



# HIMS

## Monthly News

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**ARTICLES, EVENTS, PHOTOS, & MORE!**

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**December 2022**

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# Routine and flexibility

And suddenly it's December! This is a month that many people cherish whether for religious reasons, family reasons, or for potentially having some time off from work and school; December is a treasure to many. It's also a time that can be overwhelming, sad, challenging, and busy. It's hard to know what every family's experience is this time of year, but one thing is for sure, it's very easy to fall out of routines.

Montessori education can help anchor students (and teachers) at this time of year. While Montessori classrooms are far from rigid (we love freedom, choice, and independence!), they are steeped in routine. Students learn early on to expect a rhythm and pattern to their day. Students in the elementary classrooms know their day starts with outdoor recess, while students in toddler know that after snack it will soon be time to sing songs in circle. Lunch may not start at noon on the dot every day (maybe it took a little longer to come in from 11:30 recess, or maybe the class is at their tables ready to eat at 11:55) students know what comes before and after lunch to help anchor their routine. Even children who can't tell time yet understand when their parent is a little early or a little late to pick up. But don't fret, as I mentioned the goal is more of a rhythm than a rigidity. We strive for consistency, not perfection.

When we have a solid and consistent routine, we create a feeling of trust and safety for ourselves and our children. When a child has a reliable routine they do better on days when that routine gets thrown out the window. This is likely because they can sense that this is a one-off and we will be back on track tomorrow. We have observed that children who have some flexibility in their routine adapt better than students whose schedules are too rigid or too unstructured. Students, like adults, appreciate a heads up when things are changing, and in Montessori we try to provide that by going over the plans for the day in our morning circles and by giving gentle reminders before a transition to something different. Having said this, we aren't against spontaneity at all. Having an uninterrupted work period is one of the pillars of Montessori education. Every classroom has a large block of time (ideally 2-3 hours and often in the morning). This is the time that students are working on their academic lessons. They often work individually or with a partner.

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This is also the time when teachers are giving students individualized attention whether that's a lesson or helping them with a quick question. In this uninterrupted work time students are engaging in the content areas of the classroom and may also be following their own academic interests/projects. This is also a time when students may experience a sense of awe as they discover something new or unexpected. This open work time may look like there's no structure to it, but in fact, it's very structured as it's something that happens around the same time every day for about the same amount of time, with the same expectations of behavior, grace, and courtesy. The work that gets done in this work time may look different in quantity, or look different from child to child or from day to day, but the learning opportunities and challenges are always there. It's an important part of the routine and again the routine is what anchors the classroom.

Even on days when things are happening that are out of the ordinary it still happens within the routine. For example, a lot of classes do a game and craft day right before winter break. While this is different from a typical day, many things stay intact. The students would still have a morning circle or morning meeting, they'll do the crafts and games during the uninterrupted work period. They will still eat lunch after that, they'll still have recess. They will find their craft supplies on trays on the shelves just as they would find their academic works.

This holiday season as you find yourself in the hustle and bustle, we encourage you to take one worry off your plate. Things are routine here at HMS, just as your child would expect.

Happy Holidays to you and here's to a joyful 2023!

Warmly,  
*Aimee*



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# Upcoming Events & Closures

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**December 7th**

Infant/ Toddler/ EC Transition Education Night  
\*\*Parent only event beginning at 6pm\*\*

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**December 15th**

Auction Committee Interest Meeting  
(10am @ Cutters Point Flagship)

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**December 21st**

Noon Dismissal - All Programs (No Childcare)

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**December 22nd -  
December 30th**

School Closed - Winter Break

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**January 2nd**

School Closed - New Years Observance Day

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**Check out all upcoming Parent Grove events here: [Social Calendar](#)**





# The Importance of Memorizing Math Facts

By Gail Pederson, Head Teacher of Madrona



When a student enters into 4th grade we often stress the importance of a solid foundation in reading skills. Children are transitioning from learning how to read, to “reading to learn”. Coincidentally, this is also a pivotal time to have basic math facts memorized, as well.

Math facts, or “times tables”, are building blocks for other higher learning math topics such as division, long multiplication, fractions, and algebra. If a child has not memorized their facts these other concepts will prove to be much more difficult than necessary, often leading to the student falling behind in math.

