



Annual Report 2021-2022

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE 2021-2022

Dear MA Families and Friends,

As I've been contemplating my message for the 2021-2022 school year, the words vitality and reconnection kept entering my thoughts. Vitality as "the state of being strong and active" and reconnection, "to be joined again." September 2021 saw a return to the classroom, and throughout the school year things started to feel more "normal." With opportunities like the Halloween Family Bowling, skating at Storybook Skate Trail, Snow Much Fun at The Factory, Art Expo 2022, the Artisan Market, and the Family & Friends event at Storybook Gardens in June, our community embraced reconnection and our vitality returned. Nowhere was this more apparent than in the lively and joyful faces of our students and staff. Sure, there were still many safety protocols and processes that needed to be adhered to so we could ensure the safety and well-being of all, but we did it! Thank you to Tina, the staff and administration for doing an incredible job ensuring the school year was the best that it could possibly be for our students and the entire Montessori community. You all beam with vitality and caring every day and we are extremely grateful!

As a Board of Governors, it is our responsibility to steward the school's mission, vision, values and strategic priorities, while establishing policies and procedures consistent with those objectives. The Board safeguards the assets of the school and supports the Executive Director to enhance the performance and reputation of the school overall.

Enrolment for 2021-2022 was truly a great news story! Having experienced a decline the previous year, enrolment rebounded to 330 students. Admissions inquiries remained strong throughout the year and prospective and returning families were again able to observe Montessori students in action throughout our locations. Our cash position remained solid, and in the fall, students returned to a newly refurbished outdoor play environment at 311 Oxford and a new kitchen and cubby storage area at 711 Waterloo. More extensive capital renovation projects

are planned for 711 Waterloo, however due to the complexity of the work and the challenges the trades are experiencing as a result of the pandemic, this project will be tendered in late fall 2022 with work being completed in the summer of 2023. All other areas of the school's [Strategic Plan – 'Building Our Future Together' \(PDF\)](#) – are tracking to a successful completion, and the Board has been working on envisioning future possibilities for the school's development through a new 2023-2028 strategic plan. Thank you to Alumni parent and Board Governor Andrea Dean for facilitating this process with us. We look forward to sharing the next strategic plan with you in the future.

In 2021-2022, Governors Dharshi Lacey, Rachel Noye, and Sarah Tattersall completed their terms serving on the Board. On behalf of the Board of Governors, I would like to extend my immense gratitude for their generous contributions of time and expertise. After nine years of service on the Board as a Governor, President and Honorary member, it was with mixed emotions that we received Julie Elgie's resignation. Julie's dedication and leadership has had an immense impact that has advanced the school beautifully. Her service to our community is truly a wonderful legacy and we are incredibly grateful. Thank you, Julie! We also welcomed new Governors, Angie Daouk, Mark Innes, Eric Janitis and Melissa Sariffodeen, while re-appointing Megan Komenda and Wilma McIntyre. We are so fortunate to have such creative and outstanding contributors on our Board. Thank you to all Governors. It is a privilege to serve among such a dedicated group of individuals. I encourage you to learn more about our Board members on the school's website: <https://montessori.on.ca/about/board-of-governors/>

Here's to vitality and reconnection! As a reminder of just how resilient and filled with vitality MA's students are, here's the video made in early 2022 by Junior High teacher Shawn Butler, starring several current students and recent graduates covering Gloria Gaynor's ['I Will Survive.'](#)

Most sincerely,
Suzanne Fratschko Elliott, President
Montessori Academy Board of Governors

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As at September 2021

For a list of current Board members, please visit the school's website:

<https://montessori.on.ca/about/board-of-governors/>

HIGHLIGHTS AND WHAT'S NEXT

RE-CONNECTING OUR COMMUNITY

Necessary changes to school routines over the past few years reminded all of us that communication, collaboration and connection are the hallmarks of our Montessori community. Thankfully, 2021-2022 marked a return to normal-ish and provided meaningful opportunities to reconnect with each other. There was more time in the classroom for all of our students, faculty and staff, and for the first time in two years, students returned to the classroom right after March Break! We hosted Year 8 Graduation at FireRock Golf Club and our Art Expo at Brescia like past years. Even though it wasn't 100 per cent business as usual, it was a welcome relief for most to return to a more regular routine.

