



Wilmington Montessori School



WEDNESDAY WEEKLY

A message from the Wilmington Montessori School Board

Dear WMS Families,

We had an amazing turnout for our Town Hall Meeting on Thursday; we cannot thank you all enough for your energy and support. As we continue our efforts to maintain open communication with the community, we would like to provide a recap of the evening's highlights, inform you of the progress we have made since our meeting, and share our next steps with you. We also want to continue to answer the questions that we have collected through our online form (available at www.surveymonkey.com/s/WMSTownHall2012), as we did not have time to address all of them on Thursday night.

The Wilmington Montessori Board would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to the WMS community for "stepping to the plate" at this time. Sometimes we do not express enough gratitude for all of the countless volunteer hours that our community and staff members take on for our school, and we do want to say THANK YOU.

As we all know, our school is at an inflection point due to numerous factors. If we march forward with both eyes open, an open heart and an honest dialogue about what is ahead there is no doubt that we can create a bright future for WMS for years to come.

The Board shared the following key messages on Thursday evening:

- Our vision is for Wilmington Montessori to be recognized as a premier independent Montessori school through sixth grade. We intend to stay at 1400 Harvey Road and will not lease space to another school.
- Our goal is to create a sustainable school for the indefinite future.
- We want to reinvigorate our co-op effort, with more volunteer opportunities and more work on connecting specific talents of parents with school needs, big and small.
- We have several new board members, as well as new committee structures, which we will share with you.

We then had the opportunity to hear from several parents of WMS graduates who told inspiring stories of their children's transitions from WMS into their next academic and social adventures. (Noel Dietrich, our Communications Officer, will be working to add these kinds of stories to the website and other marketing materials. Please contact her at noel_dietrich@wmsde.org if you would like to help gather these stories or share one of your own.)

Following these inspiring stories, the members of the Board also took the opportunity to introduce ourselves and share some recent changes to our structure. As many of you know, Pam Politis has taken over as Board Chair. Pam has served on the Board for over a year, and been a parent at WMS for over eight years. Nimrit Kang, Susan Thomas and Jackie Ivy remain on the Board, and Anna

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Mark Your Calendar

May

- 25 **Elementary Field Day**
9 a.m.
- Online Auction Begins**
Register [here](#) and get ready for some fast and furious bidding!
- 28 **Memorial Day**
School closed. Building closed.
No child care available.
- 30 **Preschool Field Day**
9:30 a.m.
- 31 **9-12 Concert**
7 p.m., Gym

June

- 1 **WMS Student/Alumni Photo Show Opening Reception**, 5-8 p.m.
Louris L. Redding Children's Gallery
800 N. French St. Wilmington
(Photos on display June 1-30)
- Online Auction closes at 8 p.m.**
- 6 **Last Day of School**
Graduation Breakfast
7:30 a.m., Great Room
- Graduation Ceremony*
10 a.m., Gym (See pg. 3)
- 7 & 8 **All-Staff Professional Days**
Child care open.
Contact cass_winner@wmsde.org to pre-register.
- 11-15 **Pre-Camp Child-Care Week**
(including [LEGO Mini-Camps](#))
Contact cass_winner@wmsde.org to pre-register.
- 18 **Camp Montessori Begins**
Register at www.wmsde.org/camp.

Message from the Board (Continued)

Quisel, Paul Szkotak, Susie Ventresca and Caroline Lintner joined us last week. Short bios of each member will be available on the WMS website in the near future.

The Board met on Sunday and decided on the following Board Officers:

Pam Politis, Chair

Anna Quisel, Vice Chair

Nimrit Kang, Treasurer

Jackie Ivy, Secretary

Each member is also taking an active role with regard to Committees, and would welcome your help in any area that is of interest. Here are the Committees, as they currently stand:

Finance: Chaired by Nimrit Kang, with a Sub-Committee dedicated to Restructuring and Operations Co-Chaired by Susie Ventresca and Anna Quisel

Marketing and Enrollment: Chaired by Susan Thomas

Fundraising: Co-Chaired by Caroline Lintner and Paul Szkotak

Communications: Chaired by Jackie Ivy

Governance: Chaired by Pam Politis

Interim Head Search: Co-Chaired by Anna Quisel and Israel Floyd (a member of our Advisory Board)

Cooperative School/Parent Organization: Chaired by Susie Ventresca

Once the Board has had the opportunity to assess our new strengths and opportunities as a working group, we will begin the process of identifying and interviewing potential new Board members.

We have heard from many people over the past few weeks regarding our Board, its structure and members. Once we have had time to address some pressing time-sensitive matters regarding enrollment for next year, we will address the best way to fill these seats and our Governance.

Your Questions

As a Board, we feel our role is first and foremost to do what is best for Wilmington Montessori; we also believe it is important to respond to our community.

In an effort to serve BOTH of these ends, we value your input. An online form has been created as a place to submit questions and feedback and the response so far has been impressive. (This online form will remain active for the rest of the school year; we also have traditional pen and paper versions available in both lobbies of WMS.)

At this time, we want to respond to several questions that came

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Wilmington Montessori School congratulates the members of its **2012 Odyssey of the Mind** team for their second place finish in Delaware's "Weird Science" division.



