision serving a wide diversity of children, is a model that

deserves emulation in public school systems seeking to begin Montessori programs.

Three national educational leaders challenged the Montessori movement to lead school reform.

Dr. Robert Peterkin, Director of the Urban Superintendents' Program at Harvard, pointed out that traditional reforms are not providing the answers perintendents around the country need in their efforts to improve schools. The Montessori movement, with its well articulated vision, philosophy, and pedagogy, is part of the answer, he said. He praised the grassroots forces behind the Montessori movement, as well as the national and international scope of its teacher training arm. MPSC, he said, "can sustain the Montessori vision while assisting the public schools of this nation to develop their own, each being compatible and supportive of the other. You can be at the cutting edge of school reform!" See page 2 for more of Dr. Peterkin's remarks.

Dr. Edward Zigler of Yale, co-founder of Head Start, related one of the lessons of Head Start: that it is unwise to begin such a program too quickly and on too large a scale. New programs, he advised, must be carefully developed and piloted. Additionally, the services offered by

Head Start need to be expanded beyond the short age range which is now established. Dr. Zigler called for a zero-to-three program comparable to Head Start as well as a follow-up program into the early grades of school. He stressed that the educational components of all these programs should be individualized, developmentally appropriate, and coordinated into a flow experience for children as they progress from one stage to the next. Dr. Zigler's presentation is excerpted on page 7.

Dr. Ruth Mitchell, consultant to the Council for Basic Education, addressed the need for changes in assessment practices. In this area, she said, the Montessori movement is part of re-tooling the system in public education because the Montessori educational vision is changing the way assessment must be done. Montessori is helping to

(Continued on Page 3)



Betsy Cox (President, AMS) and Steve Huffman (President, AMI-USA) express a spirit of cooperation

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PROGRESSIVE VISION, LEADERSHIP, SYSTEM CHANGE, AND MONTESSORI

by Robert Peterkin, EdD

In the following excerpts from his keynote address at the national public school conference in Kansas City (November 12, 1993), Dr. Peterkin, director of Harvard University's Urban Superintendents' Program, outlines his vision of a new school leadership and Montessori's place in that vision.

I think that I can help us develop a dialogue about the kind of visionary leadership required in this moment in the history of American education. The major role of that leadership is to identify and support those visions, approaches, and programs which demonstrate their power in enhancing the life chances of our children.

Let me use some personal examples of my most recent experience in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where I served as superintendent. Greenfield and MacDowell Montessori schools were found to be true to their vision, the district's mission, and the needs of their student population; in other words, their students' academic achievements and their life chances were being enhanced.

Based on [my Milwaukee] experience and twenty-five years of work in the urban public schools of Cambridge and Boston, Massachusetts, and in the alternative schools of New York, I have come to the conclusion that America's response to the current school crisis is simply too timid. I advocate a *new leadership* that will transform America's schools, a new leadership that will shed the timidity of our current efforts and promote bold change that results in enhanced student

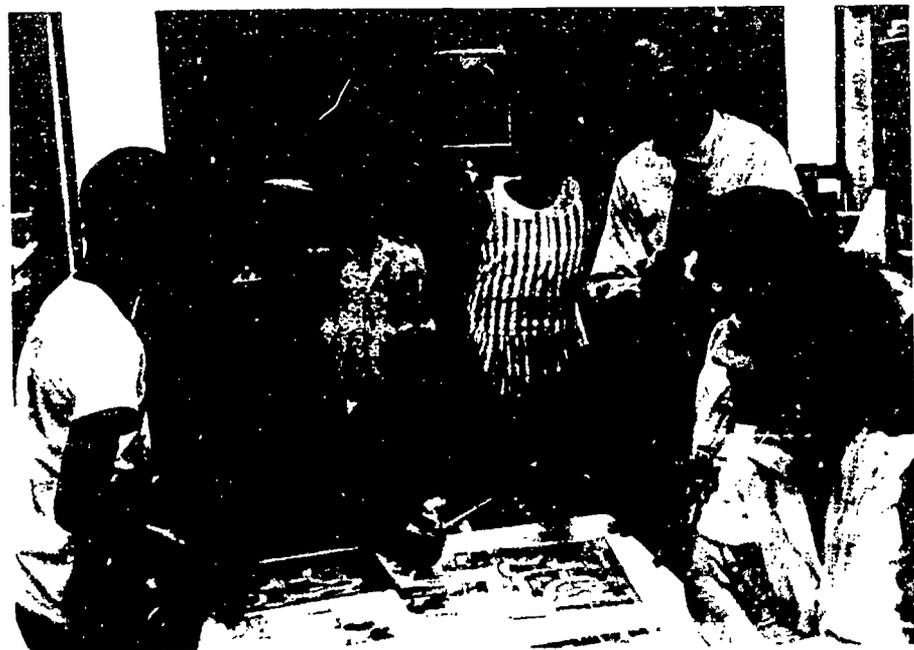
outcomes. That leadership must accept the fact that the transformation of our nation's schools is an inescapable fact. Transformation is needed for a very basic reason: The traditional hierarchical factory model of education is obsolete. We must have a leadership that recognizes that schools currently do not deal with or support the diversity of our new student population and do not provide students with an understanding of their culture and other cultures of this country and the world. We must have new leadership that recognizes that the transformation of America's schools is a complicated and comprehensive process. Without such a holistic view, school transformation will continue to be incremental and incidental.

Visionary leadership for tomorrow's schools needs to explore "the islands of success" from around the

nation that have had a positive impact on the outcomes for children, especially poor and minority children, so that such programs can be expanded into "systems of success."