We were able to re-introduce some school socials last year, enabling children and their families to enjoy some time together. To keep everyone safe, we moved our annual family skating event outside to Storybook's Skating Trail. It was a gorgeous winter night with many families from across the whole school joining us at the beautiful location. This new evening event proved to be a great example of how challenges inspired us to try something different, and it actually turned out better than the original event!

Overall, it was an incredible year for engagement with Montessori families with events being very well attended. Halloween Boo-ling in October was a scary-good time, and our Snow Much Fun event was a hot ticket, held at The Factory in February. As always, we were grateful for our community's generosity as our fundraising activities were also a big success. Read more about that below in the Development & Fundraising section.

With the completion of our Elementary Kitchen renovations over the summer of 2021, we were able to bring lunches five days a week to the Elementary students. This is something our families had been craving, and we're grateful for the support that made this upgrade possible. Another highlight of the year was the return of our classroom visits for parents, including the Upper Elementary Science Fair and Parent-Child visits. This return to the classroom was especially thrilling for the parents of our youngest students... It's hard to imagine, but many of our Toddler and Casa families had not had a chance to see their children's classrooms since their Admissions tours!

The Art Expo in May was our big school-wide event last year, and Brescia's Mercato Room was the backdrop for this biannual event showcasing our students' creativity. Art teacher Meghan O'Brien and her volunteers created a fun and interactive event. Our Artisan Market in May, and Moving Up Celebrations and Graduation at FireRock Golf Club in June rounded out the calendar that made us all realize how grateful we are to be part of such a tight-knit connected community.

WHAT'S NEXT

It was truly joyful to gather with our students and their families on Day 1 of the 2022-2023 school year. Across the school, the teachers and staff look forward to more opportunities to connect within the school setting – both social and informational.

ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

While the children benefited from more time in the classroom last year, there's nothing quite like bringing the whole community – including parents and children – together for school-related activities.

The school has resumed in-person class visits and parent-teacher conferences at all levels. And in every grade and classroom, our students love to show their families what they've been working on during the term.

The Montessori classroom is often referred to as 'a third teacher' because the learning environment and material are so pivotal to the children's learning, exploration and growth. On the November PD Day, parents will get a closer look at both, as the teachers invite them on The Journey to Discovery. The Journey, hosted every three years, is a very special one that parents rave about because it provides them a peek into their children's Montessori world and the opportunity to use the Montessori materials.

We can also host performances this year! So, our Elementary and Junior High Remembrance Day Assembly is moving to the afternoon – and to The Circus Academy to give everyone more space to enjoy this annual tradition. It's the first performance of the year for our students, and it's always a poignant and emotional event.

It's also a Musical year... So keep your eye on the Buzz parent newsletter on Tuesdays for details on this exciting performance that will take place in May!

FUNDRAISING AND IMPROVEMENTS

We can't wait for more opportunities to connect with our families this year. Our big event is our [55th Anniversary Family Gala](#) in February! This all ages event will feature some MA-zing entertainment and lots of fun. Watch the Buzz for more information on tickets.

Renovations this year will refocus on upgrading 711 Waterloo St., including the Elementary Library, Resource Rooms, Lower Elementary 1's classroom, the 711 Waterloo cubby area and

the Lower Elementary French classroom. Over the summer, new furniture was delivered to several locations, including the Library and the students were THRILLED with them the first weeks of school... just wait until the space is renovated! It's going to look MA-zing!

