

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

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*Celebration of Life*  
*How Hobbies Save the Planet*  
*Take a Stand, Lend a Hand*  
*Ice-Breaking and Team-Building*  
*Ask A Teacher*  
*International Day of Peace*

academic excellence ...

personal growth ...

small school environment

# Roadrunner report

## music notes >>>

### Why Strings? Part Five



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.

#### 15. Preparing for the creative economy:

Investing in music education can prepare students for the 21st century workforce. Our diverse and strong economy has created more artistic careers than ever before. Experts anticipate that these jobs will grow faster than others in the future.

**16. Developing creative thinking:** Kids who study the arts, particularly music, learn to think creatively. Music education helps them solve problems by thinking outside the box and realizing that there may be more than one correct answer. They learn to explore differing approaches to problem solving.

**17. Developing spatial intelligence:** Students who study music improve their development of spatial intelligence. This allows them to perceive the world accurately and form mental pictures. Spatial intelligence is helpful for advanced mathematics and much more.



## What's in a Test Score?

For some, very little. For others, very much. It all boils down to perspective. Tests in our society seek to evaluate what we know. But they aren't the only measuring device in the tool bag, so keep that in mind. As parents, it's your job to evaluate whether or not your children are learning the skills necessary to become productive adults. While we'd all like to have the surgeon operating on us who scored an A+ on his qualifying exam — would we really? Some of the college classes we learned the most in probably don't reflect that in the final grade.

For long-term success, some of the most important characteristics a student can demonstrate are curiosity and perseverance. Unfortunately, there is not a standardized test to measure these, so Arizona has a statewide testing program to measure student knowledge in math, English language arts (reading and writing) and science. The state grades schools on how their students perform on these tests.

The state grades have not yet been released for this year, but we can report on how our students performed on the standardized math and ELA tests. You will be happy to know that overall, Sedona Charter School outperformed all other schools in the Verde Valley by a significant amount. We are happy to report that your students are making progress and shining brighter than the rest!

We took a look at the overall 2018 AzMerit scores for the following schools:

Sedona Charter School, West Sedona Elementary, Big Park Community, Desert Star Community, American Heritage Academy (Cottonwood and Camp Verde campuses) Mountain View Prep, Oak Creek Elementary, Cottonwood Elementary and Middle School and Camp Verde Elementary and Middle Schools.

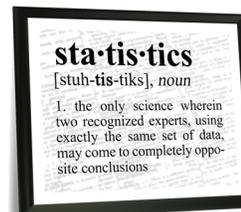
Here are just a few things that we discovered:

Sedona Charter School had the highest percentage of students receiving passing grades in English Language Arts and the highest percentage of those students passing with high proficiency. The next closest school was Mountain View Prep, and they were 4% lower. In fact, you might say we blew away the competition as most were 30-40% lower.

But what about Math? "That's more important," you say. We're happy to report we did even better! Compared to all the district schools, our Math scores were 30-40% higher except for Big Park who was a close second. Mountain View Prep was 13% lower overall in Math. That's significant people, and you should be proud to be part of the SCS family!

Yes it's true we could write pages crunching the numbers every which way.

When results are broken down by grade, SCS wasn't always at the top, but the good news is, we weren't far behind! These numbers verify you've made the best choice in Sedona Charter School. Give your kids a high five — they know their stuff!



# How Hobbies Save the Planet

Lower Elementary has had an exciting start to this new school year. We have been focusing on normalizing the students. Normalization is a Montessori term meaning to introduce the students to their new environment. It is a technical word borrowed from the field of anthropology and means becoming a contributing member of society. In our Montessori classroom students allow their prepared environment to spark curiosity and an interest in learning. During normalization, students are learning how to interact with one another, make decisions, and communicate peacefully.



Our students have also been working on memorization, telling time, shoe tying, and sewing. They are learning how to manage their time when working through a list of

objectives to complete. Sewing has definitely been a class favorite. We have taught several different stitches and are using these on a few projects including making placemats. Students are realizing that the things they like to do, or the things they consider hobbies, can actually save our planet.

The LE classroom is learning about sustainability, and we are working towards being more sustainable this year. For example, we have asked all

students to bring in a cloth placemat, cloth napkin and metal utensils. As part of their practical life work, students are responsible for cleaning their own place settings. We have also asked students to bring in a reusable water

bottle to cut down on plastic waste. Sewing and making our own placemats fits nicely into this overall theme.

During the month of September, parents and students can look forward to reading buddies, field trips, structured Physical Education classes and instruction to teach valuable computer skills.



As always, there are endless opportunities for parents to work off their 50 volunteer hours throughout the year. We are looking forward to having parent volunteers after we have worked through our normalization process! Stay tuned for details.

We anticipate another fun and educational year!



## Did You Know?

International Day of Peace is Friday, September 21<sup>st</sup> and we will be celebrating along with many people around the world. The International Day of Peace is a shared date for all peoples to set aside differences and celebrate commonalities to contribute to a culture of peace and harmony. This year's theme is *The Right to Peace; The Universal Declaration of Human Rights at 70*. The theme celebrates the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in Paris on December 10, 1948 as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations.

