



St. Joseph Montessori School

*Educating the human
potential since 1968.*



St. Joseph Montessori School provides a Montessori Catholic learning community that honors the whole child and their immense potential.





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WELCOME TO ST. JOSEPH MONTESSORI SCHOOL



“Our care of the child should be governed, not by the desire to make him learn things, but by the endeavor always to keep burning within him the light which is called intelligence.” – Dr. Montessori

Welcome to St. Joseph Montessori School, a unique experience in education providing American Montessori Society (AMS) accredited authentic Montessori education with an environment that respects the learner, encourages independence, curiosity, creativity, critical thinking skills, and collaborative decision making. SJMS is an educational alternative that is committed to serving a widely diverse population with varying needs and aptitudes.

SJMS is blessed to have a faculty and staff that embraces the philosophy of Maria Montessori, understands the role of the child, teacher, and prepared environment, and provides respect, love, and care to all learners. SJMS values professional development for our faculty and staff and provides an environment of teamwork, collaboration, and initiative to create an open and welcoming environment.

One of the many goals we strive to achieve at SJMS is to watch the child as they develop and exhibit the Portrait of a Graduate characteristics of being a life-long learner, developing confidence & independence, curiosity, and becoming a global citizen. Nothing is more fulfilling than watching a student exercise initiative and persistence as a toddler then leaving SJMS displaying those attributes of the Portrait of a Graduate along with sensitivity, respect for themselves and others, and a spirit of discovery in their approach to life and learning.

Thank you for taking the opportunity to explore St. Joseph Montessori School. We are glad to have you here. I look forward to seeing you on campus whether it is to stop by and say hi, arrange to observe a classroom, or to attend a parenting workshop and events.

Be excellent to one another;

Brian Lower
Interim Head of School

OUR PHILOSOPHY

We at St. Joseph Montessori School believe that, as a result of the program provided in our school, each child will become a confident, competent person. They will possess self-knowledge, independence, concentration, inner discipline, and a spirit of joy. They will exhibit care and respect for themselves, for others, and for the world around. Each child will exercise initiative and persistence in completing learning tasks, and will exhibit sensitivity, curiosity, creativity, and a spirit of discovery in his or her approach to life and learning.



OUR PURPOSE

The purpose of St. Joseph Montessori School is, in the words of Dr. Maria Montessori, “to educate the human potential” by means of a scientifically prepared environment that provides a wide variety of materials; employs a multi-sensory approach to learning; and frees the child to choose activities according to individual interests, abilities, and talents within certain limits. The opportunity to participate in one’s own education provides the child a context for growing academically, socially, and emotionally. At St. Joseph Montessori School, the child’s ability to direct his/her own learning is guided by the Montessori influence of freedom with limits.

Our school exists as an educational alternative that values and is committed to serving a widely diverse population with varying needs and aptitudes. We believe our services must extend beyond the classroom. Educational opportunities provided for families enable parents to reinforce and enrich the child’s learning. Staff members are offered the means and resources for professional growth and are provided an environment that encourages initiative, creativity, and collaborative decision making. Respect, cooperation, and mutual support among students, parents, staff, and community members are critically important to a child’s success in school and must be actively fostered by all participants.

SJMS AT-A-GLANCE

Our School was founded in 1968 as a private preschool for St. Joseph Academy. In 1977, SJMS became a private, Diocesan school for The Diocese of Columbus. Our school is accredited by Ohio Catholic Schools Accrediting Association (OCSAA) and affiliated with American Montessori Society (AMS), Columbus Catholic Dioceses, and National Catholic Educators Association (NCEA). St. Joseph Montessori School is pursuing full accreditation through the American Montessori Society and is a Step 5 on the AMS Pathways (out of 10) as of July 2022. SJMS is governed by a Board of Trustees that consists of 12-14 individuals who volunteer their time and offer their backgrounds, diverse knowledge, and talents within our school community and beyond.