CANADA-WIDE EARLY LEARNING CHILD CARE PROGRAM UPDATE

[In October, Executive Director Tina Sartori announced that,](#) with the unanimous support of the school's Board of Governors, Montessori Academy would not opt into the Canada Wide Early Learning Child Care program (CWELCC) because we are not a child care centre. We are a school and, as such, the CWELCC program is not compatible with how we operate and function. The risk was also too high when considering the sustainability of our Elementary and Junior High programs beyond CWELCC funding. As a result of this decision, we're revising our Financial Support plan starting with the 2023-2024 school year; parents will be able to apply for financial support after their child(ren) completes one year at the school. More information on that will be shared in December.

BOARD ACTIVITIES

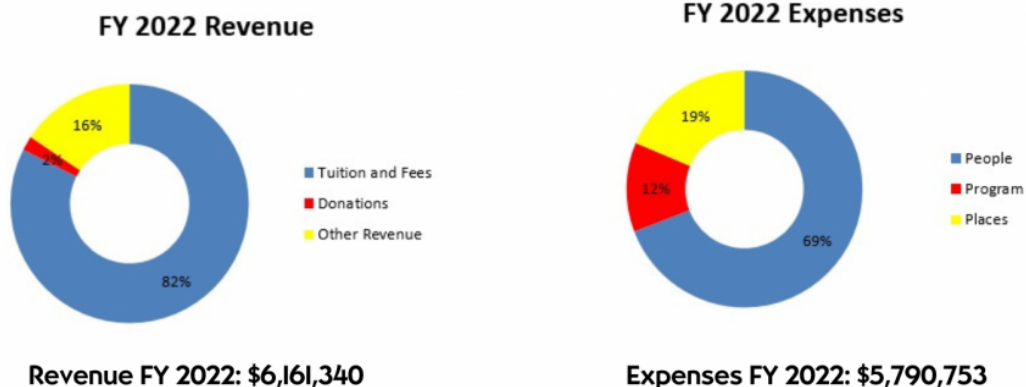
Now that the Board also finalized their work on the school's new Strategic Direction, the priorities will be introduced to the school community this year to help guide the school over the next five years.

FINANCIAL REPORT 2021-2022

Fiscal 2022 (July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022) saw a return to pre-pandemic numbers in terms of enrolment at the school – 330 students versus 309 last year; this drove up income from not only tuition and fees, but also extended hours and new applications. We also saw the end of the government subsidies related to the pandemic, but still benefited for a few months of this year from the Canadian Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS) that shut down in October 2021.

Expenses directly linked to enrolment therefore also increased, such as program expenses, but we also saw a need to increase our staff to maintain our ratios of teachers to students in our classrooms. As well, we were able to move forward with our commitment to addressing discrepancies in salaries for staff versus the market and bringing all staff closer to the benchmarks in our salary grid created just prior to the pandemic shutdown.

Donations this year also exceeded expectations thanks to grants we received. While we were able to utilize some funds to purchase new furniture for the Elementary Library, our intention is to continue to fundraise this year and put all directed contributions towards the final renovation phase of 711 Waterloo in the summer of 2023. These funds, along with excess income due to government subsidies off setting our expenses last year, will allow us to complete this large capital project.



The school's financial statements can be found by searching for "Montessori Academy of London" [on the Canada Revenue Agency website's List of Charities.](#)

DEVELOPMENT & FUNDRAISING

"No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted."—Aesop

What a fantastic year! Thanks to the generosity of our families, donors, Board of Governors, Private Foundations, our partners, and the innovation and dedication of our teachers, we were able to exceed our fundraising goal. Total Funds Raised for the 2021-2022 School Year was \$120,343. This surpassed our budgeted fundraising goal by more than \$20,000! Thank you!

