

# From the Principal's Desk

By: Sarah Lord



SANDS MONTESSORI

## The Eagle's Nest

### Growth vs. Fixed Mindset

As parents, our words and actions have a tremendous impact on how our children perceive themselves. Our beliefs are communicated based upon a fixed or growth mindset and our mindset may be different depending on the topic or situation.

A fixed mindset conveys that intelligence is set at birth and seeks validation from external praise. A fixed mindset is a mind made up. It seeks validation of its thinking by external praise and assurances of inevitable failures. Many of us experience a fixed mindset when we try things that are difficult and have been difficult for a long time. For example, if you can never quite make that shot in basketball or get that soufflé to rise, you could begin to think those things will never happen for you and decide to stop or settle for less. A growth mindset believes that intelligence can be developed and views challenges as an opportunity to grow. It considers possibilities and is not easily discouraged. It also recognizes effort over ability. We possess each of these mindsets in varying circumstances. In our work with children, we strive to encourage children to

develop a growth mindset, to practice and learn from their practice. Most things are not learned in one sitting; they require multiple attempts. According to Carol Dweck, a professor at Stanford University, when students embrace a growth mindset, they achieve better in school because they believe their brain can grow smarter and they continually focus on improving their abilities. They value learning and perseverance rather than just performing well.

Students with a fixed mindset tend to avoid challenges because they are afraid of failure or hard work. They are more concerned with the perception of being smart.

This ties in nicely to Dr. Maria Montessori's belief that children thrive when they are intrinsically motivated to learn. Dr. Montessori designed the materials to be self-correcting. As children try and try again, they learn from their errors. They take the time to explore possibilities and solutions and consequently, enjoy the process of learning. Children in the are proud when they make new discoveries on their own.

Their choice and autonomy in the Montessori environment where learning is individualized and

sequential helps them learn to embrace challenges. They learn that their success is based upon their decisions and actions. Most things are not learned in one sitting but through multiple attempts.

Teachers continually help students link their new knowledge to the greater world and set goals based upon their progress. Likewise, as parents, we can help our children develop a growth mindset. Here a few strategies:

- ◆ Praise process and effort over the product. "Wow! You stuck with it!! Show me the strategy you used to develop that new skill!"
- ◆ Help your children learn from mistakes. Help them explore what they learned and how they can apply it moving forward.
- ◆ Help your children understand that their brain is like a muscle that can grow stronger every time they stretch to learn something new.
- ◆ Model that you value hard work, taking risks, moving out of the comfort zone, taking on challenges. Want to learn more?

Click here or visit For more information, [visit https://www.mindsetkit.org/growth-mindset-parents](https://www.mindsetkit.org/growth-mindset-parents)

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### *Stay & Play on Wednesdays*

All Sands Montessori families who have younger siblings are invited to join Stay & Play every Wednesday in the Parent Center (in the lobby area, across from the front office). The group meets after morning drop off, and play with new and returning friends until about 11:30 a.m. Participants are asked to take turns bringing a small healthy snack to share.

For more information, please contact Lisa Moreland at [lisamoreland3@yahoo.com](mailto:lisamoreland3@yahoo.com).

# SCHOOL GIFTED PROGRAM: SOAR (SCHOLARS OF ACADEMIC RIGOR)

## Gifted Testing

The first Gifted Testing cycle is complete. Students in 2<sup>nd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Grades took the Terra Nova and In-View tests in October. Some students in third, fourth, and fifth grades were re-screened using the Iowa Test of Basic Skills and/or the CogAT. Scores are now available to families on Power School. Official score reports have been sent home to families.

Using the results of the Terra Nova or Iowa Test of Basic Skills, students who score >94<sup>th</sup> percentile are identified gifted in the academic subject. From the In-View and CogAT assessments, students who score >127 are identified Superior Cognitive Gifted.

The next Gifted Referral Testing cycle is from January 17 through February 10, 2017. Second grade students who scored within the rescreening range, 90<sup>th</sup>-94<sup>th</sup> percentile in academics and/or 117-127 on the In-View, will have another opportunity to test. Students of any grade level may be referred for testing by a parent or teacher. Contact Ms. Delaney for a Gifted Referral Testing Form.

**Chess for Recess is back!** During

recess times in December and January, students are invited to join in the fun... Chess for Recess. We welcome all levels of players from the beginner to the experienced. 6-9 students meet Fridays: December 2<sup>nd</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup>, January 6<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, & 27<sup>th</sup>. 9-12 students meet Thursdays: December 1<sup>st</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> and January 5<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup>. In fact, we love having students who are just starting out. **Our motto: Every pawn is a potential**



**queen.** Queen of Katwe is a major motion picture (PG) about a Ugandan girl whose life is changed through her discovery of Chess. This movie is a must see!

