



FIRST OF THE NEXT 50



Montessori
ACADEMY OF LONDON

2017-2018 ANNUAL REPORT

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



What a delight to be part of the 2017-2018 Annual report to our Montessori Community. The year was a remarkable one in so many ways. There were accomplishments, firsts, and tremendous successes for the school. As well, the Board said adieu to a few long-standing Governors who were part of the creation of our current governance model, as well as the leaders who helped guide the school through the challenges created by the Childcare and Early Years Act (CCEYA), which came into effect in 2015.

We thank several longtime Board members who finished their tenures in 2017-2018: Christine Haas, former Board president; Karen Conway; Rick Santos; and Sarah Kirshin-Neilans. Geoff Connors, Andrew Botterell, and George Rizkalla also departed the Board this year. We appreciate all of their valuable input and support of the school. A list of current Board members is at the bottom of this page and on the school website: montessori.on.ca/about/board-of-governors

Certainly, the lead accomplishment for the school year was that we marked our 50th Anniversary as an organization! Numerous celebrations happened but they all culminated in the 50th Gala in June. To see the students' art, listen to the speakers and watch a video representation of all we stand for was an amazing experience.

One of the firsts from last year and symbol of the continuing maturity of the school, was the establishment of our Endowment Fund. Its primary purpose is to support ongoing financial assistance to those in our community who have occasion to need support. It also adds another quiver in the arsenal that our Development team can utilize in raising funds for the good of the school. Many thanks go to Suzanne Fratschko Elliott for being the Board leader who applied her experience and persuasiveness to get the fund in place.

A major accomplishment for the past school year was the financial position of the school. Over three years ago, the Board put a plan in place that dealt with the burden imposed by the CCEYA legislation, which called for the school to take a long-term view of its budget and finances. In other words, we couldn't absorb the costs needed to comply with CCEYA in the short term. Instead, the Board chose to spread the impacts over a five-year period. Last year was a remarkable one in terms of our enrolment numbers, when compared to our plan. We virtually operated at full capacity as a school with additional students beyond what we had budgeted. With our organization's financial model, this meant that we had additional revenue with only a modest increase in our budgeted programs and staffing levels. As a result, we made up our planned shortfalls two years faster than we expected. A solid financial result. One which we would love to replicate but in reality is difficult to do, and is totally dependent on enrolment.

And now, we begin our next 50 years. I would like to thank our Board of Governors for the ongoing efforts on the school's behalf. I would be remiss if I didn't extend a huge thank you to our faculty and staff. Joining the Board has allowed me to see the dedication, passion and hardwork our teachers and administrators do for the school. They all deserve our gratitude and thanks for making MA a place where parents want their children to be. In the end, the development of confident, compassionate and engaged citizens will keep our classrooms full and help make London a better place.

KEVIN HIGGINS, Board President

BOARD OF GOVERNORS 2017-2018

OFFICERS

Julie Elgie, *President, Parent*

Christine Haas, *Vice-President, Alumni Parent*

Rick Santos, *Treasurer, Community Member*

Wilma McIntyre, *Secretary, Community Member*

GOVERNORS

Sarah Harding, *Founding Member Representation*

Karen Conway, *Community Member*

Sarah Kirshin-Neilans, *Alumna*

Jim Middlemiss, *Current Parent*

Kevin Higgins, *Current Parent*

Suzanne Fratschko Elliott, *Community Member*

Geoff Connors, *Alumni Parent, Current Grandparent*

Tina Sartori, *Executive Director, Ex-Officio*

Kristen Crouse, *Academic Director, Ex-Officio*

David Pasquino, *Finance Director, Ex-Officio*

BOARD CHANGES EFFECTIVE JULY 2017

The Board appointed Kevin Higgins as President and Jim Middlemiss as Vice-president; both are current MA parents. Community member Carl Hallberg was named Treasurer of the Board.

The Board also welcomed new members in July: MA Alumnus Tyler Reavell, MA parent Sarah Tattersall and Alumni parent Andrea Dean. For more on our Board members, visit the Board of Governors page of the school's website: montessori.on.ca/about/board-of-governors

2017-2018 HIGHLIGHTS

The 2017-2018 year was a big one. The school celebrated not only a new Executive Director at the helm of the school – Tina Sartori – but a huge milestone: 50 years providing London families education choice and authentic Montessori education.



