

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

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Upcycled Adventure Playground  
What Tests Cannot Measure  
Artists in the Classroom  
Positive Discipline  
GC Community Volunteers  
Are Field Trips Worth the Effort?

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

# Roadrunner report

## music notes >>>

### The Suzuki Philosophy

Part Five



Many parents are curious as to why we don't incorporate music reading and notation from the onset of playing our instruments. In our continuation of the basic principles of the Suzuki Philosophy, we shall explore: **Delayed Reading**

When we learn our native language, we learn to speak long before we can read. Eventually our reading literacy catches up to our speaking ability. This model of language acquisition is used in the Suzuki Philosophy as applied to reading music notation. The sequence of instruction allows both student and teacher to first and foremost focus on development of proper technique: good posture, beautiful tone, accurate intonation, musical phrasing, memorization and acquiring a sensitive musical ear.

A solid foundation and command of our instrument must be established first, free of the task of note reading which can deter from the attention to quality concentration on technique. Only then do we introduce music notation into the equation. When the mind is then asked to interpret musical symbols and notation, the execution at the instrument will not falter.

Thus, Suzuki students learn to read music extremely well, because their acute understanding of sounds allows for the symbols of music notation to make sense easily.

## Upcycled Adventure Playground



As we prepare to reinstall our playground equipment in its new location on the south end of our campus, our Middle School classroom is working on creating an additional new play area with their own imaginative twist. As an

elective, Middle School students have been planning and collecting resources (tires, planks, ropes, paint and more) for an upcycled adventure playground. In small planning groups, the students came up with proposals of what play equipment to create with the donated upcycled materials. It has been really exciting to see students' visions and different suggestions. In addition, they have been practicing great life skills asking local community members for supplies and making phone calls to local companies requesting help and donations.



You may be wondering, what exactly is an adventure playground? An adventure playground is a playground that uses natural or upcycled materials from the environment to enhance and encourage adventurous play and imagination. The

goal of creating an adventure playground is to provide for children's play needs beyond the traditional playground structure. Even better, adventure playgrounds are often one-third the cost of a traditional playground. In adventure playgrounds, children demonstrate problem solving skills, develop self-trust, learn decision make skills and develop physical endurance.



The wide range of challenges and variety of activities allow kids to explore, create, and cooperate with others. They learn how to work in groups, share, negotiate, resolve conflicts, and self-advocate.

Parents, we are still looking for donations for this project (old tires, planks, ropes, and paint). Moreover, we need a few volunteer builders, carpenters or laborers to help bring our plans into reality. Please consider how you may help us finish our project and make our school better. Supplies can be dropped off at the Middle School classroom. For more information or to volunteer your time and skills, please email Ana at [Ana.Hansen@SedonaCharterSchool.com](mailto:Ana.Hansen@SedonaCharterSchool.com).

# Positive Discipline — Encouraging Students to Think

Amy Tedrick was reintroduced to much of this information in a Positive Discipline workshop she attended a few weeks ago. A helpful book for every parent is Positive Discipline by Jane Nelsen. Here is Amy's summary of the high points of the workshop.

This may come as a surprise, but often teachers experience the same behaviors from children at school that parents experience at their home. Teaching and parenting using positive discipline helps encourage children to come up with solutions to the problems they encounter in life. The goal is to empower them to find their own answers rather than providing the answers adults expect to hear.

When speaking with our children, are we asking them questions or leading them to provide the answers we want to hear? Asking sends a message that children have ownership of the answer and are free to come up with their own solutions. In contrast, leading (as in, "don't you want to apologize?") creates resistance resulting in the child just telling us what we want to hear as opposed to thinking critically.

Children deserve the same respect from adults that adults expect from children. Are we being good listeners? Have we made eye contact to show our attention? Are we giving our kids the same listening attention that we expect from them? Are we teaching them to think for themselves or merely "do as we say"?