This is where Montessori can take a leadership role in systemic educational reform. Most school reform has been of the "top down" nature, with lots of mandates and rhetoric, and little understanding of the teaching/learning process. Few, if any, legislators, school board members, and, regretfully, superintendents understand the developmental cycles of learning—for adults or children. While they all hope that "all children can learn," they have little knowledge as how to structure learning environments to turn that hope into a reality. This is the reason we see the increased interest in such public/private efforts as the Edison Project, Educational Alterna-

(Continued on Page 3)



Dr. Peterkin conducts a school visit.

PROGRESSIVE VISION, LEADERSHIP, SYSTEM CHANGE, AND MONTESSORI . . . CONTINUED

tives, Inc., and even the Walt Disney Corporation. Our public school systems are crying out for help! This is where the Montessori Public School Consortium can sustain the Montessori vision while assisting the public schools of this nation to develop their own, each being compatible and supportive of the other. You can be at the cutting edge of school reform!

First of all, Montessori has a well-articulated vision, philosophy, and pedagogy. Montessori has a teacher training arm that is national and international in scope. Montessori has a proven track record in over one hundred school systems.

Montessori education also has other characteristics that are supposedly beloved by reform-minded systems: parental participation, diversity, and "respect for the child's potential." With regard to diversity, Montessori schools are

probably better integrated than our urban schools, according to the 1988 *NAMTA Public School Survey*, with nearly two-thirds of responding schools having waiting lists of up to five hundred students. A superintendent's dream! Since Montessori education is based on a vision of total child development, compatibility with district visions of "all children can learn" is a marketing problem, not an educational one.

In addition to the Montessori vision, [the public Montessori schools in Milwaukee] also responded to the vision of the system with respect to fairness (assignment), diversity (social and well as economic), program integrity, and student outcomes. [Such responsiveness] also allows Montessori schools to take their rightful place in a reform agenda, perhaps a leadership role in helping others articulate their visions for schools that are much different than Montessori but are

concerned about the welfare and growth of children.

Those who are in the public education arena, with responsibility for the education of millions of students, must be allowed the latitude to find new solutions to persistent problems.

We must have a conversation that stretches out across this nation and creates an advocacy for children. Superintendents of schools must embrace a new agenda, discharge their responsibilities in powerful and supportive ways for children, and not succumb to the traditional compromises made at this level which disenfranchise our children.

I am more than ever convinced that the future of our children lies in a visionary leadership which insists upon the rights of children to a superior quality of life. Unless we are all prepared to make that same commitment, we will not succeed as a nation. ♦

MPSC

update

Editors

Tim Duax
David Kahn
Renee Pendleton

Layout & Typesetting
Amy Losasso*For more information contact:*

Montessori Public School Consortium
11424 Bellflower Road NE
Cleveland, Ohio 44106

Phone: 216 • 421 • 1905
Fax: 216 • 421 • 8193

published quarterly

The Montessori Public School Consortium is a cooperative venture of the Association Montessori Internationale (AMI), the American Montessori Society (AMS), the North American Montessori Teachers' Association (NAMTA), and the Hershey Foundation, under the auspices of Montessori Development Partnerships, Inc.

THINK NATIONALLY, DO LOCALLY . . . CONTINUED

push teaching and learning in the direction of concepts, application, and student responsibility for learning. Performance assessment therefore needs to be a collection of ways to provide accurate information about what students know and are able to do; norm-referenced multiple-choice tests simply do not meet this need. Dr. Mitchell went on to survey some alternative, Montessori-appropriate assessment tools.

Complementing the keynote presentations were Montessori discussions and workshops designed to provide specific follow-through for the challenges brought by these three national leaders. Topics included Montessori supervision, magnet school start-up, the Montessori continuum, Montessori Head Start, curriculum consensus, and teacher workshops on language and Cosmic Education. ♦

THE HELP YOURSELF APPROACH TO MONTESSORI IMPLEMENTATION: HOW TO BEGIN

MPSC recommends that, as a rule, district coordinators of public Montessori programs take a hands-on approach by making strategic contacts themselves. The process, which is not difficult, involves acquiring or training Montessori teachers and equipping Montessori classrooms.

MONTESSORI TEACHERS AND TRAINING—WHAT PUBLIC SCHOOLS SHOULD LOOK FOR

National Montessori associations have job-placement publications that can assist in the recruitment of trained Montessori teachers. See the end of this article for the addresses of the American Montessori Society (AMS), the Association Montessori International—USA (AMI), and the North American Montessori Teachers' Association (NAMTA).

For districts that choose to provide Montessori training, MPSC endorses AMI and AMS training. These are the most established training programs and the ones most often used in the public schools. Following are the factors to be considered when selecting Montessori training.

1. Location

AMI and AMS training centers are located throughout the country. MPSC suggests considering a local or regional training center, which may offer a greater commitment to community process than imported training providers. If a local or regional center appears to need supplemental staff for a larger project, this is easy to request. Both AMI and AMS will be able to consult with districts as to the capabilities of their centers. MPSC can provide direct help in implementation approaches and planning frameworks if the local training center seems inexperienced in this area.

2. Pre-training Information

Once the training center is selected, teachers must understand what the requirements are before they commit to taking the course. If teachers are not fully informed at the outset, both attrition and dissatisfaction with the workload can occur, eventually obstructing project implementation.

3. Anchor Trainer

The Director of Training or Head Trainer is responsible for not merely the content areas but the restructuring of the trainee's attitudes and beliefs about how children learn. This requires that an experienced trainer be present, even while visiting lecturers are scheduled, in order to guide the integration of subject matter and child psychology. Montessori trainees are asked to learn a new way of teaching and a new attitude toward children, a process best accomplished through the consistent presence of someone who can come to know each trainee as an individual. AMI requires that the anchor trainer be present at least ninety percent of the time training is in session and deliver at least fifty percent of the course lectures. AMS requires that either the anchor trainer or a site coordinator be present at all times when training is in session.

