

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

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Resolve to Give  
Resolve to Read  
Resolve to Explore  
Resolve to Discover  
Resolve to Smile

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

# Roadrunner report

music notes >>>

## The Suzuki Philosophy

Part Three



In continuation of our series on the special features of the Suzuki philosophy, this issue will explore:

### Parent Involvement

When children first learn to talk, parents function as their teachers. In the same way, parents also play an important role as “home teachers” as a child learns an instrument. Traditionally, parents are deeply involved in each lesson in the Suzuki approach, even learning to play the instrument to help with practice at home.

Since we have adapted this method to the school environment, parents may not be able to attend class, but there are still ways that you can be involved.

- Create the same nurturing environment for music study as you did when your child was learning to talk.
- Help your child establish a daily practice routine at the same time each day when the child is fresh and focused.
- Create a dedicated practice space for your child free from distractions.
- Set attainable goals for each practice session; it may be to master just one measure of music, but make sure to work productively to meet the goal and celebrate the accomplishment.
- Make practice fun: create a practice board game, make a chart to track progress, reward productive practice with a fun family outing. The possibilities are endless!

## Resolve to Give

At Sedona Charter School, we set high expectations for family involvement, whether volunteering your time, sharing your talents teaching our students or contributing your monetary resources, you are vital to the health and well-being of our educational offerings. We offer a different model for educating students that gives us the flexibility to create a Montessori environment that fosters independent student learning, parental involvement, and parent satisfaction. Many have remarked that we deliver a “private school education at a public-school price.”

However, we receive less funding than traditional public schools. We do not receive funds from local property taxes or bonds. According to a June analysis by the Arizona Joint Legislative Budget Committee, a public charter school student will receive \$951 less – from all funding sources – than a student in a district school. In short, we provide an alternative method of education using far less money.

So, you may ask, how do you keep the doors open? We rely on the generosity of our school families and community members to fill the numbers gap so that we can continue to provide individualized Montessori instruction to your children.

This year we also undertook three major, urgently needed construction projects (building a teacher residence, building the Performing Arts Classroom, and moving the playground), which, even

with all the donations we received, have drained our small financial reserve.

Hence the question, “Is My Child’s Education Worth More than a Cup of Coffee?” The average American spends \$3 per day on coffee. That’s \$1100 per year, far more than the \$951 per student we need to bridge the gap between charter and district funding.

Many of you have already made a significant contribution this school year, and we deeply appreciate it. If you have not yet donated, please visit our office or our website at [sedonacharterschool.com](http://sedonacharterschool.com) to learn how you can contribute—you can even set up small recurring donations online.

Parents, this year more than ever, we are counting on your donations – or the donations of your friends and family -- to help us finish out this school year, meet our weekly payroll, furnish our Performing Arts Classroom to the extent it becomes the functioning artistic space we envisioned, and re-establish our playground at its new location. We simply cannot do it without you!



lower elementary >>>

# Resolve to Discover

The New Year is such an exciting time in our culture, and we use this season to teach students about the passage of time and New Year traditions around the world.

It is always fun to talk with our students about earth and why we are celebrating a New Year. How many days are in a year? What is the difference between an orbit and a rotation? How long is a year on other planets? What is the International Date Line, and what does it have to do with the New Year? Our students in Lower Elementary love learning about our planet and solar system.

We have fun learning the traditions celebrated at the beginning of each New Year here in the United States. Many different parts



of the USA eat unique foods for good luck. European-Americans will often eat pork, New Englanders like to eat cabbage and pork, and those in the south enjoy Hoppin' John, a dish of black-eyed peas, rice and meat. We are talking about New Year's Eve gatherings, feasts, football games and the New York Time Square countdown and ball drop. There is also the tradition of writing New Year's resolutions, and we will be writing ours down and keeping them until the end of the school year. We will then review them to see how we have done in obtaining our goals.

Our students know that all countries celebrate the beginning of a New Year, and they enjoy learning the traditions of other countries around the world! In Spain it is customary to eat 12 grapes, one at each stroke of midnight, to symbolize good luck in each month of the New Year. In Colombia people carry an empty suitcase around the block in hopes of having a travel filled New Year! In Denmark they stand on chairs and jump off at midnight to symbolize jumping into the New Year. In Greece, on New Year's Eve families



hang onions

on their front doors as a symbol of rebirth, and then on New Year's Day parents wake their children by tapping them on the head with the onion. Children love learning the customs of others and sharing in the diversity our world has to offer. We have even learned that customs and traditions vary from family to family in our own classroom and students are sharing their unique family traditions.

As we explore the hundreds of ways the New Year is celebrated around the world, we are traveling from country to country and settling on the continent of Asia to begin studying this culture the second half of the school year. As we learn and explore, we look forward to introducing the Chinese New Year in February!

We're anticipating a wonderful 2019!

montessori >>>

# Did You Know?

We have some very talented UE students who participated in writing contests sponsored by the Elks Lodge in Sedona and the Sedona Library. We are pleased to announce the top two winners of the Elks essay competition.

