

2019-2020 Salem Montessori School Board of Directors

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Mission Statement:

Salem Montessori School provides a joyful, collaborative learning environment that supports the natural development of the young child and honors his/her desire for independence and innovation.

Core Values:

At SMS, a Christian school that welcomes all, our core values are to

- Support the natural development of the young child.
- Honor the child's desire for independence and innovation.
- Provide a joyful learning environment.
- Encourage collaboration between teachers, parents, and children.
- Respect the child's right to learn at his/her own pace.
- Create classroom settings that foster a lifelong love of learning.



October 16, 2019

Dear Salem Montessori Community,

It is with great excitement that I share some impactful news about the future of Salem Montessori School. The Board has voted to expand SMS into Elementary grades for the 2020-2021 school year. This topic has been explored for many years by the Board and we now find ourselves uniquely positioned to grow. With the leadership of our Head of School, Julie Smith, and her experience growing elementary programs at previous schools, our Assistant Head of School, Catherine Greene, and her tenure and experience with SMS's culture, and the strength of our current Board of Directors, we feel confident that this is the right time to prudently grow our offerings.

It began with a simple idea: *"SMS offers such a magical educational experience for young children; why does it have to end at age 6?"* We are delighted to be able to answer that question with a resounding, *"It doesn't!"*

As much educational research has shown and you have likely witnessed firsthand, Montessori classrooms nurture curiosity, intrinsic motivation, and genuine love of learning in children. We know our teachers facilitate this sense of wonder every day at SMS, and we are excited to grow the age group of children eligible to attend our school!

We know that you have many questions, and we hope to answer all of those questions for you at our SMS Community meeting on **October 24th at 6:00 pm** in the Parlor at SMS. We encourage ALL SMS community members, regardless of the age of your children, to attend to learn more about this elementary program. In the meantime, here are the answers to a few salient questions:

What grade levels will be offered in 2020-2021? For the first year, we will offer one classroom serving K-2. All grade levels within that range are welcome to apply, as it will be a multi-age classroom in the typical Montessori model. The school, and the classrooms, will grow as the children age up, and we will eventually have two classrooms: younger elementary and older elementary, ending with grade 5.

Where will the elementary program be located? We are delighted to partner with Salem Academy and College for the Elementary School at SMS. The elementary classrooms will be located immediately across the parking lot (and drop off lane) in the lower level of the Salem College Fine Arts Center. The school will share the SMS Playground (during different hours) and have access to Old Salem (as we already do) as well as some of the amenities of Salem Academy and College.

What will the school hours be? The school hours will be 8:45 am to 2:30 pm. We hope to also offer an optional after-school enrichment program, pending availability and demand.

What is the cost of the program? We are offering an early enrollment discount of 10%, bringing the tuition down to \$7,650 (which may be paid in installments of \$637.50 per month for 12 months) for families who submit their applications before December 15th. More information on the early enrollment discount to come. The full year tuition for Regular Application to the Elementary program will be \$8,500, regardless of grade level, also available as a monthly pay option.

How many students will you admit for the first year? We will limit the first year to 15 students, as we need room to add additional students in subsequent years. There will be an admission process, and **all** interested families will be asked to submit an application. Priority will be given to existing SMS families and alumni families.

What additional resources will be available to students? The students will have a music teacher and Spanish will be a part of the curriculum. Art will continue to be a regular part of the curriculum and the students will participate in various outdoor activities, much as they do in the preschool.

We are thrilled to share more information about the Salem Montessori School Elementary Program in the coming days, and since spaces are quite limited in the first year, we will begin accepting applications immediately. You may locate the elementary application process on our website www.salem-montessori.org.

“If education is always to be conceived along the same antiquated lines of a mere transmission of knowledge, there is little to be hoped from it in the bettering of man’s future. For what is the use of transmitting knowledge if the individual’s total development lags behind?”

--Maria Montessori

Education is so much more than the transmission of knowledge; at Salem Montessori School, we nurture the development of the whole child. As a community, we look forward to building something special together and hope that you will consider being a part of our **pioneering first class of elementary SMS students!**

Sincerely,

JoAnn White
SMS Board Chair