

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

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Making the First Day Easier
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Cultivate Learning
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Why Strings?

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

Roadrunner report

music notes >>>

Why Strings? Part Four



Nearly everyone enjoys music, whether by listening, singing, or playing an instrument. But despite this almost universal interest, few schools emphasize the many benefits that music education brings. Our Strings Program can and does enrich students' lives and education. Here are four more reasons why music education is so important, and how it offers benefits even beyond itself.

11. Fine-tuned auditory skills: Musicians can detect meaningful, informational elements in sounds, like the emotional meaning in a baby's cry. Students who practice music have better auditory attention and pick out predictable patterns from surrounding noise.

12. Music builds imagination and intellectual curiosity: Introducing music in the early childhood years fosters a positive attitude toward learning and curiosity. Artistic education develops the whole brain and enhances a child's imagination.

13. Music is relaxing: Students can fight stress by learning to play music. Soothing music is especially significant in helping kids relax.

14. Musical instruments teach discipline: Kids who play an instrument learn valuable lessons in discipline. They learn time management, perseverance and excellence mastering the art of playing their instrument with skill and passion.



Making the First Day Easier

The new school year begins Wednesday, August 8th and we're offering these tips to transition smoothly from summer to school.

1. Emphasize the positive aspects of starting school to create enthusiasm and anticipation about the first day of class. Kids will see old friends and meet new ones, so let's get geared up together for another wonderful year at SCS.
2. Some children become nervous about new situations, including changing classrooms or teachers. If your child seems nervous, bring them to visit the classroom before the first day of school. A great opportunity for this is our Back to School Night on August 7th at 5:30 pm.
3. Make sure to touch base with your child's teacher during the first week of school to open the lines of communication and show you want to be supportive of your child's school experience.
4. Consider starting kids on their school sleep/wake schedule a week or so ahead of time. Getting enough sleep is crucial for a child to be successful in school. Set a consistent bedtime and stick with it every night. Turn off electronic devices at least an hour before bedtime.
5. Choose a backpack with wide, padded shoulder straps and a padded back. Pack light. Organize to use all compartments. Pack heavier items closest to the center of



the back. The backpack should never weigh more than 10-20% of your child's body weight. Go through the pack weekly and remove unneeded items to keep it light.

6. Studies show that children who eat a nutritious breakfast that includes protein function better and have greater concentration and more energy. When packing lunches and snacks, choose healthy options (such as water and real juices). Include protein, fruits, vegetables and healthy carbs. Leave sugary drinks at home.
7. If your child is planning to bike to school this year, practice the bike route before the first day of school to make sure he/she can manage it. Always wear a bicycle helmet, no matter how short or long the ride. Ride on the right, in the same direction as auto traffic and ride in bike lanes if they are present. Wear bright-colored clothing to increase visibility and know the "rules of the road."
8. At home, create an environment that is conducive to doing homework with a consistent work space in a quiet room, without distractions to promote study. Schedule time for homework. Build this time into choices about after school activities. Supervise computer, phone and internet use. Be available to answer questions and offer minimal assistance. Don't take over and do it for your child.

We look forward to seeing everyone in just a few short days!

New Energy, New Schedule, New Faces

This summer Lower Elementary has been undergoing some major changes! Some new things students and parents can look forward to are:

- A traditional Montessori 3-hour work session
- No assigned seating
- Specials such as Library, Physical Education, Computers and Art
- Writing and Literature Circles

One important change that all should be aware of is that we are discontinuing our after-school program. As a convenience for parents, we are planning to coordinate with Precious Stones to offer transportation to their facility for students who have been enrolled in their after-school program. We will send out more information regarding when we have finalized our plans. Please arrange for your students to be picked up between 3:00-3:15 pm daily.

We are also happy to introduce our two new Lower Elementary teachers: Amy Alexander and KC O'Connor!



