



Comet Connection

January 29, 2020

Cottage School, *Montessori Education*

San Juan Unified School District

Greetings Cottage Community,

We have just passed the half-way mark in the school year and you should have received progress reports for your children last week. While progress reports largely focus on whether or not your child is performing at grade level, it is just as important, if not more, that your child continues to make growth in closing any gaps in their learning. If you have questions about your child's progress report please contact their teacher.

Our PTA will be taking over MOD Pizza at Howe 'bout Arden on February 4th and our Spring Book Fair is rapidly approaching as well (March 23-27). We are still looking for a few PTA Officer candidates for the 2020-21 school year with voting taking place at our General meeting on February 28th.

The district is hosting a special early kindergarten registration event at Greer Elementary on Saturday, Feb 8th from 9:00 am - 2:00 pm with regular enrollment beginning February 11th at San Juan Central. We always fill up our classes so please be sure you register early! TK students (born Sept 2 – Dec 2, 2015) can register beginning Feb 4th. TK enrollment is first come, first served so get in early that morning to protect your spot at Cottage!

Sincerely,
Dr. Arthur Estrada, Principal

Important Dates

January 29	Winter Concert 5:30 pm
February 3	ELPAC Testing Begins
February 4	TK Registration Begins Fire Drill 2:00 pm PTA Dinner Take Over MOD Pizza Howe & Arden
February 6	Assembly
February 8	Kindergarten Early Enrollment Event at Greer Elementary School 9:00 am – 2:00 pm
February 11	Junior Achievement Day
February 17-21	Winter Break – NO SCHOOL
February 26	Reading Challenge Gathering 2:00 pm Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser 5:30 pm
February 28	PTA General Mtng 6:00 pm
March 6	End of 2nd Trimester
March 10-13	Parent Conferences Minimum Day Schedule 12:05 dismissal all grades

Understanding Montessori Education

What do children do in a Montessori program?

There are several different, yet integrated, areas of learning in a Montessori classroom: practical life skills, sensorial development, language, mathematics, history, science, and cultural studies (geography, art, music). In addition to the available materials in each area, children might also take time out during the day to sing songs, read a story, or enjoy nature.

Children have both individual and group lessons in each area. Throughout the day, children are free to work with the activities. Emphasis is placed on helping children choose pursuits that are of interest to them, thus supporting the child's natural curiosity and desire to learn. At the elementary (6-12 years) level, you can also expect to see children working together on projects, since collaboration at this age helps the child to become socially adapted to society and aware of the needs of others.

In a Montessori class, children are engaged, active, and respectful because they are internally motivated, spending their time in an environment that consistently supports development of their will — that is, positive willpower and self-control.

How is discipline handled in a Montessori classroom?

It is the development of self-discipline that is encouraged and valued. By maintaining a carefully prepared, structured environment that encourages exploration, creativity, and choice within clear boundaries, the child learns self-control and problem-solving skills that foster independence and responsibility. In this setting, discipline is viewed as a maturation process that evolves, supported by guidance from the teacher. With gentle, prudent assistance, children eventually become comfortable and equipped to accept the consequences of their own behavior. Skilled teachers use Montessori materials and activities to promote a classroom atmosphere that reinforces personal discipline and harmony by offering each child the opportunity to gain a sense of direction, confidence, cooperation, and self-control.

Do children have difficulty transitioning to a public school after going to a Montessori school?

Moving from a Montessori school to another school setting is an issue often raised by parents and family members. Happily, the habits and skills a child develops in a Montessori class last a lifetime and stand a child in good stead no matter where they go. Montessori children tend to be adaptable, working well alone or with a group. They have solid decision-making skills, practical problem-solving abilities, and generally manage their time well. Since children in a Montessori classroom are also encouraged to share ideas and discuss their work, fitting into new situations is made easier thanks to good communication skills.

Pick up and Drop off

While we try to get our children loaded at the end of the day as quickly as possible, safety is our primary concern. We thank you all for your patience as you pick up your children each day from the front of the school/bus zone area. For those of you who park your vehicles along the street or across at the park, please be careful in crossing the street and ensure that you are using the cul de sac at the end of the park parking lot for U-turns.

We have also noticed that many children are not utilizing their safety belts or appropriate car seats in vehicles. Car seats and seat belts required by law, and we recently had a child hurt just up Morse Avenue because they were not wearing a seatbelt at a sudden stop. Please help us keep our children safe.

Cottage PTA News

Our next General Meeting is on Tuesday, February 28th from 6:00-7:00 pm. We will be meeting in the library to discuss plans for the school year. Childcare will be available for your students in the cafeteria. Students will be engaged in activities and will have pizza for dinner while you are meeting with us.

We are looking for volunteers to serve on next year's PTA Executive board. Meetings are once a month and help shape our activities and fundraisers in support of all our classes. Additionally, we are always looking for volunteers. If you are able to volunteer for any of our events we could always use your help. If you are able to assist, please email us at PTACottage@gmail.com.

Thank you for your support of Cottage Elementary and the PTA!