**Chess Set Lending Library**-Would your family like to borrow a chess set? Along with a chess board and 34 pieces, the bag will include directions for playing

chess and at least two interesting chess problems. If you would like to borrow a Chess Set simply write a note or e-mail [delanea@cpsboe.k12.org](mailto:delanea@cpsboe.k12.org).

**WatchWriteNow Film Club**-On November 2<sup>nd</sup>, twenty-five 6<sup>th</sup> grade students joined the Sands Montessori WatchWriteNow Afterschool Film Club. The Wednesday afterschool club is directed by Mr. T. T. Stern-Enzi, regional film critic. Sixth graders will watch films, including shorts, and then share their critiques. In this, our second year, students have the opportunity to be a part of the club through the end of the school year. On the first day, they excitedly received their Film Journals and explored the guiding question, "What does it mean to be modern?" There is room for more 6<sup>th</sup> graders. So, encourage your sixth grader to give it a try.

If you have questions or comments please contact Annette Delaney, Sands Montessori Gifted Intervention Specialist-[deanea@cpsboe.k12.oh.us](mailto:deanea@cpsboe.k12.oh.us) or 513-363-5022.



The January SMPO Meeting will be **Tuesday, January 17th, at 7 p.m.** in the Media Center.

Everyone is invited and encouraged to attend!!



## December 5th-15th

Donate one or more pairs of new socks to be donated for shelters. Socks can be of any size or colors. Socks are one of the most requested items at homeless shelters. Let's show our love

by giving some socks.

There will be collection boxes outside the office. Sands Montessori Art students will be working on tags to tie to the pairs of socks. This is an easy way to give to the community!

## 3-6 Rooms

In the 3-6 year old classrooms at Sands Montessori, grace and courtesy is practiced every day. Maria Montessori said that children thrive off of order. Grace and courtesy is a part of this order within the Montessori environment. Practicing grace and courtesy provides the children with specific vocabulary to use and actions that allow them to build empathy and awareness for what is occurring around them. In our classrooms, we focus on respect for one another, building empathy and mediating problems that children may face daily. These actions exemplify what “grace and courtesy” means in the Montessori environment. One of the 3-6 year old classrooms practices acknowledgements each day. The children must speak



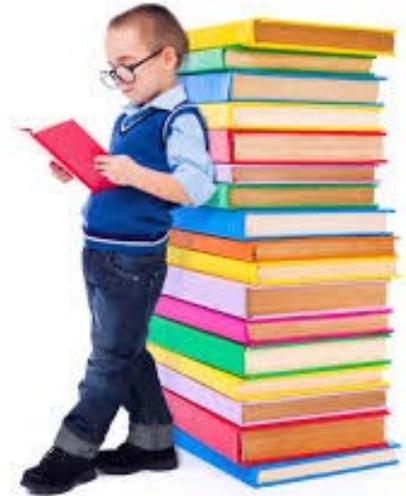
about a kind, positive or respectful action that a child did during the school day. In all classrooms, there is also constant mediation between children. Teachers may provide the children with positive words to assist them in problem solving through their conflict to come to a resolution and they may also encourage children attempt to solve their concerns independently. Grace and courtesy lessons do not always have to be impromptu. Teachers may plan specific grace and courtesy lessons based on what may be beneficial for the children. For example, teachers can practice skits to model how children can ask a teacher for help or how to respond to children when their feelings get hurt. Kindergarten children can complete writing activities that involve creating a conversation regarding what it means to be courteous in the classroom. Grace and courtesy lessons empower children to be self-aware, empathetic and independent.—Abbie Fox

## Book Fair a big SUCCESS

Thank you all of you for supporting the book fair in November. I am so grateful to be part of a community that appreciates not only the importance of reading but also the educational interests of children.