To celebrate our Golden Anniversary, the school held several events over June 1 and 2, 2018. To help promote the weekend of events, Academic Director Kristen Crouse and Junior High teacher Shawn Butler joined 103.1 Fresh FM morning radio show hosts Kim & Mark for the “Mind Grind” trivia quiz segment. Kristen was victorious in the quiz and they both did a fantastic job generating excitement about our school's big events.

ARTexpo 2018 – our student art showcase – kicked off the celebrations on the Friday night at Brescia's Mercato Room, while the Family Fun Day and Open House on Saturday provided fun for our families, alumni and the public who stopped by Piccadilly Park and our Elementary location. During the Golden Anniversary Gala on Saturday night, we premiered Shawn's inspiring new promotional video for the school, “What We Believe – 50 Years of Montessori Academy of London.”



If you haven't seen it, check it out on the school's [Youtube page: https://youtu.be/9H4F_CiflUg](https://youtu.be/9H4F_CiflUg)

Other highlights of the year included the first Junior High Odyssey Trip in September 2017, facilitated by Alive Outdoors and made possible with the help of the 2017 Graduating Class Gift. Elsewhere in the school, our students benefited from a new enhanced observation tool implemented by senior leadership, and professional development opportunities provided to our faculty through the Centre for Guided Montessori Studies and other organizations.

The Elementary students also enjoyed the fruits of continued renovations that included new flooring and paint in Junior 1 and Junior 3. These upgrades to our facilities were made possible thanks to our generous donors.

Speaking of donations and fundraising efforts, two new members of the school community joined us to help enhance our development program: Tonya Dendrinis joined us in April 2017 as our full-time Development Director, and Suzanne Fratschko Elliott joined the Board as community member. Tonya introduced exciting new fundraising initiatives for our 50th year, and Suzanne's hard work helped establish an Endowment Fund through the London Community Foundation. Seeking outside funding not only helps the school provide world-class Montessori education, it shares the value of Montessori education with a larger audience.

For more on the incredible support we received during our 50th Anniversary celebrations, see the back page of this report and our community/donor profile on page 3.

FOSTERING ENGAGED CITIZENS

Everything we do supports our students – and our vision of a “community of confident, compassionate and engaged citizens.” When our Junior 1 Lower Elementary class wrote a letter to Ward 13 councillor Tanya Park about installing recycling bins in Piccadilly Park, where the students play daily, she came by the school to thank them for their environmental stewardship.

BUILD STRONGER RELATIONSHIPS WITH OUR FAMILIES



To support our parent community, the school gathered feedback from our families in June through our first-ever parent survey, which provided the Administration valuable information on parent priorities. The school also invited Montessori advocate Amy Kelton to the school to speak to parents; Amy also facilitated a workshop for teachers as part of their professional development.

As a community, we're committed to communication and collaboration with parents, and that includes providing opportunities for parents to connect.

- Fall socials: These teacher-led socials offered opportunity for families to connect with other families in their classrooms early in the school year.
- Parent pub night: The school hosted this casual evening social for our parents.
- Montessori Family Dinner: Our East Side Mario's night brought families together for a big dinner; proceeds from this event supported the school's fundraising.

Our rock star Toddler dishwasher, garnered 1+ million views on Facebook: <https://goo.gl/po5e1Q>



DONOR PROFILE

COMMUNITY SUPPORT HELPS BUILD A BRIGHT FUTURE FOR OUR SCHOOL AND STUDENTS.



CORNERSTONE
ARCHITECTURE

Understanding that Montessori Academy of London would need to look for alternative funding sources for its sustainability, the school became a not-for-profit charity in 2010. Since that time, the school has seen proof of how fortunate it is to have a community of supportive alumni, past and current families who understand that additional fundraising has been needed to continue to maintain our cherished facilities and provide the highest-quality Montessori education available.

One of the school's biggest community supporters is Cornerstone Architecture. Most recently Cornerstone joined the 50th anniversary celebrations as Presenting Sponsor, supporting our weekend of anniversary events, including the Golden Anniversary Gala. But the relationship goes deeper than that, explains Cornerstone principal architect and owner Alison Hannay. "Our relationship with Montessori Academy of London began as parents of two children in the school, James and Aurora, who started in the Casa program and continued through to Junior High. Along the way, we helped out as parent volunteers, and I also spent a few years as a parent representative. It was through this school community involvement that I became involved with the school professionally, as well."

She continues, explaining, "While I served as a parent representative, the school became a not-for-profit organization, and also acquired 719 Waterloo Street, which is now the main office and a Lower Elementary classroom. During one of many conversations with then-school director Margaret Whitley, we talked about the opportunities that this created. I became involved with helping to create a Master Plan for the school's design, working collaboratively with staff and the board to consider how best to reorganize the school with the new potential that 719 Waterloo created, and to develop a road map for the future."

