

A publication of Sedona Charter School  
K-8 Tuition-free Montessori School

Writing: SCS Staff and GC members  
Photos: SCS Staff and parents  
Design & Editing: Jane Cathcart



Summer Enrichment  
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Classroom News  
Letter From the President

academic excellence ... personal growth ... small school environment

# Roadrunner report

music notes >>>

## A Job Well Done



Thanks to everyone who bought tickets for our Spring String Fling concert on May 16th. The students did a fabulous job and the smaller groups on stage served to highlight individual progress and achievement. It was a relaxed and calm evening basking in the sounds of musical excellence.

We are so proud of our students for their perseverance this year. While everyone has shown growth and progress, we were particularly amazed at how far the orchestra has come since December.

We want to say a huge thanks to Dean and Jane Cathcart and The Master's Bible Church for allowing us to perform there for the past five years (ten concerts). Our program has grown so much through Kristina's leadership that we have outgrown that space and are looking for a new, affordable venue.

Keep practicing over the summer and be ready for a great year of strings beginning in August.



## Summer Teacher Enrichment

Our teachers never stop learning and neither should you. While every summer brings new opportunities for our students to broaden their horizons and learn new things, our teachers are also "back to school" refining their skills, mastering new curriculum and discovering new ways to make academics fun and meaningful.



LE facilitating teacher Amy Tedrick is in school nearly all summer. Talk about summer school! She will be completing her Montessori Elementary I

training this summer and into next school year. She travels to Phoenix every Monday and comes home on the weekends to spend time with family and do lots of homework.

Ana Hansen is working to take her Arizona teaching certification to the next level — her summer course of study will advance her toward a Reading Specialist endorsement.



Our new Upper Elementary Principal Educator, Suzi Ashley, can't wait to join Harry, Maija and Bethany to share knowledge of our amazing world with them and her new students. She is busy planning fall field trips and exciting new curriculum.



Harry spent a week at the Montessori Institute of the Pacific Northwest completing additional coursework and will be attending a two-week workshop in Prescott as part of Building a STEM Integrated Classroom coursework.

Bethany Gray, UE Facilitating Teacher, participated in an AZ Science Teachers Association two-day symposium on Energy for Educators hosted by Biosphere 2. She also attended a one-day seminar on Sustainability in Schools. Later this month Bethany will be part of Sedona's Wilderness First Responder first aid training with Hi Line WFR. Bethany also spent many hours working in the MS classroom science area to organize everything for next year.



While our new MS Principal Educator Lauren Rondeau won't be taking any formal training this summer, she is busy readying herself for a fabulous new year at SCS. She is working closely with Bethany Gray to get the classroom ready and gathering new ideas for curriculum and student activities.

## lower elementary >>>

# Why Are Assessments Important?

Our Lower Elementary teachers are dedicated to providing students with a unique, individualized Montessori based education where each child is working on the skills he/she is ready for and at a level at which he/she can be successful. This kind of program is not offered by most schools across our nation because it takes a tremendous amount of time and effort by teachers to set up and deliver an individualized program.

Parents, we need your help to make this happen. The reason we assess each student during the summer months is to evaluate how the child learns best and to give us time to put together a comprehensive individualized learning plan for each and every student. Don't think of assessments as a test your student must pass to enter the Lower Elementary classroom—nothing could be further from the truth.

Assessments are valuable tools to ensure

we deliver the level of education that will best spark your child on day one to learn and grow.

Lots of learning and adapting take place during the first weeks of school. If your child is new to our school, the workings of the classroom and the expectations, responsibilities and routines take some time to figure out and there is a short adjustment period. This is called normalization. It's a lot like visiting a foreign country and learning to adapt, perhaps feeling uncomfortable at the start and then understanding more and making changes to help one thrive in the new environment.

As parents, you can do many things to help your child succeed, and the most important one is to schedule your child's assessment.

Assessment times will be open beginning Tuesday, July 25th and will run every day (including weekends) through Saturday, August 5th. Watch your mailboxes for important documents and call the school office to schedule your child's assessment. Summer

office hours are Monday-Thursday (11 am to 4 pm). If you prefer, you may also e-mail [Noelle@sedonacharterschool.com](mailto:Noelle@sedonacharterschool.com) or [Lauren@sedonacharterschool.com](mailto:Lauren@sedonacharterschool.com) to schedule your child's assessment time. You'll need to plan on about an hour for each student.

The purpose of the assessment is to see what your child knows and remembers from last year so that appropriate individualized activities can be planned to ensure immediate successes in reading, math and other subject areas. Assessment results will be shared with parents when teachers are done meeting with your child.

So don't wait. Schedule your assessment TODAY.



## montessori >>>

### Did You know?

#### We actually learn from our Parent and Student Surveys

Every year parents and students are asked to complete our end of year online survey because we value your feedback. And we do actually listen to and learn from your input.

This year's survey had 95% of our school family participating and showed us once again that you choose Sedona Charter school for our Montessori curriculum and our individualized instruction. Overall satisfaction was the highest it has been since 2009 which means we are listening and growing. UE and MS classroom satisfaction was the best since we've been taking the surveys and LE was the second highest. We are pleased that parents and students are giving us important feedback and we are making changes to address your concerns.