Our Students join us as early as 18 months old in our Toddler program. SJMS has 273 students enrolled for the 2023-24 school year. Our student - teacher ratios are low with 1:7 in Toddler, 1:12 in Children’s House, 1:11 in Lower Elementary, 1:13 in Upper Elementary, and 1:12 in Middle School. Our students commute to SJMS from 43 different Central Ohio zip codes.

Our Faculty and Staff includes 53 full and part-time employees. We have 2 teachers with a PhD, 13 with Master’s Degrees, 26 with Bachelor’s Degrees, and 6 employees with Associates Degrees. SJMS employs 13 AMS Credentialed teachers, three with Non-MACTE credentials, and seven are currently enrolled in an AMS certification program.

Our Campus offers over three acres of land with two instructional buildings. We are home to two honeybee hives, a Native Ohio garden, a pollinator garden, and an Eco Lab. SJMS shares a campus with Sacred Heart Church. Our campus is centrally located with easy access to parks and museums for walking field trips and Goings Out using free, public transportation.

OUR IDENTITY STATEMENTS

SJMS is a high-fidelity Montessori School that prioritizes ethical and respectful practices.

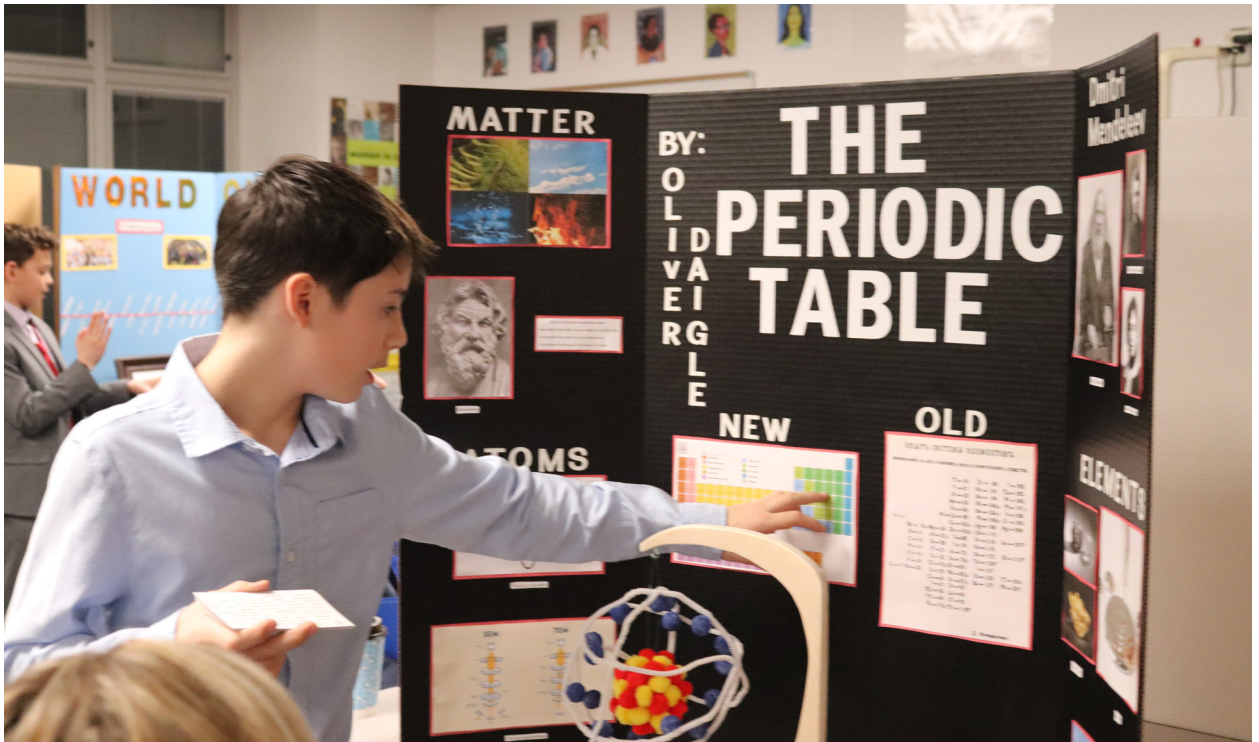
SJMS is committed to respecting the individuality and potential of each person.