In addition to our Annual Appeal and fundraising events, we were successful in obtaining four grants for the school this year. Thank you to the following foundations for their incredible gifts to our community:

- Enabling Accessibility Grant – \$37,878 to install an accessible ramp and automatic entry doors at 718 Waterloo
- J.P. Bickell Foundation – \$10,000 for new library shelves
TD Friends of the Environment Foundation– \$4,600 for Junior High Woodland Peace Garden
- The Walter J. Blackburn Foundation – \$4,432 for the Junior High Woodland Peace Garden and Water Fountain for Elementary Library.

Thank you to everyone who participated in the exciting fundraising events we ran during the 2021-2022 year! We sold out of tickets for all of the family events, and the participation and engagement from our families was higher than ever. The Halloween Boo-Ling Event, Snow Much Fun – The Factory Edition, What's for Dinner, and the Artisan Market all exceeded the budgeted fundraising goals and were well attended and enjoyed by our students and families.

As a nonprofit organization and registered charity, Montessori Academy of London is committed to investing every dollar earned into our school and students. Your donations matter and allow us to continuously enhance our programs and classrooms and make necessary upgrades to ensure our buildings are enjoyed by students for years to come.

Find a listing of our donors below....

CHARITABLE REGISTRATION NUMBER: 105229124 RR 0001

THANK YOU TO OUR ANNUAL DONORS

(For Fiscal Year July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022)

YELLOW BLOCK \$2,500 +

Government of Canada – Enabling Accessibility Fund
P. Bickell Foundation
TD Friends of the Environment Foundation
The Walter J. Blackburn Foundation

BLUE BLOCK \$1,000 – \$2,499

George Athwal and Lorraine Athwal
Helia Brew and Christopher Brew
Linda Visser and Jerome Bishop
Eric Janitis
Elizabeth Wilson and Lee Hargreaves
Natalya Karp Medicine Professional Corporation
Suzanne Fratschko – Elliott

Margaret Whitley and Mark Whitley
Ann Marie Harding and John Harding
Kevin Higgins and Erin Reid
Noelle Carrier and Trevor McKenzie

RED BLOCK \$500 – \$999

Elizabeth Abbott and Jonathan Batch
Ruth Butler
Andrea Dean
Cyrus Hsia and Heather Bowman
Elaine Stalker and Jack Norman
Deepti Vissa and Ananth Vyas Bhimavarapu
Blythe Allman and Brian Allman
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Mili Ryan and Dr. Sean Ryan
Herman Sugrim and Evelyn Sugrim
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BLACK BLOCK \$250 – \$499

Mike Greene
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April Crake and Jeff Petrie
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Kevin Higgins and Erin Reid
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Lynne Day and Alan Day
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Kamran Kizilbash and Sajal Kizilbash
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Carolyn Milligan
Kary Sartori
Robert Zaleski and Linna Zaleski
Cindy Hodgins
Cathy Steen
Angela Verveniotis
Natalie Woods and Paul Brasser
Brooke Goad
Freweini Medhin
Lindsey Hart-Harris and Tim Harris
Graham Leitch and Karla Milinkovic
Tameka Brown
Sarah Decicco
Susan Donaghy

We are so grateful for all of our donors. If there are any errors or omissions please contact the Development Director at tdendrinis@montessori.on.ca and we will be happy to make the correction as soon as possible.

LIFETIME DONORS

“SOMEONE’S SITTING IN THE SHADE TODAY BECAUSE SOMEONE PLANTED A TREE A LONG TIME AGO.” — WARREN BUFFETT

Montessori Academy of London would like to recognize the following donors who have generously continued to invest in the school. While we are grateful for all of our ongoing donors, we would like to acknowledge those who have reached the milestones of giving over \$1,000 or more to the school over the years.

It is thanks to the ongoing support of our loyal community that our school continues 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.