- Zach was awarded First Place and will be given a \$100 prize
- Sierra's entry earned her Second Place and she will receive a \$50 prize

There will be an awards ceremony at the Elks Lodge in February during which our students will read their essays out loud and receive their monetary awards.

In addition to this contest, Kyla Jane won \$60 for writing a Halloween story through the Sedona Library.

We are proud of our students for shining brightly in Sedona and look forward to even greater things to come in their futures.



upper elementary >>>

# Resolve to Explore

Maria Montessori once asked "What is a scientist?" and answered that question as follows: "We give the name scientist to the type of man who has felt experiment to be a means guiding him to search out the deep truth of life, to lift a veil from its fascinating secrets, and who, in this pursuit, has felt arising within him a love for the mysteries of nature."

The students of Upper Elementary are scientists in Maria Montessori's eyes. They have a love for the mysteries of nature and are passionate about unveiling the secrets of the world around them. Each child is a true scientist; when they see something they do not understand, they ask questions and use their comprehension of the world to draw what they believe to be a satisfactory conclusion and explanation.

Our students are constantly asking questions to form a better understanding of science. We are fortunate to have the ability to split up fourth years and combine fifth and sixth for core lessons. This allows the topics to be tailored to Arizona's state



standards more efficiently while providing the



opportunity for individualized lesson plans to more effectively reach each grade level. We have been fortunate to explore the universe in which we live at The Arizona Science Museum. We stood in the center of the Natural Disaster Exhibit and experienced the force of hurricanes, earthquakes, wildfires and more. At the Biosphere 2, the class performed experiments to help them understand the Biomes of our home planet.

In the classroom we have discussed the innermost workings of our bodies. From the cells that make up our bodies, to beautiful diagrams of human organ systems that each student created, the students of Upper Elementary have shown a profound interest in science this year. As we enter the second half of the year, we look forward to taking science to an even higher level of cognitive learning by implementing the children's individual interests to fuel their participation and guide them to search for answers to the mysteries of nature.



# Resolve to Read

During the first week of December, our Middle School students were busy hosting the Scholastic Book Fair. Led by Laurie Altringer, students and parents volunteered their time to help with the book fair. Reading levels ranged from preschool to young adult, so there was something for everyone including posters, bookmarks and erasers.

So why host a book fair? Not only did it help our students understand and experience the ins and outs of setting up and running a mini-store, it also helped foster a love of reading for all who browsed and purchased books. It is our goal to foster a love of reading from the earliest ages at Sedona Charter School. The following list of reasons to read gleaned from "Best Books for Kids" should convince you that providing age-appropriate books for your children is a must.

**Kids who read often and widely get better at it.** This is just common sense. After all, practice makes perfect in almost everything we do, and reading is no different.

**Reading exercises our brains.** Reading is a much more complex task than watching TV or videos. Reading strengthens brain connections and builds new ones.

**Reading improves concentration.** Children must sit still and quietly to focus on reading. If they read regularly, they develop the ability to concentrate for longer and longer periods.

**Reading teaches children about the world.** Through reading, we learn about people, places and events outside our own experience. We are exposed to ways of life, ideas and beliefs which may be different from our own. This builds a store of background knowledge which helps children read confidently.

**Reading improves vocabulary,** leads to more highly-developed language skills and improves

the ability to write well. Children learn new words and unconsciously absorb information about how to structure sentences or use words and language effectively.

**Reading develops imagination.** When we read our brains translate the words into pictures. When we're engaged in a story, we're imagining how the characters are feeling and how we would feel in the same situation.

**Reading helps develop empathy.** Readers are identifying with the characters, so they are feeling what each character is feeling.

**Readers do better at school.** They do better at all subjects and their academic excellence continues through grammar school to high school and beyond.

**Reading is great entertainment!** A paperback book doesn't take up much space, so you can take it anywhere, and you'll never be lonely or bored if you have a book in your bag.

**Reading relaxes the body and calms the mind.** TV, videos, video games and social media stimulate the brain and don't allow the viewer to relax. Readers can truly relax and understand how to be silent.

So make it your New Year's resolution to look less at screens and more at books! Enjoy reading those books purchased from our Book Fair or talk with your teacher about other titles that would meet your interests. **HAPPY READING!**



# Letter from the President



*It's easy to play a musical instrument: all you have to do is touch the right key at the right time and the instrument will play itself.*

- Johann Sebastian Bach

Hello everybody,

While it comes as no surprise that learning to play a musical instrument is great for a child's developing brain, there is a strong correlation between playing an instrument and improved academic performance.

According to a 2014 Northwestern University study, when children learn to play music, their brains begin to hear and process sounds that they couldn't otherwise hear. This helps them learn to listen to distinction between sounds that can aid in literacy.

Students who play instruments (even when using sheet music) are constantly using memory to perform. As they begin to master the art of memorization, it serves the students well in all areas of life. In addition, playing musical instruments improves hand-eye coordination. Studies suggest that playing music can develop motor skills faster than playing sports.

While the link between music and reading/literacy is well known, there is a great improvement in math skills as well. Musical education helps students learn pattern recognition, and playing music offers repetition in a fun format. In a 2012 study, students who played musical instruments scored on average 63 points higher on verbal and 44 points higher on math SATs.