Sedona Charter School will have a peace assembly at 1:00 pm. Students will perform the Montessori peace song, "Light a Candle for Peace," written by Shelley Murley. In addition, they will be making peace crafts and sharing peace poetry.

There are many ways your family can gather to celebrate unity on this peace day. Prepare a special meal together and discuss the qualities of peace. Participate in a community service project, like volunteering for the Yavapai Food Council or helping a neighbor in need. Let's work together to make World Peace Day a memorable and wonderful event.



# Ice-breaking and Team-building

Wow, what an incredible turnout for back to school night. It was standing room only in our Upper Elementary, Lower Elementary and Middle School classrooms. The parent, student and community involvement at SCS continues to take our breath away. The UE team wishes to express the immense gratitude and respect we have for our families for their consistent support of our school and the education of their children.



Our students are already hard at work this new school year. We began our first days with some fun icebreakers like "Dr.

Tangleup." This teamwork activity empowers students to work together to figure out how to unknot themselves.

Next, Maija brought some, (I hesitate to use the word delicious), so let's just say interesting, snacks from Scotland. Boy were we surprised when the kids actually loved the haggis potato chips and dried fish!



We have some exciting changes in our class community this year, one of which is

silent reading time for 30 minutes each day. Here are just a few of the reasons we feel this time is so critical for our students:

- Silent reading offers students the opportunity to read material of their own choosing, simply for the joy of reading.
- During this time, students utilize their reading strategies to decode unfamiliar words and use context clues to learn new vocabulary. This will help them build confidence in their abilities to work through reading trouble spots.
- Research has shown that as the amount of time students spend reading independently increases, children ask for books at home and want to read more outside of the classroom.
- Silent reading is one element aimed at creating independent, lifelong reading learners.

As always, we have some amazing adventures planned for our UE class this year, including educational field trips students won't want to miss. Our September trips will feature Tuzigoot National Monument and Phoenix Science Museum. Next, we are looking forward to an overnight camping trip in October to Tucson, with a bonus day at the Biosphere. Stay tuned for details!

# Take a Stand, Lend a Hand

During the first week of school our Middle School students took an anti-bullying pledge. We spent time discussing the importance of a peaceful environment in the classroom and the negative consequences of bullying and teasing. The students also talked about the definition of bullying.

In our SCS Family Handbook, bullying is defined as "any unprovoked, repeated written, verbal, or physical act, which is intended to cause physical or emotional harm to another individual's person or property." Students also talked about concrete things they can do to help victims of bullying behavior, how to recognize a bully or a bullying victim, and how to stop bullying from happening.

The Anti-Bullying Pledge states that students will treat others respectfully; try to include those who are left out; refuse to bully others, refuse to watch, laugh or join in when someone is being bullied; tell an adult; and help those who are being bullied. Our students had very meaningful discussions on the topic and enjoyed taking the Anti-Bullying Pledge.



In addition to learning how to properly interact with one another, we are wasting no time getting into the academics of this new school year. Students are already settling into a groove in math. Many are approaching their first block (unit) test. Parents should be on the lookout for an assignment page that will be sent home in the coming weeks. Once your child adequately communicates the learning targets he/she has been focusing on, you will be asked to sign and return the assignment page.

Students are also endeavoring to raise milkweed bugs as an introduction to learning more about organisms, habitats, populations, and ecosystems. Be sure to ask your child the names of their insects.

We have created a class webpage that we hope parents and students will check regularly. There you will find important information including: schedules, teacher contacts, essential agreements, class calendar, assignment documents, classroom news, a student-created section and class photos.

Please check the site often at <http://sedonacharterms.weebly.com>.

## Letter from the President



*"Tired minds don't plan well. Sleep first, plan later."*

-Walter Reisch

Hello Everyone,

The first month of school has passed and students have acclimated to school life. Their workload will now be increasing. As parents, we play an integral part in helping our children achieve academic success. So, let's talk about an important factor: **SLEEP!!!!**

With evolving technology, we are now surrounded by gadgets that may have an effect on our bodies and specifically our sleep cycle. One important factor is the blue light emitted by smart phones and I-Pads. Studies show that students who use devices emitting blue light before going to bed have a much more difficult time falling asleep; and when they do fall asleep, they have much less REM sleep. As a result, it takes these children much longer to feel alert the following day.

Some studies also suggest that the microwave radiation emitted by cell phones and other devices that use wi-fi for example, may possibly alter brain activity and affect sleep. Since all of this technology is relatively new, we are still in the beginning stages of learning its full effect on the human body.

The recommendation from leading pediatricians is to stop using all electronic devices at least 90 minutes before bedtime. Those 90 minutes are best spent reading a paper book! In addition, doctors recommend keeping all smartphones, I-Pads, etc. out of the child's bedroom at night.

