

Montessori Program in SMFCSD

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District Montessori Team

- Nima Tahai, Principal of Parkside Montessori
- Dr. Rosemary Wood, Principal of North Shoreview Montessori
- David Chambliss, Assistant Superintendent of Education Services
- Sarah Notch, Facilitator from the San Mateo County Office of Education
- Dr. Joan Rosas, Superintendent

History Snap Shot

- Opened at Meadow Heights in 1975
- Second site opened at Parkside in 1977
- Meadow Heights classes moved to Horrall circa 1988
- Horrall classes moved to NS in 1994 phasing in as a lottery-only magnet school
- Federal magnet grant received in 2005-07
- Fee based Preschool opened in 2006
- Middle school expansion began in 2008
- First 8th grade class graduated from NSM in 2011

Montessori Task Force Study and Recommendation in 2014

- Study undertaken to consider adding Montessori spaces in the San Mateo - Foster City School District as there was a waiting list for North Shoreview.
- The Montessori Task Force reviewed a variety of facilities options.
- The final Montessori Task Force recommendation was to establish an additional K-8 Montessori site at Parkside with joint staff development, joint student activities, a unified application process with shared wait list and shared parent activities including fundraising.

Work to Meet Recommendations

- Renovated Bayside Academy to handle elementary age students
- Moved Parkside Elementary School STEAM staff, students and families to Bayside Academy
- Established a whole school Montessori program at Parkside
- Updated the Montessori Middle Years program at NSM
- Explored options with St. Mary's for staff training

New Considerations

- Is the fee based pre-school priority equitable?
- Should there be a kindergarten entrance priority for the NS neighborhood?
- Where do Parkside Montessori 5th grade students go for a Middle Years program while growing? (Parkside Montessori will build its Middle Years Program for the rising 4th grade class.)
- Is the Middle Years programming at NSM meeting the needs of the students?
- Is the NSM Middle Years programming replicable?

Targeting the Questions

- How can we increase the diversity of the pre-school so that priority is more equitable?
- With the space limitations at NSM, how do we address the request for a neighborhood priority?
- Where do the Parkside 5th graders continue their education?
- Is the Middle Years program at NSM meeting the needs of the students at NSM?
- Will the NSM Middle Years model meet the needs of the Parkside Montessori Middle Years students?
- Are there programmatic changes that should be considered?
- Are there structural changes that should be considered?

Outreach Efforts

- Parkside Montessori Staff meeting
- North Shoreview Montessori Staff meeting
- Parkside Montessori Families meeting
- North Shoreview Montessori Families meeting
- North Shoreview HOA meeting
- Parkside neighborhood meeting - upcoming

Responses Collected Related to Structure and Program

- Would a different structure support a more robust program?
 - Predominately do not have the momentum to change the structure.
- Energy centered around maintaining the K-8 structure in all meetings, however, there are immediate needs/requests that were raised at this point in time:
 - Staffing
 - Middle Years Program for Parkside's 5th graders
 - Refinement and Replication of the Middle Years Program
 - District support to grow the program
 - Monitor equity with the pre-school priority including subsidized slots

Suggested Next Steps for the Program

- Maintain the existing K-8 structure at NSM and Parkside
- Explore moving interested 5th grade Parkside students to NSM next year
- Engage the 4th grade parents/students in planning for being the first Parkside Middle Years Class
- Work on needed aspects of a quality program

Quality Programming

- Create a cross Divisional District Office strategic plan for growing both programs - staffing, professional development, curriculum mapping, enrollment, facilities needs...
- (Staffing is the critical need area!)
- Further explore strategies, supports and partnerships with Montessori organizations - American Montessori Society, National Center for Montessori Public Sector...
- Further research top K-8 programs

Questions Asked Regarding Neighborhood Priority for North Shoreview

- What do you value about attending the K-8 NS Montessori program?
- What do you value about attending a neighborhood school?
- Would you still want to attend NS if it weren't a Montessori School?
- What is the priority set aside that you feel would work for your neighborhood?
- Are there other thoughts or considerations that you would like to share?

Response to Questions Regarding Montessori/Neighborhood

- With the exception of one tabletop that didn't feel that a Montessori program was of value, collectively the attendees appreciated and valued the Montessori program AND wanted to attend their neighborhood school. It wasn't an either/or answer.

Response to Neighborhood Set Aside

- Responses ranged from 100% to 25% with a general trend toward 50% of the K spaces being set aside for the neighborhood
- Additionally...there are presently three Priorities in the K class of 36:
 - 1 District employee who works at the site
 - 10 Siblings
 - 11 Pre-school
- Questions were raised about Priorities:
 - Why is there a Districtwide Employee Priority?
 - Is the Pre-school Priority equitable?
 - Could the highest Priority be the Neighborhood?
- Sibling Priority was understood.

Suggested Next Steps for Neighborhood Priority

- Determine neighborhood set aside
 - Recommend 12 K seats for the neighborhood
- Re-examine Pre-School Priority:
 - “Gap” support? Sliding scale
 - Placement and priority?

Questions?