Adds Executive Director, Tina Sartori, "Cornerstone Architecture has truly been a part of our school history and evolution as their designs can be seen at a number of our locations as we completed major renovations over the last few years, especially as we transitioned into becoming a Ministry-licensed school under the Childcare and Early Years Act (CCEYA). Alison and her team have such a strong foundation in creating intentional environments, which allow our students to move and learn with purpose."

Cornerstone's support of the 50th anniversary was made even more special because the firm also designed Brescia University College's Mercato Room, the beautiful space where ARTexpo 2018 student art showcase and the Golden Anniversary Gala took place in June. "We were very happy to be approached about the opportunity to support the school's 50th anniversary celebrations. It was a tremendous milestone for the school – offering such a unique and quality educational experience to the City of London for so many years. This felt like an opportunity for us to say thank you for the many wonderful memories that we have of our time as Montessori parents, and to hopefully be an example to our children. We were so happy that we could attend as a family, and that my business partner, Richard Hammond, and his wife, Jo-Anne, were able to join us for the event."

As an alumni parent, Alison says that supporting the Montessori Academy of London is important to her family because it's something that continues to make a difference in the way her children see the world. "We support the school and its amazing staff – they are truly role models – to provide this experience for other children and families as well!"

The school is fortunate to have strong relationships with businesses and community organizations throughout London, who understand the benefit of supporting education choice, and specifically traditional Montessori. Without these donors and supporters we wouldn't be able to continue to provide the highest-quality – and the only accredited – Montessori education in the area.

TIMELINE

- 1968 Our doors open as Montessori House of Children with 30 preschool students.
- 1973 The MHC Elementary program begins.
- 1980 Our school becomes a founding member of the Canadian Council of Montessori Administrators (CCMA).
- 1982 A Full Lower Elementary program begins.
- 1985 The Upper Elementary program is established.
- 1988 We become the first Canadian Montessori school to offer a Junior High Program.
- 1992 We are accredited by CCMA; today we remain the only accredited Montessori school in London.
- 1999 A Toddler community is added to the school.
- 2010 We become a not-for-profit registered charity with a Board of Governors.
- 2012 Our name becomes Montessori Academy of London (MA).
- 2015-2016 The Toddler & Casa programs are licensed under Ontario's Childcare & Early Years Act.
- 2017-2018 We celebrate 50 years of providing traditional Montessori education in London.

FAST FACTS 2017-2018

- » Number of Students = 346
- » Year 8 graduates in June 2018 = 27
- » Number of Families = Approx. 240 families
- » Pieces of student artwork showcased at ARTexpo 2018 = 300+
- » Golden Anniversary Gala attendees = 136

LEVELS & AGES

- Toddler - 18 months to 3 years
- Casa - 3 to 6 years - pre-school, JK/SK
- Elementary - 6 to 12 years
- Lower Elementary 6 to 9 years
- Upper Elementary 10 to 12 years
- Junior High - 12 to 14 years

LOCATIONS

- Oxford Street location: Casa/pre-school programs
- Waterloo Street locations: Junior High, Elementary, Toddler and Casa programs
- Westmount (Commissioners Road) location: Part-day and Full-day Toddler and Casa programs

WHAT'S NEXT FOR 2017-2018 BEGINNING THE NEXT CHAPTER

BEGINNING THE NEXT CHAPTER OF THIS SCHOOL'S STORY.

This year is the first of the next 50! As we begin the new chapter of this school's story, our Casa and Elementary programs are up for re-accreditation by the Canadian Council of Montessori Administrators (CCMA) who visited our location in November; and one of our programs was being accredited for the first time – Toddler.

Re-accreditation supports our Strategic Initiative to adhere to traditional Montessori philosophy and curriculum, while offering innovative modes of instruction. It confirms that we offer the highest-quality Montessori education in London and providing our students the foundation for not only academic success but the skills that will lead them to success throughout their lives.

Montessori Academy of London was one of the first schools in the country to be accredited more than 25 years ago, and we are the only accredited Montessori school in the London area. Our re-accreditation every five years also supports our school's role as a leader within the Montessori community in Canada and beyond; in fact this year, the admin team helped write the brochure on the benefits of CCMA accreditation.

WHY ACCREDITATION MATTERS

Not all Montessori schools are created equal. Because Dr. Montessori never trademarked her name or the hands-on materials she developed, any school can look like a Montessori school and even use her name. However, they may not offer a traditional Montessori curriculum – one that best reflects Dr. Montessori's original work.