4. Training Course Components

For both preschool and elementary training levels, AMI and AMS recommend approximately three hundred hours of lecture-style presentation of content material. AMI trainees will spend approximately another three hundred hours in hands-on work sessions with the materials. Hours of hands-on work in AMS courses vary from center to center.

In order for trainees to develop a broad sense of classroom dynamics and management, it is important

that the training period include observation and practice teaching in the classrooms of experienced Montessori teachers. AMI training programs require seven weeks of supervised field experience outside the trainee's own classroom. AMS trainees serve a nine-month internship, three hours per day at the preschool level, six at the elementary level.

Album writing is an important part of the training process. Constructing an album of lesson plans aids the trainee in analyzing the Montessori process and requires the trainee to internalize every presentation in detail. Prefabricated albums are like cookbooks; they enable the trainee to pick and choose during the training process, going into depth only to the extent that their own interests and priorities allow.

The use of both written and oral exams provides a balanced and thorough evaluation of the trainee's attainment. In addition, external as well as internal evaluation provides objectivity and consistency among programs.

5. Review and Affiliation

AMI or AMS affiliation ensures that the training center comes under regular internal and external review, guaranteeing quality control.

6. Independence

The authority of the course is most effective when the training center is independent of the situational or local constraints that can occur when districts administer or manage their own training programs.

7. Ongoing Support

Look for a training center that can provide support services to the district after the training period is over. Pedagogical continuity in the areas of training, professional in-service, and curriculum or materials consultation ensures a smooth start-

(Continued on Page 5)

REPORTS FROM THE FIELD: NATIONAL PUBLIC MONTESSORI SUPPORT NETWORK

These experienced public Montessori teachers and administrators are available to answer questions and give ideas about start-up and implementation.

AMI Contacts

Cleveland, Ohio

Ms. Barbara Booker, Principal
Hicks Montessori School
2409 Bridge Avenue
Cleveland OH 44113
(216) 621-2616

Denver, Colorado

Dr. Martha Urioste, Principal
Ms. Elizabeth Hall, Montessori Coordinator
Mitchell Montessori School
1350 East 33rd Avenue
Denver CO 80205
(303) 296-8412

Kansas City, Missouri

Mr. Frank Vincent, Principal
Elementary II Montessori
5015 Garfield
Kansas City MO 64130
(816) 871-0208

Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Mr. John Schmuhl, Principal
Edward A. MacDowell Montessori School
1706 West Highland Blvd.
Milwaukee WI 53233
(414) 933-0088

Washington DC

Dr. Jean Miller, DC Schools Elem. Montessori
Coordinator
Ms. Rita Zener, DC Schools Primary Montessori
Coordinator
c/o Washington Montessori Institute
2119 "S" Street NW
Washington DC 20008
(202) 387-8020

AMS Contacts

Buffalo, New York

Ms. Eileen Buermann, Montessori Program
Coordinator
Bennett Park Montessori Center
342 Clinton Street
Buffalo NY 14204
(716) 851-3790

Cincinnati, Ohio

Ms. Rita Swegman, Principal
Sands Montessori School
940 Poplar Street
Cincinnati OH 45214
(513) 357-4330

Houston, Texas

Mr. O.D. Curtis, Principal
Dodson Montessori Magnet School
1808 Sampson
Houston TX 77033
(713) 225-5620

Yakima, Washington

Mr. Rod Bryant, Principal
Adams Elementary School
723 South 8th Street
Yakima WA 98901
(509) 575-3448

Yonkers, New York

Ms. Kathleen MacSweeney, Principal
Montessori Humanities & Creative Arts Magnet
at School 27
132 Valentine Lane
Yonkers NY 10705
(914) 376-8455

THE HELP YOURSELF APPROACH . . . CONTINUED

up of the program and a cooperative spirit among the staff members.

VENDORS OF MATERIALS—WHAT PUBLIC SCHOOLS SHOULD LOOK FOR

1. Concern with Implementation, Not Just Sales

MPSC recommends two Montessori materials vendors: Kaybee Montessori Materials and Nienhuis Montessori USA. Both suppliers are interested in quality implementation of Montessori and not simply in selling materials.

Kaybee is owned and operated by Montessori-trained Pat Sinopoli and her husband Tony. They serve their customers with sensitive guidance and solid Montessori expertise. Kaybee is part of a vendor consortium called the Montessori Materials Guild, which offers everything a school needs to equip a classroom, from Montessori apparatus (Kaybee's specialty) to practical life items to books to shelving and furniture. Thus, if Kaybee does not have what a customer needs, the order is referred to another Guild vendor that does.

Nienhuis, by far the world's leader in this field, produces the highest quality, most durable, and longest lasting apparatus, exactly conforming to the standards of Dr. Maria Montessori. Nienhuis Montessori USA is the United States branch of the worldwide, AMI-authorized Dutch manufacturer of materials.

Monte Kenison, former Branch Manager of Nienhuis Montessori USA, has recently established a non-partisan Montessori Resource Center (MRC) to support all Montessorians in their work. Himself a Montessori trainer, he will always put quality implementation of Montessori first.

Large orders can be discounted, especially if the school district deals directly with the vendors themselves. If the budget is very limited, the training center can recommend which materials to prioritize.

2. Quality Materials

To help consumers find the best quality at the best price, the North American Montessori Teachers' Association (NAMTA) is preparing a consumer report on nearly one

hundred individual products from Montessori materials manufacturers. Gonzagarredi, Kaybee Montessori Materials, The Materials Company of Boston, Montessori Requisites USA, and Nienhuis Montessori USA have been invited to participate. The results will be released by June 1 and made available through MPSC.