Thanks to you, we were only a few dollars shy of selling \$15,000 worth of merchandise. As a result, the library will receive more than \$8,000 Scholastic Dollars that will be used to augment the Sands Media Center collection. Scholastic has a wide range of books, audiobooks, makerspace components, and miscellaneous library

supplies which to choose from. I can't wait to see what resources we'll be able to provide for the students and teachers because of your generosity.— Robyn Appino



## 6-9 LEVEL FOCUS

The 6-9 Team continues to grow a THRIVING community of learners. All teachers are working to make sure all students are actively engaged in class activities and celebrating learning. Our quarterly theme is Human Nature. Students have defined Human Nature as the most common ways of thinking, reacting,

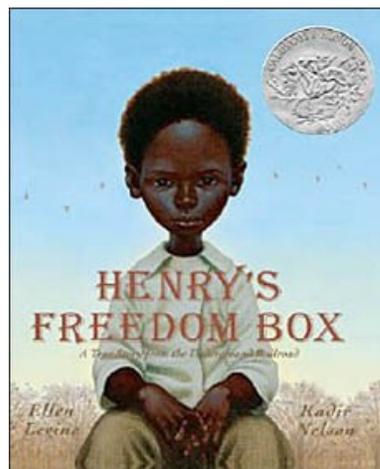
and acting amongst the majority of humans. Classrooms are connecting literature to this theme. Students are reading, writing opinion pieces, working on community in each environment to help show their understanding of this broad concept.

Henry's Freedom Box was one text used to look closely at relationships.

Many communities are also using novel sets and our very own Journeys trade-books to help make connections.

Communities are also building empathy and understanding by showcasing Holidays and Stories from around the world. The key to understanding one another is to first stop and learn from one another. This is exciting work in the Montessori 6-9 community.

Next quarter our team will focus on Independence and “What skills must an individual have in order to be independent?”



# Mindfulness Strength Training-Beech Acres

"Mindfulness isn't difficult, we just need to remember to do it." - Sharon Salzberg

Isn't that the truth! And at Sands Montessori we believe in the power of mindfulness and all the positivity that can come with those lessons. For the second year, we partnered with Beech Acres Parenting Center and Children, Inc. to bring *Mindfulness Strength Practice in the Classroom* to our school.

We kicked off our Kindness Week with City Silence and a classical music piece from Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra. All grades sat quietly with their hands on their laps and feet on the floor. After the full school assembly, the children were divided into groups to hear a book on kindness and share the acts they commit to making over the coming weeks. In early October, City Silence came back for a night with parents!

While the teachers have been reinforcing Mindfulness & Kindness in the classroom through the tips & activities from *Mindful Strength Practice in the Classroom*, we encourage you to also engage at home. Attached please find a flyer sharing the connection between Mindfulness & Kindness.

What's next? The next unit, Gratitude & Love, will be shared with our teachers in December. Be sure to ask your children about these amazing character strengths and praise them when you see them in action!



**MINDFUL STRENGTH  
PRACTICE  
FOR PARENTS™**

**It starts with being mindful in your moments with your child.**

### The Science Behind the Research: Regular Mindfulness Practice Positively Effects Brain Chemistry

- Improves mental health, physical health and wellbeing
- Reduces worries, reactivity
- Improvements in working memory, attention, academic skills, social skills, emotion regulation and self esteem

#### What is being mindful?

"Mindfulness means to pay attention in a particular way- on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally" (Kabot-Zinn, 1994).



### What is the link between Mindfulness & the Character Strength, Kindness?

Helping a child hold a positive moment long enough for it to be held in their memory is reinforced by naming the character strength used in that moment.

### How can you cultivate the Character Strength, Kindness?

- Encourage hand writing thank you notes or pictures
- Encourage family members to only speak positively about other people
- Make an effort to say hello to everyone you see



Sources: psychologyfoundation.org, beststart.org, garrisoninstitute.org, goodandbeautiful.org, Center on the Developing Child, Harvard University, The World's Brain: Reflection & Assessment in the Cultivation of Well-Being, Daniel J. Siegel, Giving Leads to Happiness in Young Children (2002, Alvin, Harbin, Dunn) (indianmfg.gov)

## Yearbook Photos Needed

There are so many clubs/events/groups/teams in which a lot of Sands students are lucky to be able to participate. I would like to be able to include as many as I can in the yearbook. Your help is greatly appreciated so no group is left out. Please use the following information to send pics to me that can be used in the yearbook.

<https://community.lifetouch.com/>

Community Image Upload Site Access Code: NJKFKN

This will hold 84 images until I create individual image libraries for separate clubs/events/groups. My school email is [sandslr@cpsboe.k12.oh.us](mailto:sandslr@cpsboe.k12.oh.us)

If you upload images, please email me so that I can keep images moving and as much open space for new photos to be considered for the yearbook. Please be selective with your submissions and make sure they are taken using at least a 5mp camera. I have a wonderful group of students participating in yearbook that are out and about taking pics almost daily, putting those cameras that the SMPO purchased for us to good use. They are very excited to be using our own cameras this year and cannot wait to start putting the yearbook together. Thank you in advance for your help—Stephanie Neal

## Order a Yearbook

It's been a great school year so far and we've been capturing fun memories for the yearbook. Don't miss out on all the events that happened at Sands Montessori Elem School- pre-order your yearbook today at [ybpay.lifetouch.com](http://ybpay.lifetouch.com) using our school's Yearbook ID code (3590217) and your student's name.