SJMS is a collaborative, cooperative, and inclusive community that supports the development of the whole child; spiritual, physical, cognitive, social, and emotional.

SJMS fosters the individual spiritual growth and well-being of the child within a Catholic framework.

SJMS is a school committed to providing an environment of empathy, compassion, and trust.

SJMS is a school committed to guiding children to be ambassadors of peace by respecting ourselves, each other, and the environment.





8 PRINCIPLES OF MONTESSORI EDUCATION

by Dr. Angeline Lillard from *Montessori: The Science Behind the Genius*

1. **Movement and Cognition:** Movement and cognition are closely entwined, and movement can enhance thinking and learning
2. **Choice:** Learning and well-being are improved when people have a sense of control over their lives.
3. **Interest:** People learn better when they are interested in what they are learning.
4. **Extrinsic Rewards are Avoided:** Tying extrinsic rewards to an activity negatively impacts motivation to engage in that activity when the reward is withdrawn.
5. **Learning From and With Peers:** Collaborative arrangements can be very conducive to learning.
6. **Learning in Context:** Learning situated in meaningful contexts is often deeper and richer than learning in abstract contexts.
7. **Respectful Teacher-Child Interaction:** Particular forms of adult interaction are associated with more optimal outcomes.
8. **Order in Environment and Mind:** Order in the environment is beneficial to children.



The **MONTESSORI METHOD** is a scientific pedagogy based on the research and teachings of Italian physician and educator Maria Montessori (1870-1952). Dr. Montessori gave the world an educational method based on The Planes of Human Development. A deep respect and understanding of the child led Dr. Montessori to devote her life to studying and lecturing on the potential of each individual. She taught adults how to respect individual differences and to emphasize social interaction and the education of the whole person rather than the teaching of a specific body of knowledge.

Montessori classrooms mirror the developmental plane of the child. Classrooms for younger children are language rich with concrete materials designed to foster students' ability to explore, choose, and complete their work. Referred to as the "prepared environment," areas devoted to language, mathematics, practical life, and cultural subjects are a core part of the classroom at every age, often using materials that overlap or build on each other. Early childhood classrooms also include "sensorial" areas. As children progress in their development and as the abstract mind develops, fewer hands-on materials are present, but more real world application of concepts occurs.

The Montessori teacher, or guide, undergoes specific Montessori credentialing and is taught to recognize and respect children's various learning styles, helping individual students learn to study most effectively. Montessori classes bring together students in multi-aged groups, rather than classes composed of just one grade level. This unique structure allows older children to act as leaders, teachers, and masters of their learning. While younger, more novice students, learn from their older peers, teachers can mix learning groups based on readiness or interest and not have to restrict a child's learning to one "grade level." The multi-aged classroom mirrors family structure and society at large as children of the three year age span learn to work, collaborate, and create synergy to create a microcosm of community.



OUR PROGRAMS

Toddler

Ages 18 - 36 months

Children's House

Ages 3 - 6

Lower Elementary

Ages 6 - 9

(1st through 3rd years)

Upper Elementary

Ages 9 - 12

(4th through 6th years)

Middle School

Ages 12 - 14

(7th through 8th years)

TODDLER PROGRAM

Our Toddler Program fosters independence and encourages curiosity for our 18 through 36 month old students. Our toddlers focus on big works! The toilets are just the right size to encourage independence and students are given the skills and opportunity to develop the confidence to be successful. Montessori Toddlers are in their sensitive period for language development. In our classroom, we use real words for objects, read books, sing songs, and have conversations that aid in speech and vocabulary development. Students will become more independent as they learn how to zip a coat, wash their hands, put on boots, and prepare their snack. In a Montessori classroom, toddlers will share in the responsibilities of the classroom. This may include feeding the class pet, sweeping up their own mess, dusting classroom shelves, and watering plants. Toddlers will develop fine and gross motor skills in the Montessori environment. Fine motor (small muscle) skills will develop as children build their hand, wrist, and arm muscles through activities such as pouring, weaving, stacking, and drawing. Gross motor (or large muscle) movements will develop through jumping, climbing, walking, and running. Children will have the opportunity to socialize with their peers in an environment where grace and courtesy is modeled and taught.