**We have done our best to accurately represent the generosity of our donors. Our record keeping has greatly improved since 2014. If you believe there is an error or omission, please contact the Development Director at 519-433-9121 ext. 233 and we will be happy to update our records.*

\$10,000+

Government of Canada – Enabling Accessibility Fund
Margaret Whitley and Mark Whitley
George S. Athwal Medicine Professional Corporation
Elizabeth A. Drewlo and Allan Drewlo
Jennifer Rayman and Reiza Rayman
Julie Elgie and Brad Elgie
The Walter J. Blackburn Foundation
Kevin Higgins and Erin Reid
Sarah Harding and Mark Ouweleen
Wei Jing Loo and Keng Tay
J.P. Bickell Foundation

\$7,500 – \$9,999

Lauren McLean and Joel McLean
Anonymous Donor
Timothy Regnault and Barbra De Vrijer
Ray Brown and Jo Ann Brown
Natalie Hertzman and Daniel Hertzman
Jonathan Batch and Elizabeth Abbott
Aventine Hill Holdings
Linda Visser and Jerome Bishop
Helia Brew and Christopher Brew
Alison Hannay and Michael Hannay
Tina Sartori
Herman Sugrim and Evelyn Sugrim
Rocky Cerminara and Marilyn Cerminara
Melissa Ankers and Michael Ankers

\$5,000 – \$7,499

Karen Conway and Chris Blackmore
Nancy Branscombe and Ken Kalopsis
The Charitable Gift Funds Canada Foundation
Buehler Custom Woodworking

Jim Middlemiss and Mary Weil

\$2,500 – \$4,999

Christine Haas and Robert Haas
Sarah Tattersall and Kevin Endo
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Paul Broad and Sara Seck
Christina Mack
TD Friends of the Environment Foundation
Nitzan Holzberg and Ilanit Ben Nachum
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Deborah Ward and Randy Dafoe
Dean Murray
Nelson Chan Medicine Professional Corporation
Suzanne Fratschko Elliott
Lorraine Athwal and George Athwal
Kelsey Ramsden and Robert Ramsden
Michael Robb and Shannon Robb
Paul Noad and Sara Noad
Trevor McKenzie and Noelle Carrier
LJ Visser Professional Corp
Susan Johnson and Ian MacKenzie
Cynthia Chan Medicine Professional Corp
Lutheran Social Services (London)
Barb Gerber
Blythe Allman and Brian Allman
Beth Belanszky and Jean Pierre Brunet
David Pasquino
Murphy Bus Lines
The Robb Family
HRdownloads Inc.

\$1,000 – \$2,499

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Aashish Goela and Neena Goela
Ann Marie Harding and John Harding
Tonya Dendrinis
Angie Daouk and Jalal Daher
Charles Wright and Jill Wright
Sheila Powell and David Tweddell
Ruth Butler

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Sue Manders and Paul Manders
Karen Townsend and Fred Dick
Shannon Webb and Jason Nicholls
Sarah Juusola and Davin Juusola
Finan Swim School
Mark Innes and Cigdem Akincioglu
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Amanda Walton and David Walton
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Michael Chu and Tamara Vanhooren
Mike Greene
Sifton Family Foundation
Laura M. Gribble and Paul Gribble
Angeline Soni
Libro Credit Union
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Caroline Rimbault and Andrew Rimbault
Tina Mele and Robert Riccardi
Central Optometry
London Community Foundation
Kerry Anderson
Crystal Muller and Jon Sutherland
Stuart Swinamer and Stephanie Fox
Lee Hargreaves and Elizabeth Wilson
Elizabeth Wilson and Lee Hargreaves
Geoff Connors and Cathy Blokker
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Jennifer Neron and Michael Cooney
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Cindy Buehler and Dean Buehler
Kamran Kizilbash and Sajal Kizilbash
Dr. Natalya Karp Medicine Professional Corporation
Catalina Casas and Wilfredo Puentes
Cyrus Hsia and Heather Bowman
Carl Hallberg and Phyllis Retty
Eric Janitis
Megan Komenda
JDI Cleaning Systems
Alan Getgood Medical Professional Corp
The Corporation of the City of London