HELP YOURSELF RESOURCES

American Montessori Society

150 Fifth Avenue
New York NY 10011
(212) 924-3209

Association Montessori International—USA

170 West Schofield Road
Rochester NY 14617
1-800-USA-AMI3

Kaybee Montessori Materials

4717 Chesapeake Street NW
Washington DC 20016
(301) 251-6319

Montessori Public School Consortium

11424 Bellflower Road NE
Cleveland OH 44106
(216) 421-1905

Montessori Resource Center

320 Pioneer Way
Mountain View CA 94041
1-800-942-8697, ext. 12

Nienhuis Montessori USA

320 Pioneer Way
Mountain View CA 94041
1-800-942-8697

North American Montessori Teachers' Association

11424 Bellflower Road NE
Cleveland OH 44106
(216) 421-1905

WHAT IS MPSC?

The Montessori Public School Consortium is a collaborative venture of the Association Montessori Internationale (AMI), the American Montessori Society (AMS), the North American Montessori Teachers' Association (NAMTA), and Nienhuis, Inc., under the auspices of Montessori Development Partnerships, Inc. The consortium is intended to provide a Montessori resource, information, and research documentation center for Montessori public schools. This newsletter is one of its outreaches.

WHAT IS AMI?

The Association Montessori Internationale (AMI) was established in 1929 by Dr. Maria Montessori and was guided for more than fifty years by her son and close collaborator, Mario M. Montessori. AMI's objective is to uphold and safeguard the quality of Montessori training and the passing on of Maria Montessori's heritage through her educational philosophy and methodology including the materials and their presentation.

WHAT IS AMS?

The American Montessori Society (AMS) is a nonprofit education society founded in 1960 whose purpose is to help children develop their fullest potential through the educational principles of Dr. Maria Montessori. This includes the following: developing Montessori programs, accrediting schools, granting credentials, encouraging research, organizing seminars and symposia, and all other areas which relate to the dissemination of Montessori philosophy.

CORRECTIONS

In our last issue, we ran a list of the one hundred largest school districts in the United States, indicating, to the best of our knowledge, which ones have Montessori programs.

Two of the listed school districts have contacted us to point out that we failed to recognize their Montessori programs. Our apologies to Duval County, Florida, the fifteenth largest district and home of the J. Allen Axson Montessori Academy, and to Escambia County, Florida, number eighty-three, and its two Montessori programs, located at Spencer Bibbs and Semmes elementary schools. ♦

MPSC ANNOUNCES NEXT NATIONAL CONFERENCE: DENVER

In October 1994, the national Montessori public school conference will be held in Denver, Colorado. Both the American Montessori Society (AMS) and the Association Montessori International—USA (AMI) have agreed to support the Montessori Public School Consortium (MPSC) and the North American Montessori Teachers' Association (NAMTA) in developing this important conference.

The Denver public school district has a well established Montessori elementary school (Mitchell Montessori School) as well as a Montessori infant project called Family Star, which is a public/private collaboration. Dr. Martha Urioste, principal of Mitchell, welcomes conference participants and encourages all to explore the Denver plan for Montessori implementation in the public schools. ♦

AMERICA ONLINE: THE MONTESSORI BULLETIN BOARD

The Montessori Public School Consortium (MPSC) has been on-line for six months with a Montessori bulletin board located in both the Teachers' Information Network and the Parents' Information Network of *America Online*.

Now the Montessori connection is immediately accessible by typing the keyword *Montessori*.

During these six months, more than three hundred people have downloaded files from the Montessori library, indicating that probably many more have logged on to browse through such postings as descriptions of public Montessori schools, explanations of the Montessori method, and a brief history of Maria Montessori; to post messages about schools, training, and success stories; or to post questions.

If your school system is not already connected to *America Online*, inquiries can be made by calling

1-800-827-6364. ♦

RESHAPING EARLY CHILDHOOD INTERVENTION TO BE A MORE EFFECTIVE WEAPON AGAINST POVERTY

by Edward Zigler, PhD

In these excerpts from his speech for the November national public school conference in Kansas City, Dr. Zigler, one of the founders of Head Start, shares his vision of developmentally appropriate education.

Nearly thirty years ago the United States declared an all-out war against poverty, but it is a war we did not win. Over the years the enemy has become stronger, its victims more numerous, and its consequences more devastating. Today nearly one in every four children lives in poverty. Compared to the 1960s, the environments where they are raised include more homelessness, street violence, illegal drugs, and single-parent families; affordable health and child care services have become less accessible; and many schools in poor districts have become war zones rather than centers of learning. The AIDS crisis, which was nonexistent three decades ago, and the soaring incidence of prenatal drug exposure have jeopardized the futures of tens of thousands of children even before their births.

Although the face of poverty has grown uglier, most of the war's weapons have been blunted or dismantled. An exception is Project Head Start, still standing on a foundation of hope that poor children can learn to succeed and that their parents can be empowered to improve their own life chances. Since 1965 over thirteen million Head Start graduates have entered school healthier and better prepared to learn; their parents have acquired better child-rearing skills, become involved in their children's education, and many have gained job skills and employment through the program. These accomplishments have earned Head Start grassroots



support and zealous endorsement by policymakers. A common hope is that if the program is made available to all poor preschoolers, they will not grow up to be poor.

But Head Start did not end poverty in the 1960s, nor can it conquer the crueler circumstances of poverty that exist today. No single program, no matter how good, can overcome the need for decent housing, jobs that provide a living wage, safe neighborhoods, and positive role models. Head Start did show that it is possible to enhance the educational outcomes of poor children and to boost some aspects of their families' functioning, but these are small pieces of a solution to a multidimensional problem. Yet because it is a step in the right direction, its expansion is justified. Updated and improved, Head Start has the potential to become a more successful weapon against poverty.

Since Head Start began, the fields of early intervention, preschool education, and family support have blossomed and produced a wealth of knowledge that can help the program better meet the needs of today's economically disadvantaged population. The literature shows,

beyond a doubt that Head Start's basic concept, methodology, and goals are sound. That is, when young children receive comprehensive services, including physical and mental health care, nutrition, and a developmentally appropriate educational program, when their parents are involved in their activities, and when their families receive needed services and support, they do become more competent socially and academically. But the literature also shows that these services must be of high quality to achieve desired outcomes. There are almost 1,400 Head Start programs, and many of them are excellent. Others, however, are mediocre, and some are downright poor.