Our strengths show through our teachers, our quality education, our campus, our strings program, and the many special activities we undertake. One of our Middle School parents commented that her child's greatest lesson was "learning how to ride subways in New York City and swim with bioluminescent plankton off the shores of Catalina Island." Another parent commented that our greatest strength is "preserving the spirit of the child," and we agree. Watch the August *Roadrunner Report* for a survey read-out from the teaching staff in each classroom.

## upper elementary >>>

# Welcome Suzi and Bethany



Allow us to introduce Suzi Ashley, our new Principal Educator in Upper Elementary next year. She is brimming with excitement to join Maija, Harry, Bethany

and the rest of the SCS family. Suzi was lucky enough to observe some of the amazing activities taking place in the classroom at the end of last school year and knew in an instant that she wanted to be part of sharing knowledge of this wonderful world together.

"The respect you have for each other and the warm culture of your school immediately made me feel welcome," she says. "I have taught K-7<sup>th</sup> grade, including four years in Puerto Aventuras, Mexico. This will be my 15<sup>th</sup> year of teaching, and I'm confident it will be the best. I love to run, read, travel and spend time with my daughter. I have been to fifteen countries and my goal is to see at least two more in the next five years."

"There are so many dynamite discoveries that we are going to make together this year. For example, we already have some amazing field trips in mind to enhance our learning experiences. Our first camping trip in the fall will be to Picacho State Park. Then we'll be delving into our Native American studies and visiting the incredible petroglyphs at V Bar V Ranch. As part of our Fundamental Needs of Humans studies we will travel to

the Musical Instrument Museum where we will immerse ourselves in music from around the world."

We'd also like you to meet Bethany Gray, our new UE Facilitating Teacher who will also be helping out in the Middle School classroom next year. She is a native of Colorado, Arizona and California but has also called Everglades NP, Zion NP, and even Costa Rica home over the years. Her education includes a BA in US Environmental History and three years of graduate coursework in Aquatic Ecology from NAU. While at NAU, Bethany taught introductory cell biology labs and participated with the National Park Service in a wide variety of school programs and settings.

"SCS provides such an incredible opportunity to educate and explore in smaller groups with so many tools that just are not available in mainstream public-school settings," she says. Bethany looks forward to taking hands on learning and expanding it to other areas of the sciences.

"My favorite summer activity is finding a sunny spot in a cold and clear stream enjoying the paradise we call home. I also love hiking, bicycling, reading, doing stained glass and cooking harvests fresh from my garden." Oh, and did we mention Bethany loves DOGS? She has three Corgis who make her life funny and interesting every day!



# A Great Team: Lauren and Niel



Lauren Rondeau, our new MS Principal Educator, and Niel Pableo our new Facilitating Teacher, are both excited to join our staff at Sedona Charter School and begin the new academic year.

To some, it may seem as if Lauren has always been a teacher. "Education has been an important part of my life from an early age, starting with creating my own classroom in my childhood home's garage complete with grade books, chalkboard, and imaginary students," she says. Lauren comes to SCS with 13 years of experience teaching and directing Montessori middle schools. She holds a Bachelor of Science in both Elementary Education and Special Education, graduating cum laude from NAU. During her ten years at the Montessori Charter School of Flagstaff, she designed challenging curriculum and motivated her students to do their best. She was mentored by an AMS-trained Adolescent Program teacher and became instrumental in the foundation, development and implementation of the middle school program. As word of her outstanding program spread, middle school enrollment steadily grew.

Lauren has had the opportunity to mentor two other Montessori lead teachers and was promoted to the role of Director while maintaining her teaching role. Lauren recently returned to the U.S. after teaching in Abu Dhabi for a year, and looks forward



to continuing our Middle School tradition of academic challenge, social development, and outdoor adventure.

"I am busy preparing for a fabulous new year at SCS and look forward to meeting all the new students and their families," Lauren comments. "And although I am comfortable teaching all core subjects, I'm most passionate about teaching literature and writing. I am happy to return to Arizona and continue my love of teaching."

Niel Pableo is a dedicated teacher who was educated within the Montessori pedagogy. He joins us after spending 8 years teaching middle school math and physics in the Philippines and Saudi Arabia. Known for being strict and yet fun with his students, Niel is always looking for ways to connect math to real life. The math team he coached in the Philippines did so well that they competed in the World Math Invitational Finals in China in 2015.



With a Bachelor's degree in teaching math and physics from the University of San Carlos and 42 units towards his Master of Arts in Education in Mathematics, Niel is a highly qualified and highly effective math teacher. He looks forward to learning more about the U.S. from our students and sharing his experiences in the Philippines and Saudi Arabia with them.

## Letter from the President



Hello everyone,

On behalf of the Governing Council I would like to thank the teachers, staff, parents and students for a wonderful school year.