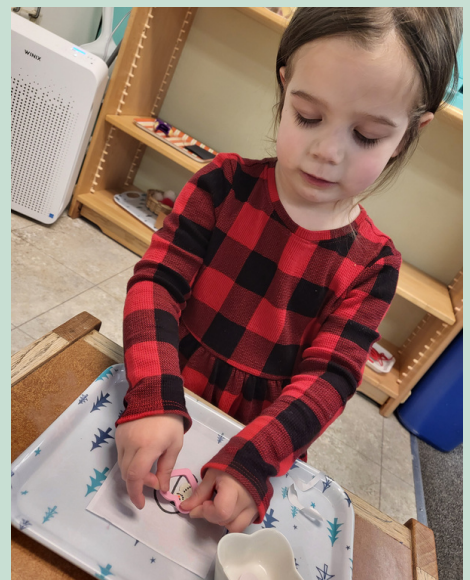
Multiplication is repeated addition, but a faster way of adding. Using manipulatives, skip counting and arrays are some strategies children can use to understand the concept. Once children have mastered these basics they can begin to see patterns in multiples. They learn that multiples of ten all end in zero and all even numbers are multiples of two. There comes a time, however, when memorization of facts is necessary. Answers need to come immediately.

You can help your child with fact memorization in a variety of ways. Focus a limited time on the facts that need to be learned. Begin by eliminating the facts that the child already knows, as well as reciprocal facts ( $2 \times 3$  is the same as  $3 \times 2$ ). It is often surprising how few are left! Making flashcards rather than buying them is useful, as it adds the act of writing them down. Verbal quizzes in the car on the way to the store are helpful. Once a set is learned it’s time to mix them up and quiz the facts out of order. The ability to recall facts randomly and within a couple of seconds is the ultimate goal.

Working with your child and demonstrating that it is an important part of their learning can boost motivation and confidence. Acknowledge success along the way and try to have fun. The payoff is worth it.



# Around Campus





# Winter Crafts

By Kelsey Getman, Head Teacher of Spruce



It's the most wonderful time of the year to do some fun activities at home with your family! The late fall and winter are the best times to create memories. With the weather being dark and dreary, what's a better way to spend time with your little ones than to do cooking and craft projects. All of these activities are a great way to bring Montessori in the home. They will promote fine motor skills, cooking skills, eye and hand coordination, and of course- independence! Below are some of my favorite ideas. Enjoy!

## Graham cracker house

### Ingredients

- Graham crackers
- Royal icing (mix 1 pound of powdered sugar and 5 tablespoons of meringue powder with 1/2 Cup of water)
- Assortment of goodies for decorating- gumdrops, marshmallows, pretzels, candy canes, sprinkles, etc)
- Small waffle cones for trees



### Instructions

You will need four graham crackers per cottage. Break two in half to form four squares. For the other two, carefully cut with a serrated knife. Use a gentle back-and-forth action for the least amount of breakage. Using the icing, fix the square to a paper plate. Attach one of your peaked-roof crackers by attaching it to the paper plate and the first square, repeat with your second peaked-roof cracker. Add the final wall of your cottage. To each side, attach a square to form a roof. Let the cottage set for about 30 minutes and then decorate!

## Coffee Filter Snowflakes

### Materials

- Coffee filters
- Washable markers
- Spray bottle
- Scissors



### Instructions

1. Flatten your coffee filters and color them with washable markers.
2. Place your coffee filters onto a tray and spray them with water. Swirl the filters around to make the colors move to different places. Let the coffee filters dry completely.
3. Fold your coffee filters in half. Then, fold it in half again.
4. Fold your piece into thirds.
5. Begin cutting shapes. These make beautiful suncatchers when taped to the window.

## Hot Cocoa Cookies

### Ingredients

- 1 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup softened butter
- 1 egg
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1/3 cup sour cream
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1/2 tsp. baking soda
- 2 cups flour
- 2 TBSP holiday sprinkles
- Fudge Filling:
  - 2 cups semi-sweet chocolate chips
  - 1 14 ounce can sweetened condensed milk
  - 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- You'll also need:
  - 24 mini candy canes
  - tiny marshmallows
  - 1 TBSP white chocolate chips melted