The project was conceived during a naive and optimistic era of developmental psychology. A common belief was that if children were only given the right experiences at the right time, they would develop into better human beings. Many actually believed that a few weeks of Head Start would inoculate children against the ill effects of poverty for the rest of their lives. These high hopes are still alive today in the enthusiasm surrounding expansion. The belief seems to be that if we can deliver a dose of Head Start to all poor four-year-olds, they will be immune to future failure.

The idiocy of the inoculation model is obvious. Poor children are still poor after they attend Head Start, and they are going to have a difficult time keeping up with more advantaged classmates in school. It is really not surprising that program graduates begin school with the readiness skills they need but soon fall behind. Some critics have argued that the program comes too late, that by the time a child is three or four years old development is

(Continued on Page 8)

RESHAPING EARLY CHILDHOOD INTERVENTION . . . CONTINUED

already marred by socio-economic deprivation. Others believe that because Head Start was meant to help poor children succeed in school, the intervention should be delivered during the school-age years. Experimentation within Head Start has proven both sides to be right.

The net result of all of these efforts has been to shape a new approach to early intervention that embraces the consecutive stages of child development. We have come to realize that a year or two of preschool cannot turn children into geniuses or forever free them from poverty. Instead we must give a long-term commitment to at-risk children throughout their growing years. The time between birth and age three is a period of rapid growth that lays the physical and socio-emotional foundations for all later development, including the capacity to benefit from preschool. And the advantages derived from preschool can be quickly lost without a smooth transition to a school environment that builds upon previous gains.

These insights form the cumulative contribution of the Head Start experiment. We now know what quality components are necessary to build successful interventions. We know that with very high-risk groups in particular, services must be delivered for a long enough period of time to impart meaningful benefits. The time has come to put this wisdom to use. We must develop a zero to three Head Start. For preschoolers, we must offer a bigger, better Head Start program. And the Head Start Transition Project must be available to all Head Start graduates in the early grades of school.

I have been working with the Carnegie Task Force on Meeting the Needs of Young Children to advise the Clinton Administration on planning a zero to three Head Start. The original Head Start program was developed by a committee of fourteen scholars from a variety of disciplines, a mix that gave Head Start the comprehensiveness that is its strength. I recommend that a similar committee be called to design the new zero to three effort.

One lesson we learned is that it is unwise to begin very quickly and on a large scale. The new program must be more carefully developed and should be tried out as a pilot project.

Such an approach is embodied in the new Head Start Transition Project, which is currently in the demonstration phase. The program begins at the time of transition from Head Start to the school environment and lasts through grade three. The project is soundly based on the knowledge accumulated in the early intervention field: It contains all the elements known to characterize effective programs. Comprehensive services will be continued for four years beyond Head Start, giving children more protection against common health and social problems that can interfere with learning. Also to be continued is Head Start's individualized and developmentally appropriate program. Preschool and school educators will be required to coordinate their curricula and pedagogies, making the two school experiences less fragmented for young learners. Parental involvement is assured because, as in Head Start, each Transition grantee must have a plan for including parents in the design, management, and operation of the program. Finally, family services coordinators will

work to assure that each child's family receives the support services they need for the full four years of transition.

A small but convincing body of evidence indicates that the Transition Project should be a success. Longitudinal studies of children who attended both early childhood and dovetailed school-age programs in the Abecedarian Project, the Chicago Child-Parent Centers, the New Haven Follow Through, the Deutschs' early enrichment program, and Success for All show that continuing intervention into the early grades can give poor children the footing they need to succeed in school. Once the transition demonstration programs are evaluated, it will be compelling to move the project into the educational mainstream where its potential can be realized nationwide.

We already have the knowledge and many of the human resources needed to build this early childhood intervention system. By making better use of current federal expenditures in this area, we can also supply some of the financial resources. Of course, to give access to all disadvantaged children in need of intervention, further outlays from tax coffers will be required. At a time of a deficit crisis, these added expenses may seem out of the question. Yet if we think of them as an investment in human capital, they are not difficult to justify. Preventive services are less costly than remedial ones. Children who begin life healthy and acquire the skills and motivation to learn have a good chance of learning. As they grow to become contributing members of the society, the small investment made in their early years will have compounded to reap a handsome dividend. ♦

update

MPSC

inside . . .

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May 1994

REPORTS FROM THE FIELD

CINCINNATI • DENVER

TALES OF TWO MONTESSORI CITIES

DENVER'S MONTESSORI VISION

by Dr. Martha Urioste

Dr. Urioste, principal of Maria Mitchell Montessori School in the Denver Public Schools, presented this talk at the MPSC conference in Kansas City, Missouri, in November, 1993. Mitchell School will host the next MPSC conference, October 20-22, 1994, in Denver.

As a colleague and advocate of Montessori public schools for the twenty-first century, I believe we are at a critical point in time and history when you and I—we—all of us—must come together to enthusiastically project to others that we care deeply about the intellectual, physical, emotional, and spiritual welfare of our children and students.

By the year 2000, our aging population will be substantial, and our minority populations in the United States will have surpassed 48 million Hispanics and 40 million African Americans. In addition, fifty percent of the Hispanic population will be eighteen years of age and under. These trends suggest a growing imbalance between an aging Caucasian population and a youthful minority population. Our current and future Montessori middle schools will therefore of necessity connect with our elders through



Biology—Elementary level Mitchell Montessori School, Denver

service education and project models. This commitment to the future has already begun in many locations.