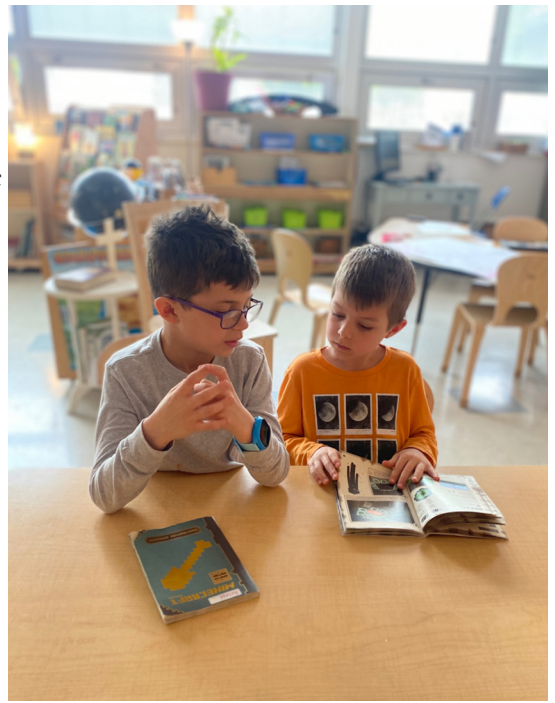
CHILDREN'S HOUSE

In our Children's House program, students learn in multi-age settings of 3 to 6-year-old children. Our environments are filled with scientifically designed manipulatives that engage young learners. These Montessori materials ease students into practical life, beginning reading, mathematics, sustained concentration, sense of order, independence, and further refine motor skills. These language rich environments also develop oral communication skills, define and refine the senses through the use of the Sensorial area, and develop fine motor/pre-writing skills. Students are also exposed to cultural studies, the Spanish language, science, music, art, physical education, and beginning library skills. Students learn individually and in small groups.



LOWER ELEMENTARY

Our Lower Elementary Program gives 1st through 3rd year children the opportunity to continue to progress at their own pace in a multi-age environment that nurtures the love of learning. Children take responsibility for their own learning and have daily opportunities to make choices in a child-centered classroom. They are exposed to many complex concepts at an early age through the use of concrete learning materials.



At this level, the primary sensitive period for children ages 6 through 9 is the acquisition of what is known as cultural literacy. Students' imaginations are embraced as they show an increase in awareness of the world and an interest in its wonders. Older children want to know the reason why things are as they are in the world. They are oriented toward intellectual investigation and discovery, and they are able to become fully engaged in the learning process. Children at this level are encouraged to think for themselves, conduct their own research, analyze what they have found, and come to their own conclusions. Montessori teaches children to think, not simply memorize. They learn how to learn, and discover that the process can, and should be, as natural as breathing.



Freedom of movement, open work space and uninterrupted blocks of time for individual and group projects all help to support the 6-9 year olds' need to gain control over their growing bodies, as well as their drive toward independence.

Rather than present children with the "right" answers, our Montessori trained teachers ask the "right" questions and challenge our students to discover the answers on their own. Why? Because although learning the right answers may help the children in school, learning how to learn will help them in life.



UPPER ELEMENTARY

In our three-year, Upper Elementary program, 9 to 12-year-old children continue to learn in a multi-age classroom. The Montessori curriculum at this level is designed to support students in their academic growth toward abstract learning. However, because the abstract brain may not be fully developed, students have the opportunity to use hands-on Montessori materials when needed until abstraction can be fully developed. Students learn through collaboration, individual work, small group work, and whole class projects. Areas of learning include reading, mathematics and geometry, language, science, foreign language, cultural studies, music, art, physical education, technology and library skills. Annual projects include an interest fair, book writing, drama productions, and interactive learning experiences.