It's important to have self-awareness in what you say, looking at the value in your words. There are adults who frequently use "I" statements such as, "I love your picture" or praising others with the phrase, "good job." When we give constant praise, we end up creating children who crave approval from others. Using encouraging statements such as, "It looks like you worked really hard on that picture," encourages without the child seeking approval. Often children who misbehave and are the most challenged need the most encouragement, not approval. This slight change in phrasing helps children develop courage to face their life challenges.

In all discipline, it is crucial to be kind and firm, as well as consistent. Discipline should always be respectful, showing that you believe in the child. When following through with the

consequence you have decided upon, don't cave in. In other words, "when you say it - mean it." Teach your children that your word is your word and negotiation is not always an option. Respectfully verbalize your expectation once and then follow through. Children need to know that adults mean what they say and are going to follow through with their word. This helps create boundaries and respect. Learning these valuable life skills builds character in our children.

They are happiest when they are learning healthy ways to change behaviors before those behaviors turn into bad habits. In life, and when using positive discipline, all behavioral challenges should be looked at as learning opportunities to teach valuable skills to develop the qualities we want to see our children exhibit as adults.



## Did You Know?



**Montessori alumnus, Jeff Bezos, founder of Amazon.com, pledges \$2 billion for Montessori preschools serving low-income children and to address homelessness**

In case you missed it, Montessori alumnus and CEO of Amazon.com, Jeff Bezos, pledged to donate two billion dollars to launch a network of Montessori preschools serving young children from low-income families to create new support systems and help address homelessness in America.

As Mr. Bezos told the New York Times, this new education effort has a goal to build and run a national non-profit network of free Montessori preschools to serve low-income children. "I'm excited about that because it will give us an opportunity to learn, invent, and improve. The child will be the customer." The New York Times article adds, "Mr. Bezos went to Montessori schools and has said it developed his sense of exploration and focus."

At SCS we are certain it is no accident that two of the three most successful companies in the world (Amazon and Google) were founded by former Montessori students. Jeff Bezos, Larry Paige, and Sergei Brin were given the opportunity, in the community of their Montessori classrooms, to develop the skills required for success in today's world. The gift of a Montessori education ultimately enables children to become individuals who can think for themselves, think about others, and think out-of-the-box.

## What Tests Cannot Measure

With Arizona standardized testing quickly approaching, UE students are incorporating test taking skills and strategies into their daily Montessori curriculum. During Writer's Workshop, the students use all steps of the writing process, from brainstorming to publishing. While working on our daily Montessori Math, we also present the style and type of question that will most likely be encountered this April on the AzMerit Math assessment. As a group, we are taking sample reading, writing and math tests from the AzMerit portal to familiarize students with how their tests will look. In addition, groups are sharing strategies to help each other arrive at the best responses in a timely fashion.

While Montessori philosophy is our main goal and style of education at Sedona Charter School, we know it is essential that our scholars have the necessary test taking skills to be proficient for their grade level. Even though some students are eager to take tests, others experience quite a bit of anxiety. We encourage our students to do their best, while realizing that the AzMerit test is just one measure of what they know.

In our environment, we use teacher observation, project-based learning, Star Assessments, and written and oral evaluations to assess curriculum content mastery. In addition to plenty of rest, a good breakfast and a healthy snack during

testing, it is important to remember that standardized testing cannot measure many qualities that lead to success. So, as we approach April, please keep the following in mind:

**30 Things a Standardized Test Can't Measure**

*Curriculum in a Click*

Resilience Passion Strength  
 Compassion wit Faith  
 a sense of humor Intuition  
 Kindness self-esteem  
 INTELLIGENCE MOTIVATION FORTITUDE  
 Courage Morals Work Ethic  
 empathy Determination  
 Diligence Personality manners  
 Grit Ingenuity common sense  
 Physical Fitness Character a love of learning  
 creativity Effort LIFE SKILLS

# Artists In Our Classroom



Our students have been very fortunate to learn from impressive artists throughout this school year thanks to the City of Sedona's Artist in the Classroom

program. This program is free to Sedona schools and participants may select from twenty-six incredible artists.