Start the year right with good habits. Give (or in this case, take) the tools necessary to get a great night's sleep and function at full capacity every school day.

Respectfully yours,

Steven Paley, President  
Sedona Charter School Governing Council



### ask our teachers >>>

**Q:** What's the best way to monitor my child's school progress?

**A:** A month of school has come and gone and you have no idea what your child has been learning or not learning. Sound familiar? We don't have to be helicopter parents to be concerned about how our children are learning. Here are some tips to stay "in the know."

- ★ First, ask the right questions. What did you learn in school today is only going to be answered by the age-old response "nothing." Have your child show you his /her school work and note the grades and/or comments made by the teacher.
- ★ Find your child's weekly take-home packet and look through it with your student. Have open and peaceful conversations with your children about what they are learning.
- ★ Check your child's class website or parent portal for information on assignments and upcoming projects.
- ★ Help your child succeed by working with teachers and communicating often.
- ★ Participate in school events to show your child that you care about what is happening and that you support the school community.



## staff >>>

**Lower Elementary:** Katarina Houser, Amy Tedrick, Amy Alexander, KC O'Connor, Deborah Williams, Dolores Biermann, Heidi Glenn  
**Upper Elementary:** Suzi Ashley, Majja 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



## looking ahead >>>

### October 2018

Classroom Happenings

Ask A Teacher

Around Campus

Performing Arts Classroom Update



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 >>>

# Celebration of Life

On Tuesday, June 5th, Terri Wentsch fulfilled her educational mission and life on planet earth and left us in love for her next assignment. She will be missed by students and parents she had the privilege of knowing during her 40-year teaching career both in Colorado and for the past 23 years at Sedona Charter School.

A celebration of life will be held on campus, Sunday, September 23rd at 1:37 pm to remember and honor Terri. We hope you will plan to join us as we reflect on her many years with us and the many lives she has touched.

We are inviting those who wish to present brief remarks about Terri to do so. Please submit your remarks in writing directly to Bob at school (or in his mailbox in the school office) no later than September 9<sup>th</sup>. Even if you don't wish to speak, please plan to submit a written reflection of what Terri meant to you or a memory of how she touched your life or someone you know. While we won't be reading every one of these that afternoon, they will be posted around campus for you to read and remember. After the gathering, we will be compiling all remarks and memories received in a memory book for Bob. If you have photos you would like to add, you may email them to [jane@sedonacharterschool.com](mailto:jane@sedonacharterschool.com) or bring them with you.

As we celebrate Terri's life, we remember her love for teaching, her love for children and her many contributions to Sedona Charter School. While Terri was instrumental in "starting" a lot of things around here, perhaps the most significant is our amazing strings program. Everything begins with an idea and individuals with the tenacity and determination to see that vision is brought to reality. Knowing the benefits music adds to academic achievement, Terri and Bob dreamed of making music a part of the children's experience in their classroom. A strings program seemed within reach because instruments could be sized for small children. Terri persevered in sharing this dream with community members until a teacher could be found and the program developed and launched.

But, Terri's vision for our school didn't stop there. She is responsible for the beautiful pond we have on campus, the playground merry-go-round (because spinning improves brain development), bathrooms inside every classroom and a host of other things over the past 23 years. Terri was one of the first teachers to reach out to parents and have them come into the classrooms to teach units in their area of expertise. She raised butterflies in the LE classroom, taught the children to crochet and worked on the crochet coral reef,

In Loving Memory  
♥ Those we love don't go away ♥  
They walk beside us everyday  
Unseen, unheard, but always near  
Still loved, still missed and very dear



always found very creative art activities for the students and is largely responsible for the abundance of computers in the LE classroom. What a legacy!

If you would like to give a gift to Sedona Charter School in Terri's memory, we will be using those donations to install two concrete horned toad benches on campus.



Please, mark your calendars and plan to invite anyone who knew Terri to join you in celebrating her life on Sunday, September 23 here on campus. You won't want to miss this special time. Please e-mail Brenda at [manscribe@gmail.com](mailto:manscribe@gmail.com) and volunteer to help with this event.



**Sedona Charter School**

# SEPTEMBER 2018

Keeping parents informed

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
2	3 <b>LABOR DAY</b>	4	5 early Dismissal 	6	7	8
9 <b>ROSH HASHANA BEGINS</b>	10	11 Patriot Day	12	13 	14	15
16	17 	18 Yom Kippur 	19 Governing Council Retreat 2 pm	20	21 Peace Day Assembly at 1:00 pm 	22
23 <i>Celebration of life</i> <i>Terri Wensch</i> 4:37 pm	24	25	26	27	28	29
30 OLD FASHIONED FAMILY PICNIC 1-4 pm 	 <b>Earn Cash for Our School!</b>		<b>Looking Ahead:</b> October 5-8 — No School [Staff Day 10/5] and Columbus Day Holiday October 12 — Report Cards Mailed October 24 — United Nations Day October 31 — Halloween Carnival — 1:30 pm			