Children within the Elementary Plane of Development become the explorers of the world and universe. The focus of interest shifts from the “what” of the younger child, to the “how” and “why” of the older child as they seek to define the wonders of the world. The primary tool of this exploration is imagination assisted by reason. Our curriculum offers a wide variety of challenging activities that promote a sense of independence and respect. Several co-curricular activities, such as environmental education and service learning, are integrated into our program to widen the children’s awareness of and social responsibility to the community.

MIDDLE SCHOOL

In our two-year Middle School program, 12 to 14-year-old adolescents build on a strong Montessori foundation through practical work in the classroom and the community. Middle School young adults' experiment as individuals and alternate academic studies with practical life experiences. They learn to set challenging goals and become masters of their own time in preparation for success in high school. People who encounter St. Joseph Montessori students frequently remark that there is a distinct difference in their ability to assume responsibility and leadership, communicate well, think insightfully, and be resilient. These are the trademarks of a Montessori young adult.





SPECIAL SUBJECTS

Art is an inherent piece of the Children's House curriculum and is integrated into their daily classwork. Our Children's House-3rd Year students visit the art room on a regular basis with a variety of art materials and techniques. The Lower Elementary level explores art basics, art in many parts of the world, and more interesting techniques. Our Upper Elementary artists continue the art exploration with the addition of art history. Our Middle School art classes experience art through an art career lens with interesting, open ended art projects. Something special that occurs every year is ceramics. Every student from our Children's House-Third Years to Eighth Years creates a piece of ceramic art.

The SJMS **Library** is designed to support the Montessori curriculum and foster curiosity and a love of reading in every child. With over 10,000 items in the collection, students, faculty, staff, and parents are able to check out and return their own books using the library's self-checkout station.

The SJMS **Music** Program is built to capitalize on the intrinsic musicality that every child is born with. Our music curriculum prioritizes music literacy, self expression, and life-changing experiences through communal music-making. Orff, Kodaly, and Conversational Solfege are incorporated alongside Montessori pedagogy in the lower levels. We offer a rigorous band program that exposes students to a wide variety of compositions including standard literature, jazz, sacred, and pop/Broadway arrangements. Our band students participate in adjudicated events such as Solo and Ensemble and Large Group contests. Students are encouraged to enhance their school music experience by participating in advanced music making opportunities such as the Columbus Children's Choir, Capital Junior Winds, the Columbus Youth Symphony, and private lessons with local professionals.

Physical and Health Education classes begin as early as 18 months. Toddlers, Children's House, and Lower Elementary curriculum focuses on large muscle activities which build strength, coordination and spatial awareness. In Upper Elementary and Middle School, classes emphasize organized sports, games, teamwork and sportsmanship. In Health classes, students learn functional knowledge, health concepts, and develop vital skills to lead a health-enhanced life which includes, but is not limited to decision making, safety, nutrition, social skills, and regulating emotions.



Spanish is a part of our curriculum at SJMS beginning in the first year of Children's House and continuing through 8th year. At each level, students engage with developmentally appropriate materials to grow their language proficiency. Opportunities are provided to practice listening to, reading, speaking and writing in Spanish. Culture and authentic materials are often incorporated into lessons. Middle Schoolers develop their proficiency in three modes of Communication: Interpersonal, Interpretive and Presentational. Our expectation is that 8th year students who choose to continue Spanish at the high school level will place into Spanish 2.

The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd is the **Religious** Education curriculum followed by students in 3rd year Children's House students through their 6th year. It is based on Maria Montessori's belief that the development of the child's spirituality is an integral part of their overall growth and well being. Rooted in the principles of the Prepared Environment and respect for the child's capacities, while presented within a Catholic framework, our program provides the guidance and vocabulary that enables each child to become aware of and grow in their relationship with God and give expression to it. Middle School students engage in deeper discussions of morality, spirituality, and Virtue while learning about the History of the Catholic Church and how we can best use our gifts and talents to serve others.