THIS IS WHY ACCREDITATION COUNTS.

Accreditation helps to establish consistent standards and preserve the Montessori philosophy of education. Each CCMA school is re-accredited every five years to ensure it provides the highest-quality Montessori education available in Canada.



THE CANADIAN COUNCIL
OF MONTESSORI ADMINISTRATORS
LE CONSEIL CANADIEN DES ADMINISTRATEURS
DES ÉCOLES MONTESSORI

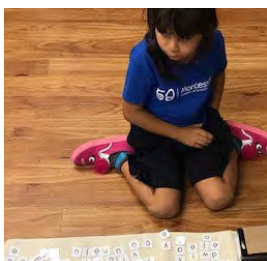
ENHANCING OUR PROGRAMS AND SUPPORTING OUR STUDENTS

Last year we had amazing support from our donors and families during our 50th anniversary celebrations. In 5 minutes at the Gala, we raised \$25,355 for our Special Project Fund; the Upper Elementary kitchens were renovated over the summer and the students are now benefitting from the beautifully upgraded spaces, storage and appliances that support nutrition, math and science lessons.

Our outdoor learning environments at Elementary were enhanced this summer with the installation of a new greenhouse and perennial garden thanks to generous funding from The Walter J. Blackburn Foundation. The new greenhouse and bee, bird and butterfly garden will provide opportunities for our students to engage in hands-on learning in the areas of botany, nutrition and ecology.

The support of our students is always a priority for the teachers and administration. Last year learning profile checklists for incoming Year 1 students were introduced to help identify early signs of learning differences, and this year, we continue to enhance that extra support with the introduction of a full-time Learning Support Teacher who will provide guidance to students who require extra support.

Among the many other activities that will take place this school year, the music program takes centre stage this year with our performance in May - Willy Wonka, The Musical. We look forward to seeing what the students and teachers put together for this colourful children's classic.



FINANCIAL REPORT 2017-2018

Strong enrolment supports improved fiscal footing and improved environments

Montessori Academy of London is a registered charity dedicated to offering traditional, accredited Montessori education to toddler, Casa (preschool), Elementary and Junior High students. Since 1968, our mission has been to provide a world-class education that promotes academic excellence, and prepares students to engage the world as active citizens and successful leaders.

The school's Board of Governors is responsible for the financial health of the school. Through sound financial planning and fiscal responsibility, as well as increased fundraising and strong enrollment in 2017-2018, the school improved its overall fiscal footing, which will assist in providing better flexibility to meet present and future plans, including unforeseen challenges.

A YEAR IN REVIEW

With renovations associated with the licensing of the Toddler and Casa programs under the Ministry of Education's Childcare and Early Years Act (CCEYA) in 2015-2016 behind us, the school has been able to return its attention to upgrades to our Elementary facilities.

Upgrades that were tackled in preparation for the 2017-2018 school year included extensive improvements to our Elementary location's Junior 3 classroom during the summer of 2017, plus new flooring and paint in our Junior 1 classroom over the March Break 2018.

Fundraising during 2017-2018 - the school's 50th year - focused on the kitchens in our Upper Elementary (Grades 4-6) classrooms. Thanks to donations to the Special Project Fund: Upper Elementary Kitchen Project, those enhancements were unveiled in September 2018 and the students and teachers are already enjoying the upgraded spaces and appliances.

In 2018-2019, the school's fundraising efforts will focus on the Junior High building at 742 Waterloo Street, to improve the learning environments that support our Adolescent program, including new floors, paint and kitchen renovations.

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Future improvements to the school's facilities, which include upgrades to the 711 Waterloo Street offices, classrooms and the Elementary Library, will be some of our most extensive; MA is working diligently on those plans. All of these planned and recently completed upgrades will help ensure Montessori Academy continues to provide a world-class accredited Montessori Education in London, Ontario.