"Hello! I am KC O'Connor, and I'm very excited to be moving south after 10 years teaching in Haines, Alaska. Haines is a very small, remote community on a peninsula

along the southeast arm of Alaska. This summer my daughter and I have been hiking through the rainforests out to beautiful coastlines covered with the local wildflowers of paintbrush, wild geranium, fireweed, shooting star, and wild iris. We've also been foraging for tasty edibles like fiddleheads, wild sorrel and other beach greens. Before moving to Alaska, I spent 15 years teaching in private and charter school programs in Colorado. I am looking forward to meeting and getting to know everyone in my new Sedona Charter School family. See you soon!"



"Aloha!!! My name is Amy Alexander. I am returning to teaching after managing an organic farm and coffee plantation in Kona, Hawaii for 14 years. I enjoy hiking,

camping, yoga, rock climbing, gardening, spending time with family and working with children. I am looking forward to the natural beauty of Sedona and all it has to offer to facilitate a great foundation for physical fitness, healthy living, and scientific inquiry.

Over the summer I enjoyed traveling in Washington and Idaho with family and friends. We did everything from camping, paddle boarding, kayaking, hiking and biking to cooking, warming up by the fire and visiting with family and friends. I am looking forward to sharing my knowledge and energy in the classroom while connecting with staff, students and parents through the Montessori curriculum and outdoor activities. Mahalo Nui Loa!!!"

Amy will be encouraging our staff and students to stay active and live healthy while KC will use her arts background to ensure children get a solid foundation in visual and performing arts. We are eager for the new school year to begin and look forward to seeing you all at Back To School Night on Tuesday, August 7th at 5:30 pm.

DID YOU KNOW?

THE GOAL OF A
MONTESSORI EDUCATION
IS TO FOSTER A LOVE
OF LEARNING.

DID YOU KNOW?

MONTESSORI CHILDREN
HAVE PROVEN
TO OUT-TEST CHILDREN IN
TRADITIONAL SCHOOLS.

Cultivate Learning

We have some exciting news in Upper Elementary this year. Not only do we have an incredible year of adventurous learning planned, but we also have two amazing new teachers to introduce. Please give Mackenzie and Lisa a warm welcome and introduce yourselves at Back to School Night, Tuesday August 7th at 5:30 pm.

Mackenzie Pace is a bright and energetic teacher. She has a bachelor's degree in social work with a minor in biology. Mackenzie has extensive experience working with children and her eyes light up with joy when speaking about teaching in the classroom.



"When I think about the people who have influenced me most in the world, many of them are teachers. They are the people who have encouraged me, challenged me, and guided me. That is exactly what I want out of my life. I desire to inspire children to ask questions, I want to challenge them to be the best they can be, and I want to encourage them to always be curious. I love the pure joy a child has when they learn something new and exciting. I have worked with kids of all ages and there is simply something that you get from interacting with kids that you cannot get from any other job. Teaching children is truly the most satisfying job I have ever had.

In my free time, I love to travel, camp and hike. Every year my family and I take a road

trip to see our wonderful national parks. This is the highlight of every summer. I enjoy exploring new places with the people I love most. When not outdoors, I like to relax on the weekends and have a lazy day just to watch movies and read books."



We are also incredibly pleased that Lisa Mercer will be joining us as well. Lisa spent the past year teaching middle school English language arts on the San Carlos Apache Reservation in southeastern Arizona. She looks forward to living in Sedona, enjoying our fabulous landscape and getting to know Sedona Charter School staff, parents and students. Lisa packs a lot of spirit into her lessons allowing her to connect with students beyond the teacher/student relationship to help them make significant progress in learning. From teaching computer programming to driving school buses, she has a variety of life experiences and many stories to share. However, you will find that she prefers to listen and observe in the classroom because that allows her to see what truly ignites her students' passion for learning. Lisa loves to read, write and explore Arizona in her spare time.

She holds a B.S. in Interdisciplinary Studies/Public Management from NAU and an M.Ed. in Elementary Education from Grand Canyon University in Phoenix.

It's our desire to cultivate learning, and we are looking forward to a spectacular year!

Work Hard, Play Hard

Lauren Rondeau continues as Principal Educator this year as she leads captivating adventures in Middle School with her new team, Laurie Altringer and Ana Hansen. With this amazing trio (Lauren, Laurie and Ana), we are sure to have a little name confusion but a boatload of fun!