Recent Washington DC findings indicate that the child 0-3 is in a quiet crisis. We must hold fast to the deep knowledge that Montessori education from birth through age 24 will help us to improve multicultural understanding, reduce dropout rates and drug use, and make a huge impact on gang mentality and values.

As Montessori education takes on a life of its own, increased numbers of people will want to receive new knowledge in order to replicate in remote locations. This will call for a grass-roots revolution in training and an increased need to maintain quality.

(Continued on Page 2)

CINCINNATI: A GROWING OPPORTUNITY

In 1974, the Cincinnati chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People filed the second of two lawsuits leading to desegregation of the Cincinnati Public Schools. This action, focusing on alternatives for the children of Cincinnati, brought about the establishment of a Montessori public school which attracted children from throughout the city.

Now, twenty years later, the Cincinnati Montessori program, which has received merit recognition from the school system and the city, is thriving and growing. Due to high demand, the program has expanded to three elementary schools, and a fourth is planned to open in the fall of 1994. In addition, a Montessori middle school will open in the fall at a separate location with seventy students and seven teachers. Cincinnati's public Montessori program has been supported by the nearby Xavier University Montessori Teacher Education program, affiliated with the American Montessori Society.

The three current principals are all excited about their programs. Rita Swegman of Sands Montessori states that the Montessori program probably has the greatest parent involvement in the district. Tom

(Continued on Page 4)

DENVER'S MONTESSORI VISION (CONTINUED)

Our Montessori public schools must hold fast to David Kahn's Ten Steps to Montessori Implementation¹: "Montessori cannot be done piecemeal. . . . Full program benefits can only be achieved if the dynamic of the total program is understood by a Montessori-trained teaching staff that shares a common educational philosophy."

A Collective Vision

Involving parents and community through a collaborative decision-making process as we do in Denver will be the way we can increase our pool of volunteers to help us implement what we have envisioned and begun. Our collective vision and mission will drive the basic school design.

With continued insistence on the development of a quality program, we will be able to develop the community of learners who will become the "Beacon of the West." In fact, many "beacons" will begin to interact with us as we link ourselves through the use of computer technology. In the not-too-far-distant future, we could realize our "School of the Air" theme, having our children travel from Montessori school to school nationally and internationally.

Many thoughts and ideas, once verbalized through collective vision, take on new forms which are often more creative and successful than the original thoughts and ideas. Following are some examples of this synergy of collective vision at work at Mitchell Montessori School and the Family Star infant/toddler program.

Mitchell's Successes

Our original community garden project, initiated by Paul Biwer, has now been expanded by the relationship we have established with the Botanical Gardens and our own botanical garden volunteer, George Brinkman.

Our link with the Botanical Gardens and George Brinkman, coupled with our development of a science lab at Mitchell and our focus on environmental education, has brought us an Eco-Habitat grant to create "Mitchell's Secret Garden." This type of project would have been unheard of on the grounds of Denver Public Schools ten years ago.

Our original vision for the acquired empty lot across the street from Mitchell was for our school and

Family Star to purchase a biodome for environmental projects. Our first steps toward developing the outdoor environment are a grant from the Keep the Lights Foundation to build a 0-3 playground and a Junior League project to install water, purchase a chain-link fence, and develop a community garden of twenty-eight garden beds for vegetables and flowers.

Montessori Expansion

In 1985-86, we declared our intention to expand Mitchell's existing preschool and elementary programs into a full-spectrum Montessori program, from infancy to adolescence. Through corporate sponsorship by the United Airlines training center, we have forged a

(Continued on Page 3)

WHAT IS MPSC?

The Montessori Public School Consortium is a collaborative venture of the Association Montessori Internationale (AMI), the American Montessori Society (AMS), the North American Montessori Teachers' Association (NAMTA), and Nienhuis, Inc., under the auspices of Montessori Development Partnerships, Inc. Partial funding is provided by the Hershey Foundation. The consortium is intended to provide a Montessori resource, information, and research documentation center for Montessori public schools. This newsletter is one of its outreaches.

WHAT IS AMI?

The Association Montessori Internationale (AMI) was established in 1929 by Dr. Maria Montessori and was guided for more than fifty years by her son and close collaborator, Mario M. Montessori. AMI's objective is to uphold and safeguard the quality of Montessori training and the passing on of Maria Montessori's heritage through her educational philosophy and methodology including the materials and their presentation.

WHAT IS AMS?

The American Montessori Society (AMS) is a nonprofit education society founded in 1960 whose purpose is to help children develop their fullest potential through the educational principles of Dr. Maria Montessori. This includes the following: developing Montessori programs, accrediting schools, granting credentials, encouraging research, organizing seminars and symposia, and all other areas which relate to the dissemination of Montessori philosophy.

¹Available from MPSC in the free publication *Montessori in the Public Schools: Implementation Basics*.

DENVER'S MONTESSORI VISION (CONTINUED)

link with Family Star, a private 0-3 program, so that three-year-olds are entering Mitchell ready to learn. In addition, we now have a pioneer adolescent class attending the public Montessori program at Cove Middle School.

We continue to envision our own middle school across the street from Mitchell. We also dream of a Montessori University of Peace or a Montessori United Nations University in what would eventually be an eight-block educational campus in the Mitchell-Family Star neighborhood. These dreams, idealistic as they may seem, are no more unrealistic than what we have already done to take this neighborhood out of the hands of gangs, drug dealers, and prostitutes.

Since the beginning of our program, we have declared the need for four more Montessori public schools in Denver. It may well be that the next Montessori public schools will be in the Denver metro area, with Boulder, Colorado, taking the lead. Three other Denver metro area groups have initiated plans using the charter school movement as an opening toward this reality. The United Way Mile High Child Care Agency has embraced the vision of developing Montessori programs in its day-cares as monies are available. Mile High and the Denver Public Schools are collaborating to maintain two Colorado Preschool Project Montessori programs, one of them located two blocks from Mitchell.