### Instructions

1. Making the cookie cups: Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Spray a mini muffin tin with cooking spray.
2. With a hand mixer, cream together sugar and butter. Add egg and vanilla. In a separate bowl, combine sour cream, salt and soda. Add flour and sour cream to butter mixture, beat until smooth. Add 2-3 TBSP holiday sprinkles and mix just until combined. Scoop dough out using a 2 TBSP cookie scoop and put one in each mini muffin cup.
3. Bake cookies for 15-18 minutes.
4. Right after you take them out, use a small measuring spoon to push into the middle of each cookie cup, creating a space for the fudge filling to go.
5. Let cool in the pan for 10-15 minutes, then gently run a thin knife along the sides to pop them out.
6. To make the fudge filling: Combine the chocolate chips and sweetened condensed milk in a microwave safe bowl. Mix lightly and microwave on high for 1-2 minutes. Add vanilla and stir again until smooth.
7. Transfer about 3/4 the fudge into a quart-sized Ziplock bag. Squeeze the fudge into a corner and snip the corner off. Now you can easily pipe the fudge into the cookies.
8. If your fudge gets too solid, just pop it back in the microwave for 10-15 seconds.
9. To assemble the cookies: Cut the rounded part off the candy canes and adhere them to the side of each cookie cup with melted white chocolate.
10. Fill each cookie cup with fudge. Place several tiny marshmallows on top. Let cool.
11. Store cookies in an airtight container on the countertop, or in the fridge for up to 1 week.

*Lights! Camera!  
Auction!*

SAVE THE DATE

APRIL 22, 2023

MCCORMICK WOODS





# Board Corner

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Hi! My name is Sarah Baker. My son Greyson who is 5 years old is currently in his second(ish) year at HMS. Greyson was one of the first kids enrolled at the Tracyton Campus in the beginning of 2022. When I first heard of HMS expanding to a Tracyton campus, I wasn't looking for a school for Greyson. We had a lot of hesitation sending him to school because he had never been with anyone except family. After meeting the staff and learning more about the school we decided to try it out. Shortly after he started we began to notice the amazing impact of Montessori. Greyson was becoming more confident when playing with other kids at the park and at home he was excited to start doing more "big boy things" around the house. HMS helped us see that Greyson was not only ready, but very capable of doing most anything. It has been such a joy to see the growth of the Tracyton campus and our son over this past year.

So now that you know why I'm hooked on HMS, here is a little more about me: I come from a big family and am so thankful because like they say, it takes a village! Once I entered motherhood, I started a podcast where I interviewed moms about the truth of motherhood and oddly enough that led my husband and I to start our own business. We own a real estate firm, Manette Real Estate Co., in Bremerton. My real passion is in building community by hosting local events and getting involved in non-profits. I host the Manette Market, which I have been growing since 2021 to support local small businesses and bring people together. I currently serve on the board of the Manette Business Association, Bremerton Farmers Market, and I joined the Harbor Montessori Board in June, which I am so excited to be a part of and support the future of HMS. Some of my favorite things include wine, chocolate, puzzles, carbs, podcasts and of course, Mrs. Butler! ;)

I hope to see you around campus!

*Sarah Baker*  
**Trustee**



# Board Corner

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## WHEN I WAS...

- picking up my nephew Samuel and my daughter Chloe the other day, there was a little boy also named Samuel waiting patiently to give my nephew a gift of homemade jelly. He could not contain his enthusiasm waiting for Samuel to walk out of building B. The little Samuel even made him a card that said, "thank you for being funny and playful". It was so joyous to observe and brought a smile to my heart. This is HMS.
- at BINGO night some of the Upper El students (on their own doing) planned, baked, advertised, and hosted a bake sale which raised over \$100 for a local humane society. This is HMS.
- at the Tracyton campus for a meet & greet/Board meeting, the school and parents were hosting a gently used book giveaway, while planning a toy giveaway coming in December. This is HMS.
- in building A, the lobby was filled with bags of donated food for the local food bank. Thank you to the Kindergarten kiddos for leading this drive. This is HMS.
- elected Chair of the Board, I researched what exactly is the role of a Board Chair. I know they lead meetings, help fundraise, work with the Head of School, but what else can they bring to the table that creates success for the school? Passion! The Board Chair and Trustees should be ambassadors for the school, share all the good that happens that we probably do not see daily. So, with this passion, we are sharing it with you and others, through our impact stories in the monthly newsletters. Today, I challenge all of you to stop and observe, really look around and notice. What do you see? You will see giving and kindness and compassion and sharing amongst our children. This is HMS.

Have a happy holiday!

**Wendy Holt**  
**Board Chair**





# Around Campus