The SJMS **STEM** program creates opportunities for Upper Elementary and Middle School students to nurture their innovative spirits and their curiosity about the world.

AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Our **Extended Day Program** provides fun, recreation, and relaxation to those children who stay for a longer day. Supervised care is available from 7:30-8:15 am and 3:15-6:00 pm. This program allows the child to attend the regular Montessori class, and then to have quality care and activities in a safe play environment. Snacks are provided during the after-school program. Before Care and After Care can be contracted for the entire year or After Care can be used on a drop-in basis, depending on availability.

Many of our students participate in **Extra-Curricular Activities** such as Lego Robotics, Italian Club, Game Club, Laudato Si Environmental Club, Martial Arts, Music Lessons and Chess.

SJMS is proud to offer **Sports** options for our students. SJMS has had their own boys basketball, track, cross country, and ultimate frisbee teams. We also partner with other Diocesan schools to offer girls basketball and girls volleyball.

Extra-curricular and sports offerings depend on the interested number of students.



The program at St. Joseph Montessori School is designed to achieve the following

PORTRAIT OF A GRADUATE Characteristics for our students:

Students will be **life-long learners**. Many of our learning activities are individualized. Each child is involved in work which holds particular interest because it is geared to his or her own pace, repeating a task as often as desired, thus experiencing a series of successful achievements. In this manner, the child acquires a positive attitude toward learning.

Students will be **confident**. At St. Joseph Montessori School, work is planned so that each new step is built on what the child has already mastered, thereby removing the negative experience of frequent failure. Success after success builds up an individual's inner confidence and provides assurance that learning is possible. These confidence-building experiences, in turn, contribute to the sound emotional development of the adult.

Students will be **independent**. At St. Joseph Montessori School, we give each child the gift of independence. This lets them know we value them and know they are capable. Children grow up feeling empowered and safe in their abilities to make sound choices. When we trust them, they learn to trust themselves; ultimately, they become happy and productive members of their communities.

Students will be **curious**. In a rapidly changing society such as ours, we must all be students during our entire lifetime. Providing students with opportunities to discover qualities, dimensions, and relationships, amidst the rich variety of learning situations, we nurture the development of a natural desire to learn in such a way that the child acquires a habit of being curious, an essential element of creative learning.

Students will be **global citizens**. Each child is involved in activities and opportunities which broaden his or her vision of the world. Through collaborative work, care of the environment, global education, and conflict resolution, the child gains an appreciation of personal and social responsibilities and acceptance of human differences.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

St. Joseph Montessori School strives to be a **community** where teachers, staff, and parents work together to create an environment of high moral and academic values for our students. Parents are a vibrant part of the academic, personal, and social development of students.

Our **Family Association** is an active volunteer organization whose purpose is to provide support for the SJMS community by designating funds for enrichment or school programming, fundraising to support these initiatives and supporting classrooms and teachers whenever possible. The goals of the Family Association are to strengthen the bond between SJMS and its families and promote public awareness of the school by being positive representatives in the community.

SJMS Connect is a networking organization of parents, teachers, administrators, alumni, and supporters of St. Joseph Montessori School who support each others personal and professional endeavors so they can in turn, support SJMS.

SJMS and the Family Association host numerous **community building and fundraising events** throughout the year including a Spaghetti Dinner, Winter Festival, Spring Gala, skate parties, bowling parties, and kayaking.



This is our school.

Let peace dwell here.

Let the room be full of contentment.

Let love abide here.

Love for one another, love of mankind, love of God
and love of life itself.

Let us remember, as many hearts build a house, so
many hearts build a home.



St. Joseph Montessori School
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SJMS Nondiscrimination Policy

St. Joseph Montessori School recruits and admits students of any race, color, or ethnic origin to all its rights, privileges, programs, and activities. In addition, the school will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, employment, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school administered programs. St. Joseph Montessori School will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or ethnic origin in the hiring of its certified or non-certified personnel.