# Intervention Team News

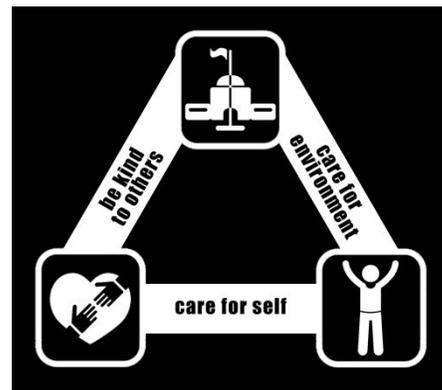
One of the responsibilities of the intervention team is to support teachers with behavioral needs related to student performance across all environments. We collaborate with staff members to understand the function of each behavior and offer strategies, tools and methods of data collection to ensure a reduction in or elimination of behaviors that negatively impact steady academic progress. As the intervention team leader, I represent our team on the Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) Committee. As a group, we are charged with reviewing building-wide referral data and working to determine what the areas of greatest need are. This is a Cincinnati Public Schools initiative that focuses on the whole child and social-emotional learning as part of the Positive School Culture (PSC) plan.

The work of the PBIS Committee addresses the following core components: Select and define expectations & routines, teach behaviors and routines directly,

actively monitor behavior, acknowledge appropriate behavior, review data to make decisions and correct behavioral errors.

After consulting with their teams, committee members from each grade band, in collaboration with specialists, have chosen to focus on these 3 key behavioral expectations at Sands Montessori: **Care for self, Care for environment, and Be kind to others.** You may have heard your child use these phrases at home or been in the building when they are chorused over the morning announcements. As our staff continues to teach these components of social-emotional learning through explicit lessons and daily experiences, we encourage you to reinforce these expectations at home by engaging in discussions about how they present themselves in your routines. You will see this logo posted throughout the school

building and should hear these universal terms being used to redirect and reinforce student behavior at all grade levels. We have chosen to use the triangle to



display these key behavioral expectations because embodying them is the combined work of the parents, child and teacher. As Maria Montessori said, *“We shall walk together on this path of life, for all things are part of the universe and are connected with each other to form one whole unity.”* -Tara Litmer

## Every Friday is SPIRIT Day!



Encourage your child to wear Red or Black to show school spirit. Sands spirit wear is available at many school sponsored activities and now online!

<https://squareup.com/store/sandsmontessori/>

## Winter Fest

THIS Saturday, December 10, 2016  
9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.  
\$6 per person; \$10 per person w/  
breakfast  
Ages 2 and under free

*Special Guest Zak Morgan performs  
10:00-10:45am*



# CAN YOU HELP?

Sands Student Council is sponsoring a wildfire fundraiser for families in Tennessee.

## SANDS MONTESSORI

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*Preparing Students  
For Life*

Visit our new website:

<http://sandsmontessori.cps-k12.org/>

Collection runs through December 15th - box outside office

- ◆ Canned/Boxed food
- ◆ Personal Hygiene Items
- ◆ Batteries
- ◆ Water, Energy Bars (be mindful of peanut allergies)
- ◆ New/gently used toys
- ◆ Baby items (diapers, clothes, food)
- ◆ Donations of Cash (no checks please)

## Girls on the Run gets moving!

This Fall, Sands Montessori girls in grades 3-6 were given the opportunity to participate in the Girls on the Run Program. GOTR is a program that encourages young girls ages 8-13 to "be joyful, healthy and confident using a fun, experience-based curriculum which creatively integrates running." As a boy-

accepted, but I had no idea just what a wonderful experience I was 'running' into.

On the day of the Cincinnati GOTR 5k, we saw some of the coldest weather we had seen to date this year. But despite the blustery winds, the impending snow/sleet/hail, the girls all showed up at Sawyer Point with smiles on their faces, brightly

had reached its culmination. The girls were determined to do their best.

That morning, not only did nearly 3,000 girls run in a blustery 5k (where the snow/sleet/hail did decide to grace us right as the race began), but they found in themselves a sense of accomplishment and success that I am sure will stay with them for time to come. -Sarah Fullen



mom, I unfortunately never really saw myself taking part in this program. That is until one of my former students asked me to be her running buddy for the end of season 5K race. Of course, I graciously

colored outfits and the tutus they had made at their party the Thursday before. They were excited and ready to run. Their season of hard work, practice, and learning