Because music promotes craftsmanship, it helps students create good work over mediocre work. Musical instruments also teach discipline and aid in creative thinking. When children play as part of an orchestra it fosters teamwork as well.

We have just completed our Performing Arts Classroom and are fortunate to have an exceptional strings program directed by Kristina Beachell. Every student in grades 1-3 is required to participate. In grades 4-8 it is an elective. We are also in need of funding to support our strings program and classroom. Please note that your donations to the school can be applied to AZ tax credit up to \$200 for single filers and \$400 for joint filers.

Respectfully yours,



Steven Paley, President  
Sedona Charter School Governing Council

## ask a teacher >>>

### Q: What New Year's resolutions could help your students?



So many well-intentioned resolutions are forgotten by January 12th each year. Here are a few every child can make to start off the New Year right and succeed in life.

- A:** 1. **Stay Organized**—Keeping a calendar or planner is extremely helpful. Write down deadlines as far in advance as you can so you can plan ahead and stay on top of things.
- 2. **Don't Try to Do Everything at Once** — Prioritize your goals by due date, importance and impact. The more you focus on what is first priority, the faster you can move on to the next thing and feel like you've made a difference.
- 3. **Stop Procrastinating** — Make the time to complete each task in advance. By working early and finishing with a little time to spare you can move on to the next task or relax for a bit and get refreshed for the next big deadline.
- 4. **Be Optimistic** — Remember, life is 90 percent attitude, so stay positive! You can't control what happens to you from the outside, but you can control how you respond. Choose to focus on the good in everyone and every situation. Be optimistic and life in general will be much more enjoyable.

Suzi Ashley



## staff >>>

**Lower Elementary:** Katarina Houser, Amy Tedrick, Amy Alexander, KC O'Connor, Deborah Williams, Dolores Biermann, Stephanie Schmid  
**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, Jannette Villalobos-Gil, Stephanie Knight  
**Title I:** Bob Wentsch  
**Special Education:** Lucy Schwill, Cynthia Tyler



## looking ahead >>>

### February 2019

*Classroom Happenings*

*Ask A Teacher*

*Around Campus*



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.*

## staff profile >>>

### Resolve to Smile!

First impressions matter, and by now most of you have encountered our newest staff member, Stephanie Knight. You've been greeted by her kind voice or benefited from her infectious smile and willingness to go above and beyond to help. As the New Year begins, we wanted to introduce you to Stephanie, who works part-time in our school office alongside our amazing Jannette Villalobos-Gil. These ladies, under the guidance of our Director of Finance and Administration, Alice Madar, keep our school running like a well-oiled machine. They play a very important role interfacing with students, parents and teachers to ensure everyone is able to focus on delivering the best possible education Sedona has to offer for your children.

Stephanie is not new to Sedona. She was born and raised right here and is well acquainted with all that Sedona has to offer. A graduate of Sedona Red Rock High School, Stephanie earned her Bachelor of Arts in English, along with certificates in Creative Writing and Literature from Northern Arizona University in 2017. She has a true love for

Sedona and is grateful to be working at Sedona Charter School.

Stephanie has always loved to read, and you will find her in a corner reading during most of her free time. She also loves to write and aspires to write Christian fiction. "I am a follower of Christ and love to share what God has done in my life with others," she commented. Stephanie comes from a family with a healthy love for the outdoors, and as such, she enjoys being active in Sedona's "big back yard," "walking, hiking, swimming (when the creek is warm enough), or simply sitting outside reading and enjoying the beauty of God's creation which surrounds us in Sedona."

So why work at Sedona Charter School? "I have always felt that education is important, no matter our age," Stephanie replied. She recalls being blessed with so many great teachers over the years and is so thankful for their influence and teaching. "Although I know that I do not have a passion for teaching, it is great to be able to work at the school to help the teachers influence other students. It is a way of giving back to all the great teachers who



influenced me. Working in the office allows me to interact with teachers, staff, parents and students, and it has been a joy to be able to get to know everyone who is a part of the Sedona Charter School family."

Stephanie is a gifted administrative assistant with great attention to detail and a positive, uplifting attitude. She is a great fit in our office and has brought a wealth of knowledge with her expertise in software programs and computer use in general. She looks forward to getting to know everyone more and doing her part to see that Sedona Charter School continues to benefit the students, families and community of Sedona.

This New Year, resolve to greet everyone with a smile. You'll be surprised how much better your days unfold.



Sedona Charter School

JANUARY 2019

Keeping parents informed



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
			1	2	3	4	
		W I N T E R B R E A K					5
6	7	8	9 <i>Early Release</i>	10	11 	12	
13	14	15 3:45 pm —Governing Council Meeting	16	17	18	19	
20	21  NO SCHOOL	22	23 New Student Enrollment 11 am	24	25	26	
27	28	29	30	31	<b>Looking Ahead:</b> February 2 — Sedona Marathon February 6 — Early Release February 6 — Bohemian Night of the Arts February 15-18 — President's Holiday No School		