"We spend January 1st walking through our lives, room by room, drawing up a list of work to be done, cracks to be patched. Maybe this year, to balance the list, we ought to walk through the rooms of our lives, not looking for flaws, but for potential."

Ellen Goodman

Upcoming Dates

- Monday Jan 19  Martin Luther King Day, No School
- Wed January 28 6:30 pm Parent Education Night with guest speaker Kristin Ancker "How to Support your Child for Success: Developing ground rules and consistent expectations with your child will lead to a life time of successful relationships."
- Saturday Feb 7 - Winter Fair at Yeoman’s Hall 5:30-7:30 pm
- Feb 16 & 17 No School
- Feb 25 Families Moving Up Night - for families with children who will be moving up to the next classroom in the fall

...And a Happy New Year!

The new year brings a time of reflection and of anticipation. The break gave me the time to not only reflect, but to set (and begin to implement) some personal goals. Of course many of my personal goals are not new, but this year I am really going to work on them! You know the ones I am talking about! The take better care of myself, find more quiet time, exercise more, get more sleep resolutions!

My other goals have to do with Oak Grove. We accomplished a tremendous amount this fall. There were unexpected changes that required our entire community to absorb and understand a lot. Thanks to the tireless work and effort from the teachers and staff and the board of trustees, parents and even the children, we start this new year stronger and more committed. The process was not easy. The hours and weeks were long for many of us. But the outcome was a true statement of what an incredible community we are all blessed to be a part of. So, during my quiet reflective break, I began thinking that even during times of stress, we must always remind ourselves of the whys.

So, I am entering this new year with a renewed commitment to the fundamental principles of Montessori. As I watch and I read about the current climate of traditional education, not only in Connecticut, but throughout our country, I am even more motivated. Yes, research confirms Montessori and the science of education is finally catching up with what Maria Montessori presented over 100 years ago. But for me, it is seeing and feeling it every day at Oak Grove. The child’s early years are so critical. Children learn by doing. The teachers work tirelessly to prepare the best environment for our children's emotional, social and
academic needs. The work is done early in the school year to settle the classrooms, allowing the children to experience the enormous satisfaction that comes from deep concentration and personal effort. The staff and teachers help the children to understand that how they act and what they say has a positive or negative impact on others. The peaceful and stable environment that is created here helps the children believe in themselves and brings them the needed confidence and the guidance.

So, as I enter into this new year, my goal is to find something each day to observe or be a part of, that clearly reminds me of the why. My enthusiasm for Montessori never fades. My challenges and goals for Oak Grove are driven by this enthusiasm. I am grateful to be a part of a community that shares in my enthusiasm and goals.

Save the Date
It will be here before we know it!!

OGMS Annual Auction and Gala
Saturday March 21, 2015
More information coming soon!

Happenings Around the Grove

3-6 Classroom

The 3-6 Classroom would like everyone to help them welcome Audrey Blake as the new Assistant Teacher in their room. Audrey comes with the energy and the knowledge to fit right into this busy classroom!
I would like to share some news with everyone about Hudson Shi, a second year student in the 6-9 classroom. Here is an email that his mother wrote to us today:

I'd like to share with you good news about Hudson. He was invited to perform at the Carnegie Hall in New York next month. Hudson received this honor because he got the highest mark in the assessment test of piano Level 4 in Connecticut last May, organized by the Royal Conservatory Music Development Program. Every year the program invites the winner of every level in every discipline (such as piano, violin, opera singing, etc.) from the state of New York, Connecticut and New Jersey. Hudson was very lucky to be the winner of his level in piano performance.

Hudson is very disciplined in piano practicing. We think he owes the good habit to the Montessori teaching, especially to Willa’s teaching. We are very proud of his achievement, and thought you must be very happy to learn this too.

Thank you!

We are so proud of Hudson and can’t wait to hear all about his adventures in NYC next month! Thank you Kate for sharing this news.

So much to do, so little time! Fourth years will be starting geometry. Fifth years will be drawing themselves to fame with an Arbor Day State wide art contest! Seniors are diving head first into their senior projects. And have started dreaming about senior trip! Pizza Lunch this Friday!
We are so happy to have Catherine and Bethany running the After Care Program. The kids are so thrilled, the energy is fun and positive. Stop in and say hi! It’s a demanding job, especially when the temperatures keep us inside and unable to run and burn off all that energy. I could not be happier having the After Care Program in such capable and loving hands! Catherine will also continue to run our Before Care Program.

Winter Solstice
What a wonderful celebration! Thank you to all who brought food and good cheer, helping to make this a fun evening and kick off to the holiday season.

Gratias ago tibi!
I would like to extend an enormous thank you (gratias ago tibi) to Anne D’Alleva for volunteering her time and expertise in teaching an intensive afterschool Latin class to the Upper Elementary students. Also, I would like to thank Valeria Volin for stepping in and assisting Anne with the class. These students are so lucky to have this opportunity. Thank you Anne and Valeria!