During the holidays, middle schoolers rehearsed with Jeannie Carroll, a talented singer, and then performed for the residents of Sedona Winds Retirement Community. The joy in the air at this performance was palpable from both students and residents alike.

Currently students are creating weekly watercolor paintings with Kimberly Lillyblad, another amazing artist available through the program. Seeing the students' work and their development from week to week has been exciting. Their works of art will be on display in our classroom during Bohemian Night of the Arts on March 5th.

Lastly, in mid-February, students were invited by the Artist in the Classroom coordinator, Nancy Lattanzi, to view Steve Simon's Great Peacemakers exhibit at Sedona City Hall. While touring the exhibit, students had the opportunity to meet with the artist, and it was very inspiring. Simon created 40 paintings of historical peacemakers and

accompanied the art with informational videos and original prose. Some of the peacemakers included in his collection are:

John Muir, Malala Yousafzai, Martin Luther King, Jr., Gandhi, the Dalai Lama, Thich Nhat Hanh, and Sadako Sasaki. This opportunity perfectly aligned with Ana Hansen's Peace and Mindfulness efforts, as well as students' humanities studies. If you care to check out this exhibit, it is on display at Sedona City Hall through May 2nd. Or view Simon's work online at [www.thegreatpeacemakers.com](http://www.thegreatpeacemakers.com).

We are grateful to the City of Sedona for offering these unique and valuable experiences to our students. Please stop by the middle school to check out some of our budding artists' watercolor creations!



## Letter from the President



*I didn't fail the test, I just found 100 ways to do it wrong.* - Benjamin Franklin

Hello Everyone,

Our students are busy preparing for AzMerit tests in April. Standardized tests have long been a part of life for every student from grade school through graduate school. While there are many factors in determining school, classroom and individual performance, standardized tests are solely used because of the comparative information they provide. Until students are evaluated by more than just a test score, we have to ensure children have the skills they need to ace these tests.

**Reading** comprehension is one area where test taking technique can be more important than subject matter. Typically, students read a short story consisting of an introduction, middle section and conclusion followed by questions related to the story. **Tip 1:** Quickly scan the questions before reading the passage. This helps highlight the answers in one's mind. **Tip 2:** Recognize question patterns. If the question is about where or when the story takes place, the answer is probably in the introduction. Answers about a problem in the story are usually found in the middle. Questions on how the problem was resolved are typically in the conclusion. Using these tips saves valuable time.

**Math.** Most students know how to solve equations and compute math facts but have trouble answering questions in a standardized test format. Many struggle with word problems. Students answer 7 x 4 with relative ease, but if you tell them there are 7 bouquets of flowers consisting of 4 flowers each, it becomes more difficult. It's important for students to familiarize themselves with word problems and practice solving them.

**Estimation** is a real-life skill also encountered on standardized tests. Adding 1,898 and 4,056 might be time consuming. Instead of adding directly, round the numbers to 2,000 and 4,000. If there's only one answer close to 6,000 then you have your solution.

As with all tests, there are difficult problems mixed in with some simple, straightforward ones. When taking a timed test, it may be wise to skip a difficult problem and come back to it when easier questions are solved.

As parents, support your children through the test taking process. Encourage them, make sure they get plenty of rest the night before, and cook a nutritious breakfast that morning.

Respectfully yours,

Steven Paley, President  
Sedona Charter School  
Governing Council



## ask a teacher >>>

### Q: Are Field Trips Worth the Effort?



No doubt both teachers and parents have asked themselves this question at one time or another. The truth is that field trips at any grade level can provide students with truly educational experiences they cannot get in the confines of a classroom.

**A:** Field trips provide students with new ways to learn. Perhaps the most important benefit is that students are learning by doing instead of just passively listening to the information being taught in class. Concepts that have been studied in the classroom come alive on trips. After all, there is quite a difference between being taught about hurricanes and wind speed and experiencing them in an exhibit at a science museum.