The Denver Public Schools Board of Education has voted six to one to support the importance of "front-loading" education. This concept could eventually provide added staffing allocations for all classrooms K-5 at a twenty-to-one ratio. State legislators are beginning to

MPSC 1994 Conference The Montessori Learning Community

Denver, Colorado
October 20-22, 1994

Watch your mail for details!

realize that early childhood education is a must if we are going to continue to enjoy the quality of life we have in Denver and in all of Colorado. In the meantime, Mitchell Montessori School continues to hold fast to maintain a quality model, and large numbers of parents continue to place their children on the waiting list though the only form of publicity is word of mouth.

Local and International Connections

Family Star originally envisioned inclusion of the elderly in our 0-3 model. As a step in that direction, the U.S. West Telephone Pioneers (retired employees of the U.S. West Telephone Company) have adopted Family Star and initiated a grocery coupon campaign. Proceeds from this project are used to provide scholarships for children from our neighborhood to enter Family Star.

Our vision of international linkage has occurred as a result of a project sponsored by Metropolitan State College and the American Water Works Association (a Water for People organization). Engineers from Bluefield, Nicaragua, have visited Family Star to observe the building of a five-foot tank which will hold clear rain water and keep it free from contamination. This water will be used for the community garden, fetched by our Family Star toddlers and children at Mitchell.

This project, now being replicated in Bluefield, Nicaragua, is one of ten in the world. An immediate connection with Bluefield could take place via fax and/or computer technology, if not travel.

The Montessori Vision and the Future

The Montessori vision is what each of us is able to articulate within the context of the Montessori writings. Individually and collectively, we are all bringing forth the Montessori vision throughout the country and the world.

Maria Mitchell School was named after a well-known astronomer from the East Coast who came to Denver to gaze at the stars in the early 1900s. Now, we are told that we are about to embark on the greatest adventure humanity has ever experienced—space exploration. We are told that our meta-universe contains one trillion galaxies, each containing 100 billion to 400 billion stars. We can only marvel at the importance of the foundation of cosmic education for our Montessori children and the sweeping outcomes and results from this legacy.

And what of the Montessori children who decide not to engage in space travel? Perhaps they will be able to respond to the knocking of Mother Nature at our door. The signals are getting increasingly louder: floods, fires, earthquakes, ozone depletion, whales beaching themselves. Will these children be the ones to "clean up" the planet?

We are at the crossroads of restructuring and recreating the bridge into the twenty-first century. We are preparing to launch our children into an exciting cosmic journey, and we also have the potential to recreate paradise on Earth. ♦

CINCINNATI: A GROWING OPPORTUNITY (CONTINUED)

Rothwell of North Avondale Montessori is convinced that children become more confident and independent in the Montessori classroom. And Shirley Stephens of Carlson Montessori, as the newest principal, appreciates the support shown among the three schools. The principals get together at a monthly breakfast to share news and concerns.

Montessori teacher Marta Donahoe states that the middle school will be an experiment where the students will stay with the same team of teachers for two years. Along

with interdisciplinary academic work, students will benefit from "land-based" education on farmland adjacent to the school building and owned by the district. A flexible schedule will facilitate the farm experience as well as other real-work experiences which will provide an opportunity to earn.

The public Montessori initiative in Cincinnati is important on a national level for several reasons. First, its unfolding reveals how growth can take place in public Montessori schools which have very modest beginnings. A related story in this

issue gives an in-depth profile of one area of this growth, the Sands Montessori Primary program for three- to five-year-olds.

Second, according to Cincinnati school officials, the Montessori approach is one of the most effective in the city. It successfully integrates children from all thirty-six communities of Cincinnati to learn through an internationally based curriculum. It is also a program of strong academic achievement, according to Dr. Stephanie Morton, principal of the new middle school. Speaking at a parent evening for those interested in the middle school, Dr. Morton cited the Montessori children's high placement when compared to children in other city elementary schools.

Third, Cincinnati has launched a system-wide effort at school reform. The multi-faceted approach aims to boost academic achievement through bringing together teachers, administrators, and parents to work toward common goals. Magnet schools reflecting diverse educational models (including Montessori) are seen by the district as a significant component of the reform effort.

Finally, Cincinnati is important nationally because it shows us a working model of public-private collaboration, involving financial contributions from the business community, private foundations, local organizations, and neighborhood groups. This community-based support has resulted in growth, which translates into improvements in the lives of the city's children and families.

Cincinnati deserves to share its story with those around the country who are working to develop public Montessori schools. The Cincinnati Montessori program is well worth a visit. ♦

CINCINNATI'S SANDS MONTESSORI PRIMARY PROGRAM FOR THREE- TO FIVE-YEAR-OLDS

In 1986, Sandra Sommer gathered together parents and community members intent on developing a preschool for Cincinnati's Sands Montessori School, of which Ms. Sommer was principal. At that time, the school started at the traditional kindergarten level and had classes for six- to nine-year-olds and nine- to twelve-year-olds.

The goal was to open the preschool in the fall of 1987 with forty students, twenty in the morning session and twenty in the afternoon. The students would come from throughout the city, half of them from low-income families and the other half paying tuition. These forty students would bring the school population to 730.

The Sands Montessori West End Preschool Committee, as this group came to be called, received start-up grants from local corporations and the city government. Immediately, there were waiting lists for students, so it was decided to convert an end of the lower level of the building into two additional classrooms. Start-up funds, architectural work, and scholarship funds for the expansion were all donated, and matching grants totaling \$76,000 were awarded by several foundations.

In 1993, the preschool program established a contract with the Hamilton County Department of Human Services to act as a child-care provider. This contract will provide funding for low-income families to enroll their children. In 1994, the Greater Cincinnati Foundation donated \$10,000 to provide additional scholarship money.