Adding a third member to the Middle School team is an important factor in helping bolster what we offer students. We will be able to facilitate more individualized lessons as well as integrate new methods of learning. Our teachers have spent countless hours this summer restructuring not only the physical space of the classroom, but also the curriculum and schedule. So, join us Tuesday evening, August 7th at 5:30 for Back to School Night and meet our new faces, notice our extra energy and take in the new look to our room. We hope to bring you a teaching team stronger than ever to give your students the best Middle School education possible in Sedona.



Laurie Altringer joins our team primarily responsible for teaching math and science. She has 12 years of teaching experience in Arizona and

Oregon as well as other countries and hopes that the real passion she brings to teaching will help students fall in love with learning. Although her core focus will be math and science, she is a strong promoter of the arts, having taught after-school violin and developed an outdoor mural project. She has led school math teams and sponsored school sustainability and gardening programs.

Laurie thrives on creating hands on “real-world” experiences for her students through outdoor education programs and field trips.

She speaks fluent Spanish, has taught Spanish in grades 1-5 and led an environmental education class in Spanish in Guatemala. We look forward to the energy and enthusiasm she brings to our MS classroom this year!

In her own words, “I am excited to be joining the SCS community and the Middle School teaching team! I love, love, love both math and science, so I lucked out becoming the new Middle School math and science teacher! I've taught 4th through 8th grades in Arizona, Oregon, and Abu Dhabi (just like Lauren!). This will be my 13th year of classroom teaching. I graduated from Northern Arizona University, where I studied Education and Chemistry and then attended Western Washington University for graduate school, where I studied Environmental Education. I have two kids who will also be Roadrunners (one in Lower Elementary and one in Upper Elementary). I enjoy hiking, swimming, crafting, practicing yoga, playing cards, traveling, and spending time outdoors with my family.

Two promises I make to my students: we will work hard, and we will play hard! I look forward to getting to know you!”



We are certain you will recognize this face from our LE classroom and Title I program last year. Ana joined us in 2016 as a reading teacher for our LE students. As we recognized her teaching and administration talent, her duties expanded to include administering our Title I program and heading up Peace education.

This year we are pleased to announce that she will work full-time in the Middle School classroom teaching social studies and literature.

Letter from the President



Hello Everyone,

Welcome back to school. This is the 24th year of classes at Sedona Charter School and we look forward to seeing you at Back To School Night on Tuesday, August 7 at 5:30 pm.

Our School uses the Montessori approach to education which is different from traditional schools. Rather than just passively receiving instruction, students are taught to become self-motivated, hands-on, responsible participants in their education.

Parents also play an essential role in our Montessori approach. One of the reasons, our school is so successful is parent involvement. Parents can volunteer in their child’s classroom, chaperone a field trip, volunteer for our Governing Council, be on one of a number of school committees, or help in any of our school-wide events (strings concerts, fall picnic, winter holiday around the world, just to name a few).

We have all the approvals and permits to build our new performing arts classroom, but we still need to raise \$50,000. Please consider donating your tax-credit dollars to this new classroom so that it can become a reality early this school year. We are excited to have our children learning and performing the arts in this new state of the art classroom.

If you are unable to donate on your family’s budget, perhaps you know someone who can. Please spread the word about our Strings Program and Performing Arts Classroom to others you know who can make a difference.

Respectfully yours,

Steven Paley, President
Sedona Charter School Governing Council

ask a teacher >>>

Q: Are You Prepared Enough for the First Day?



While children are filled with excitement and first-day jitters, parents are filled with thoughts about the best way to prepare children for the new school year. All you need is a little organization and planning ahead.

- A:
1. Get back into your sleep routine. 8-10 hours of sleep are essential
 2. Set up a homework station. Sit down with your child and designate a time and place for homework each day.
 3. Prepare for the unexpected. Before school even begins, have a sitter lined up in case you get that phone call saying your child is ill.
 4. Review and read all Back to School Info carefully, mark down important dates and returned signed forms.
 5. Get organized. Designate a spot in your house for school-related papers. This eliminates clutter and make life less stressful.