As summer vacation is upon us and the students (as well as teachers) are enjoying a much needed break, it is important to note that a good amount of knowledge is lost during the summer when students do not engage in academic activities during their time away from school. A 2015 study reveals that 70 percent of primary school teachers recommend voluntary summer reading programs to counteract this academic decline. Sedona Public Library has a fantastic summer reading program for kids continuing through July 29th. For the families on the go, there are a number of websites that can be accessed from computers and I-pads. [funbrain.com](http://funbrain.com) and [coolmath4kids.com](http://coolmath4kids.com) are some sites that have plenty of free educational reading and math games for kids K-8th grade.

[Kids.nationalgeographic.com](http://kids.nationalgeographic.com) is an excellent science website with very interactive and engaging videos for kids to enjoy.

I would like to thank Maureen Nealon and Kassie Burkee for their service to the Governing Council. Their leadership and dedication will be missed. As we prepare for the new school year, we are looking for two new members of our Governing Council — at least one community member who may have experience in the education field and another parent. If you are interested, please feel free to attend our meeting on July 18th at 3:45 pm in the Middle School classroom and/or contact Alice Madar at the school office.

Respectfully yours,  
Steven Paley, President  
Sedona Charter School  
Governing Council

## ask a teacher >>>

**Q:** What has been your favorite aspect of teaching Spanish this year?



**A:** As a first year Spanish teacher for the Middle School here at Sedona Charter School, I had a blast getting to know the students and learning how to approach language learning from a whole new perspective. The students caught on quickly and participated enthusiastically in the interactive, conversation-based lessons. We played games and utilized online lessons, learned how to correctly enunciate and conjugate, and practiced having full length conversations. We ended the year with a wonderful trip to Café Jose's, where our server created a menu written completely in Spanish and the students successfully ordered their meals in fluent Spanish. I am confident they will move on to high school with a good grasp of bilingual language learning, and it has been a pleasure to be their teacher.



## staff >>>

**Lower Elementary:** Bob and Terri Wentsch, Katarina Houser, Amy Tedrick, Dolores Biermann, Ana Hansen  
**Upper Elementary:** Suzi Ashley, Maija Alanen, Harry Buedel, Bethany Gray, Jacquie Randall  
**Middle School:** Lauren Rondeau, Niel Pableo, Bethany Gray  
**Orchestral Strings:** Kristina Beachell  
**Administration:** Alice Madar, Noelle Reeves, Lauren Hendler  
**Title I:** Joe Falsetto and Ana Hansen  
**Special Education:** Lucy Schwill, Teri Lechowski



## looking ahead >>>

### August 2017

*Family Survey Results*  
*Back to School Night*  
*Ask A Teacher*  
*Alumni Profile*



contact us at 928-204-6464  
[www.sedonacharterschool.com](http://www.sedonacharterschool.com)

165 Kachina Drive  
Sedona, AZ 86336

**our mission...** *Our Montessori school challenges each child to achieve excellence through an individualized program, which includes a schoolwide musical strings program. We inspire a passion for learning, instill a sense of personal responsibility, and cultivate a respect for the environment and involvement in the community.*

## around campus and beyond >>>

# End of Year Wrap-Up



Whether conquering a ropes course in Middle School, mastering Shakespeare in Upper

Elementary or ice skating in Lower Elementary, our students had a fantastic year of learning and growing both inside and outside of their classrooms.

As always, our Lower Elementary students prepared, cooked, served and consumed yet another Thanksgiving meal learning both cooking skills and people skills in the process. Our youngest students hosted potlucks for parents, met and learned about therapy dogs, hosted foreign exchange students from the Middle East, and presented an amazing year-end program. They enjoyed local field trips, presented amazing strings concerts and saw the Grand Canyon via train. We'd like to thank our LE parents for their support and involvement in and outside of the classroom,

partnering with us to complete yet another year at SCS.

If you ask one of our Upper Elementary students about the highlights of their year, most include one of the many field trips resulting in a fantastic, academically enriched year. From identifying volcanic features at Sunset Crater to visiting Wupatki and Honanki Heritage sites, our students learned much about the ancient culture of our native peoples. Of course, no UE year would be complete without fostering connection and community on the big camping trip visiting the Grand Canyon and points beyond.

Our Middle School students began their year learning outdoor lessons at Camp Colley and finished their journey at Odyssey of the Mind World Finals. Joined by several of our 6th year students, our Odyssey of the Mind team did so well at the state competition that they were invited to participate in the World Finals in Ann Arbor, Michigan. This was an amazing honor and we are so proud of the parents who rallied together to make the trip possible. Our



new student Operations Team organized several Parent Night Out ventures and learned the ins and outs of school operations throughout the year. Our 8th years completed their journey on Catalina Island enjoying marine biology first hand, up close and personal. Thanks to the incredible parents and community members who helped make this year unforgettable.

And finally, to all of our students who never thought they could play a violin or other stringed instrument, we thank you for the wonderful music you provided us all year. Your teamwork, hours of practice and dedication are what sets Sedona Charter School apart from the rest. We appreciate your leadership, creativity, initiative and love of learning and look forward to another magical year of music and learning beginning in August.