These accomplishments came about through numerous community meetings, school board meetings, administrative meetings, buildings and grounds meetings, proposals, and fundraisers over a period of several years. This short history shows what is possible when individuals strive to further the implementation of Montessori programs. ♦

NEWS BRIEFS

REXFORD BROWN TO KEYNOTE MPSC CONFERENCE IN DENVER



Rexford Brown

Rexford Brown, Senior Fellow of the Education Commission of the States, will be the keynote speaker at the public Montessori conference sponsored by the Montessori Public School Consortium in Denver, Colorado, October 20-22, 1994. The theme of the conference will be "The Montessori Learning Community."

Dr. Brown is a prominent policy analyst and director of a million-dollar project called "Policy and Higher Literacies," funded by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. A leader in the national school reform movement, he has consistently praised Montessori as a reform approach. His latest project is the design and documentation of a school charter for Denver's urban Public School 1. The proposal for this project begins with this definition: "A learning community is just what it sounds like: a place where people learn together in ways that

CONSUMER REPORT: ESPECIALLY FOR PUBLIC SECTOR

On April 23-24, the North American Montessori Teachers' Association (NAMTA) brought five evaluators to Cleveland to review manufactured Montessori materials from Kaybee, Gonzagarredi, and Nienhuis. Over eighty items were evaluated based on pedagogical correctness, durability, quality of construction (including exactness of scale), and printing consistency and accuracy. A report on the evaluation will be issued in the 1994-95 school year.

Directed by Dr. Jean Miller, Montessori Elementary Coordinator for the District of Columbia Public Schools, evaluators measured, weighed, and compared each set of corresponding apparatus. "One is amazed by the differences," said Dr. Miller. "It is important to understand that each manufacturer has pros and cons, as well as to consider internal consistency."

One aim of the project is to support the manufacturers who want professional feedback on how to maintain standards. The report will also make recommendations to schools concerning what is interchangeable and what needs to be consistently ordered in a certain line of materials. "Our purpose is to provide some guidelines—especially to public schools—that are not based simply on price but on the quality and consistency of the materials," said David Kahn, Executive Director of NAMTA.

The Materials Company of Boston and Montessori Requisites declined to participate in the study. ♦



Dr. Jean Miller and AMI trainer Kay Baker

build a sense of community, of common sharing and conversation about what really matters to them."

Hosting the conference will be Mitchell Montessori School, Denver's public Montessori magnet school. Mitchell's faculty has organized both a middle school and an infant program with the help of parents and support from the district. Its principal, Martha Urioste, provides leadership through her "Mitchell Plaza" vision of a unified community outreach sustaining all levels of

Montessori education—from infancy through adolescence (see her article on page 1).

This conference will open a dialogue among Montessorians about the role of community, family, and educator. It will explore the needs of the central city school, Montessori applications for the child at risk, Montessori program supervision in public settings, parent education and involvement, and community as an essential part of learning effectiveness. ♦

NEWS BRIEFS

FOUR OHIO DISTRICTS POOL RESOURCES FOR MONTESSORI

A new funds development approach used for implementing Montessori in the public sector is being modeled in Stark County, Ohio. At least four and possibly six districts will pool resources to sponsor one Montessori school. School boards and unions of these four districts have already approved the agreement: Canton Local, Lake Local, North Canton City, and Plain Local Schools. Canton City and Jackson Township Schools are seriously considering joining the project. Districts will share capital costs and teacher candidates. Montessori alternative pedagogy and the collaborative nature of the project have already attracted half a million dollars from private funders. The proposal design was prepared by Montessori Development Partnerships of Cleveland. ♦

NATIONAL MONTESSORI HEAD START CLEARINGHOUSE

The Marotta Montessori Schools of Cleveland, in cooperation with Montessori Development Partnerships, has recently announced the opening of the National Montessori Head Start Clearinghouse, a center for technical support, documentation, and consultation. The Clearinghouse aims to increase the number of quality Montessori Head Start programs for American children by sharing the expertise of the Marotta schools and other successful models



throughout the United States. Membership benefits will include telephone support, a newsletter, access to operational data on existing Montessori Head Start programs, and discounts on seminars and publications.

The Clearinghouse is set to open September 1, 1994. For information on membership, write to The National Montessori Head Start Clearinghouse, 11404 Lakeshore Boulevard, Cleveland, Ohio, 44108, or call (216) 851-4751. ♦

MONTESSORI ASSESSMENT

Montessori Development Partnerships is devising a national plan for evaluating Montessori programs in the public sector using Montessori criteria rather than district-mandated assessment, which sometimes bears little relationship to curriculum and instruction. Particular interest is emerging from the Kansas City and Cincinnati districts to collaborate on a national review of Montessori-appropriate assessment instruments. ♦

MPSC, AMI PRODUCE START-UP BROCHURE

At the request of the Association Montessori Internationale, MPSC collaborated on a "do-it-yourself" brochure which provides public school administrators with Montessori "start-up" information. The brochure tells prospective Montessori districts whom to contact in the Montessori public school field and how to contact the training organization. The aim is to encourage informed "start-ups" so that districts can make decisions based on sound Montessori programming and apart from commercial interests. ♦

THE MONTESSORI ADOLESCENT PROJECT (MAP)

Montessori Development Partnerships has sponsored a preliminary survey of Montessori adolescent programs in North America. The results will be available this summer, along with interpretive commentary by project director John Long, a Montessori middle school teacher with ten years' experience. The next step will be to explore some Montessori programs in-depth and build a series of case studies with an overview suggesting what are key Montessori experiences for adolescents. ♦

MPSC

update

Editors

Tim Duax
David Kahn
Renee Pendleton

Layout & Typesetting

Amy Losasso

For more information contact:

Montessori Public School Consortium
11424 Bellflower Road NE
Cleveland, Ohio 44106

Phone: 216 • 421 • 1905

Fax: 216 • 421 • 8193

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