Through preparation and organization, you can ensure that your child will have a smooth transition to the start of the new school year. By doing so, you and your child can enjoy the rest of your summer break.



staff >>>

Lower Elementary: Katarina Houser, Amy Tedrick, Amy Alexander, KC O'Connor, Deborah Williams, Dolores Biermann
Upper Elementary: Suzi Ashley, Maija Alanen, Lisa Mercer, Mackenzie Pace, Jacquie Randall
Middle School: Lauren Rondeau, Laurie Altringer, Ana Hansen
Orchestral Strings: Kristina Beachell
Drama: Lauren Hendler
Administration: Alice Madar, Lauren Hendler, Jannette Villalobos-Gil
Title I: Bob Wentsch
Special Education: Lucy Schwill, Cynthia Tyler

BACK TO SCHOOL



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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.*

from campus to home >>>

Montessori at Home

There are five common phrases you'll hear in our Montessori classrooms that you should try incorporating into your home life.

1. I saw you working hard.

We focus on the process over the outcome. In following this key tenet of Montessori education, we avoid telling children "good work" or "awesome job." Instead we focus on how a child wrote so carefully that her work could be easily read by anyone. Praising a child's work ethic, rather than results, helps children realize they can improve through their own efforts.

Instead of telling your child, "You're a good boy," tell him "I noticed you being kind to your sister today." This shows that you notice good behavior, without placing judgment. Instead of telling her, "You're such a good musician," try "I noticed you kept practicing your piece until it sounded just how you wanted."

2. What do you think about your work?

In our classrooms each child becomes her own teacher. Yes, our teachers guide and present lessons, but then they stand back and allow students to discover and learn for themselves through carefully prepared materials. Self-analysis is a big part of that discovery.

When your child asks "Do you like my picture?" try asking what she thinks about

when drawing a picture, how she decides what colors to use, and what her favorite part is.

Help her start to evaluate her work for herself rather than looking for your approval.

3. Where could you look for that?

Independence is another key tenet in our classrooms. Our goal is to help children do things for themselves. So, while it's often easier to simply answer a child's question, we often answer questions with another question such as, "Where could you look for that?" or "Which friend could you ask for help?"

If your child loses a shoe and you see it peeking out from under the bed, try asking leading questions, rather than just handing it to him. "Where were you when you took your shoes off? Have you checked your room?" This may take more time initially, but it trains your child to start taking more initiative and as a result, coming to you less.

4. Which part would you like help with?

Our students are responsible for many things. But sometimes a job is just too big or an assignment too overwhelming. In these cases, we ask how we can help. We don't just swoop in and "save the day," because this sends the message that the child is either incapable or the adult in the room will always "do it for him."

For example: If your child is faced with cleaning his room, stuff everywhere can be

looking ahead >>>

September 2018

Classroom Happenings

Special Events Calendar

Ask A Teacher

Around Campus



overwhelming. A skilled parent can step in and lighten the load. Try "which pile would you like me to put away?" or "I'll clean off the bed, you start with the closet" to show that you're in it together.

5. In our class, (or home) we

This tiny phrase is key to reminding students of classroom rules and desired behaviors.

Phrasing reminders as objective statements about how the community works, rather than barking commands, is much more likely to elicit cooperation from a child. "In our class, we sit while we eat" is less likely to be met with an unfavorable response than "Sit down!" Children want to be a part of the community and we simply remind them how it works.

If you have a rule about not jumping on the furniture or beds, instead of saying "stop jumping," try saying "we only sit on the furniture inside our house" and see if you get fewer arguments and a happier child.

Montessori is so much more than just a 'type' of education. It's a way of seeing and being with children. Build on what your child is learning and doing in our classrooms by bringing the ideas into your home. You'll be amazed as you watch your child's independence and concentration grow.



Sedona Charter School

AUGUST 2018

back to School
Keeping parents informed



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	<p>Looking Ahead: September 3—No School—Labor Day September 5—Early Release Day September 13—Picture Day</p>		<p>1st Day of School</p>	STAFF WEEK	WEEK	
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
	<p>HOT LUNCH STARTS</p>	<p>Governing Council 3:45 pm</p>				
26	27	28	29	30	31	
				Hearing Screenings	Vision Screenings	Vision Screenings Maria Montessori's Birthday