In addition, students, parents and teachers often see each other in a different light on trips, increasing communication and appreciation between them. Some students who might be very quiet in the classroom really come to life on field trips.

The key is involving the students in the planning process, so they understand the logistics of making a trip happen. Even though some field trips are expensive, the process of fundraising and first-hand understanding of the monetary value of the trip are important life lessons for every student. All in all, we feel that well-chosen field trip destinations are definitely worth the planning and cost. Students may remember the experience of a school field trip as a highlight for the rest of their lives. *Lauren Rondeau*



## 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



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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 >>>

# Governing Council Community Volunteers

Community members bring a wealth of experience and a unique perspective to our school by volunteering to serve on our Governing Council. It is the mix of seasoned educators and administrators, along with parents and community members that gives our governing body the diversity and experience necessary to keep Sedona Charter School innovative and creatively educating students well into the future.

We welcomed **Yamile Daher** in July, 2018 with her passion for seeing students succeed in school and beyond. She began her career as a volunteer with Big Brothers Big Sisters and worked as a Suicide Crisis Counselor for Didi Hirsch Mental Health Services, the

first organization in the U.S. to establish a 24-hour suicide prevention crisis line. Currently employed as an Adult Therapist for Spectrum Health Care, her specialization continues to be in crisis counseling, working directly with

children, teens and adults facing challenges including PTSD, anxiety, depression and substance abuse disorders.

Yami is also a Program Counselor at the Behavioral Health Unit at the Verde Valley Medical Center where she works with individuals and groups in need of counseling, and she works with teens that have completed treatment programs and are integrating back into their families.

Having always been actively involved in her community, and enjoying giving back to it, Yami is excited for the opportunity to serve as a Community Representative on the Governing Council. Originally from Lima, Peru, Yami enjoys traveling and learning about different cultures. She appreciates the simple things in life like spending quality time with family and friends and hiking scenic Sedona.

After volunteering for two years as an advisor on the Performing Arts Classroom building project, **John Griffin** was impressed enough with Sedona Charter School to make a difference by joining our Governing Council last month.

After college, John and his wife moved from San Diego to Nairobi in the early 70's where they ran a small business. Arriving in Sedona in 1980, he has seen a lot of changes

take place in our town over nearly four decades. In 1983 he earned his contractor's

license and has been involved in the local construction industry ever since.

John was active in Sedona governance at the time the city was incorporated and has been on several boards including the Board of Adjustments and the Sedona Licensed Contractors board (serving as President). He also served on the Sedona Planning and Zoning commission for 15 years, including 10 years as chair.

John brings many strengths to our Governing Council together with extensive local contacts, facilities expertise and board experience, to name a few. We are confident he will bring his disarming sense of humor to our meetings with a calm focus on the facts. John is particularly interested in working on our Strategic Planning Committee and we value the wealth of knowledge and experience he brings to our group. John, along with parent Jordan Rogers are currently working on rebuilding our playground in its new location.



## looking ahead >>>

### April 2019

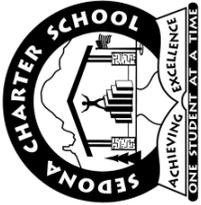
*Classroom Happenings*

*Ask A Teacher*

*Around Campus*

*Field Trips*





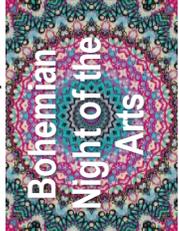
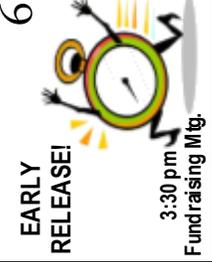
Sedona Charter School

MARCH 2019



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

**Looking Ahead:**  
 April 3— Early Release Wednesday  
 April 8-10—Spring Parent Conferences  
 April 19—No School—Enjoy a break!  
 AZ Merit Testing in April—Sleep well and eat a good breakfast!



**ENJOY YOUR SPRING BREAK**



*St. Patrick's Day*

Report Cards Available

3:30 pm Fundraising Mtg.

Read Across America