For more details on Montessori Academy's past finances, our CRA charitable returns can be found online: www.charitydata.ca or www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/charities-giving/charities-listings.html

COMPARISON OF REVENUES TO EXPENSES

JULY 1, 2017 TO YEAR-ENDING JUNE 30, 2018

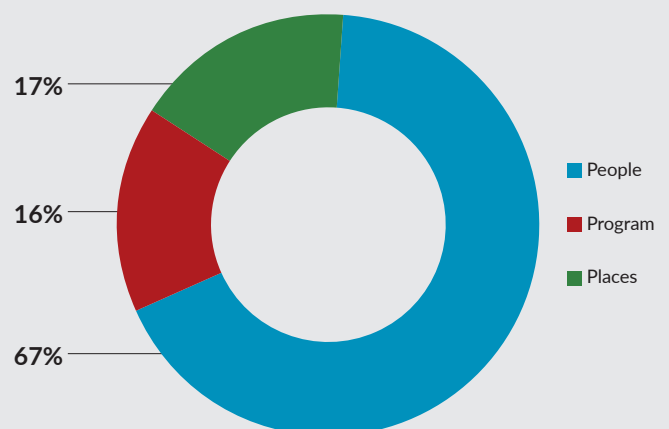
FY 2018 REVENUES

Y18 gross revenue: \$5,487,771



FY 2018 EXPENSES

Y18 gross expenses: \$5,028,847



YOUR DONATIONS AT WORK

We have had an incredible year, raising over \$123,000 to support the school!
Thank you, we could not have done it without you!

We would like to acknowledge the following sponsors and supporters who helped to make this a successful year:

OUR 50TH ANNIVERSARY SPONSORS

Presenting Sponsor

Cornerstone Architecture



Gold Sponsors

Canadian Commercial Development Mercedes Benz



Silver Sponsors

BMO Nesbitt Burns – Jonathan Batch
Eisenfeld Levy Law
Brescia
Palasod
Sportswood Printing

Bronze Sponsors

BDO
Bronnenco Construction
Hollis Wealth
McLennan Flowers and Gifts
Murphy Bus Lines
Music for Life – Yamaha Music School
Petit Paris
Stinson Security

It's because of **YOU**, our generous donors, sponsors and volunteers, that we are able to provide our students the best traditional Montessori education possible.

LEADERSHIP CIRCLE TEAMS

This year we introduced the 50th Anniversary Leadership Teams. Donors were encouraged to create a team to raise \$5,000 and be part of the Leadership Circle. This year, two teams raised over \$10,000 for the school. We would like to thank the following donors who participated in the Leadership Teams:

Board of Directors Team

Deborah Ward & Randy Dafoe
Tracy Brennan
Ramona Robinson & Mark Robinson
Minni Singh & Ram Singh
Andrew Botterell & Carolyn McLeod
Kevin Higgins & Erin Reid
Jim Middlemiss & Mary Weil
Sarah Harding & Mark Ouweleen
Pat Gere
Suzanne Fratschko Elliott
Wilma McIntyre
Julie Elgie & Brad Elgie
Karen Conway & Chris Blackmore
Geoff Connors & Cathy Blokker

Toddler Alumni Team

Kevin Higgins & Erin Reid
Magdalena Kovacevic & Dean Kovacevic
Jim Middlemiss & Mary Weil
Robert Riccardi & Tina Mele
Michael Robb & Shannon Robb

Major Gift Donors

(Donors \$1,000 +)
McKenzie Homes
Mark Whitley & Margaret Whitley
Susan Johnson & Ian J. MacKenzie
George S. Athwal Medicine Professional Corporation
Alison Hannay & Michael Hannay
Julie Elgie & Brad Elgie
Jo Ann Brown & Ray Brown
Kevin Higgins & Erin Reid
Arsh Jain & Roxanne Persaud
Jennifer Rayman & Reiza Rayman
Mark Ouweleen & Sarah Harding
Lee Greenwood & Kate Greenwood
Lauren McLean & Joel McLean
Alan Getgood Medical Professional Corp
London Community Foundation

The Walter J. Blackburn Foundation
Sifton Family Foundation
Anonymous Donors

Alumni Circle (Alumni Donors)

Alyssa Haas
Aurora Hannay
Courtney Elgie
Emma Whitley
James Hannay
Jillian Cochrane
Madison Dafoe
Mark Whitley
Peter Scrivens
Rachael Derkatz
Sydney Elgie

Legacy Circle
(Those who have made or pledged a Planned Gift)
Margaret Whitley & Mark Whitley

50th Anniversary Club (Monthly Donors)

Amanda Walton
Angela Matthews
David Pasquino
Linda Yovanovich
Tina Sartori
Tonya Dendrinis

Visit www.montessori.on.ca/thankyou/ to see a full listing of our amazing donors!

VISION

Our vision is a community of confident, compassionate and engaged citizens who think globally, act responsibly and collaborate successfully to create a humane world.

MISSION

To provide a world-class Montessori education that promotes academic excellence and prepares children and young adults to engage the world as active citizens and successful leaders.