**Good luck in the World Finals
at Iowa State University!**

WMS Online Auction

WMS's Online Auction goes LIVE this Friday, May 25, and will close at 8 p.m. on Friday, June 1.

Some of the items available for bidding include a week in a two-bedroom ocean front condo in North Myrtle Beach, S.C., during the week of August 3-10, 2012, a birthday party at Talleyville Fire Station and a haircut and highlights from WMS's very own Robin Tisdell!

This is a great way to support Wilmington Montessori School and get great gifts, services and fun at a reasonable price. Log in and register for all the fun!
<http://www.biddingforgood.com/wmsauction>



Message from the Board—Answers to Your Questions (continued from page 2)

up on multiple occasions. These questions generally fall into one of six categories:

1. Status of FSMA Charter
2. Leadership
3. Enrollment
4. Education/Programming
5. Financial
6. Teachers/Contracts

Status of FSMA Charter

As an answer to the first topic on the list, hopefully you received via email on Friday the Board's response to the News Journal article regarding FSMA, and the article's inclusion of WMS in this discussion. If not, you can view our response on the Wilmington Montessori School news page (www.wmsde.org/news).

Leadership

As a response to the topic of Leadership, we have given you a brief overview of the new Board. As new and returning Board members, we are very interested in speaking with you and engaging in an on-going dialogue about our vision for WMS. You will continue to hear from us in both the Wednesday Weekly and via email. (If you do not currently receive electronic communications from WMS, please contact Noel Dietrich; also please make sure you have the Board's email address, wms_bod@wmsde.org in your contacts.)

In regard to Linda Zankowsky's resigna-

tion, Linda remains our Head of School. As is typical in independent schools, Linda's contract requires her to give a full year's notice upon resignation, which she has done. She will continue to serve in this role until the Board feels we have an Interim Head in place and the wealth of knowledge from Linda's 12 years of service has been relayed. We are incredibly thankful for her years of service to WMS. You will be hearing more in the near future from Israel Floyd and Anna Quisel regarding the Interim Head Search.

Enrollment, Education/Programming and Financial Concerns

These topics are deeply intertwined. Our current enrollment for next year is on target to reach 200 students by the end of the 2011-12 school year, prior to our typical influx of summer enrollments, and we believe we have a strong financial plan that allows us to run WMS as a premier Montessori school with all of the programming and specials that our children currently enjoy.

This is a much smaller enrollment than we currently have, and we will have to right-size several areas of the school in order to address this issue. Every effort is being made to do this in a way that is in keeping with WMS principles and ideals, and meets the requirements of our bank, PNC, who holds our mortgage. Both internal and external teams are currently working with us to help align our operations and infrastructure to

best serve a smaller sustainable school at 1400 Harvey Road.

Over the next two weeks, Board members will be gathering input to carefully determine how our school's resources can be used in the best way. Teacher contracts will be issued at the end of this process, by June 6, 2012.

Get Involved

What can you do to be involved or help? The opportunities are myriad.

First and foremost, make sure you are enrolled for next year.

Secondly, talk about WMS with friends so they realize we are strong.

Third, invest in WMS with any of the following: time, treasury or talent.

These last points are critical and you will be hearing from us over and over again.

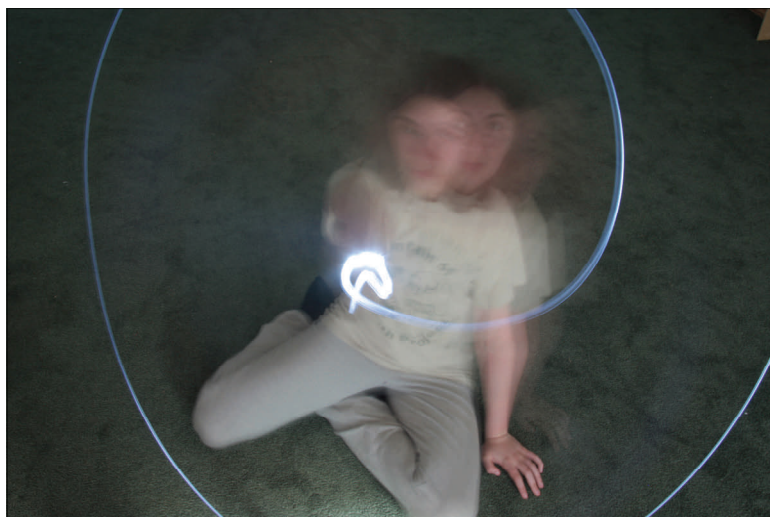
Bottom line: We need you at this time and welcome your ideas and input.

We want to reassure you that we welcome input and energy from any and all parents at WMS. If you are interested in helping out, please contact wms_bod@wmsde.org.

We will continue to be in touch with all of you so please think about how you would like to be involved. Thank you so much.

Sincerely,

*The Wilmington Montessori School
Board of Directors*



WMS photographers to be showcased in June Art Loop

The WMS After-School Photography class has been invited by the Mayor's Office for the City of Wilmington to show their work in the new Louis L. Redding Children's Gallery as part of the June Art on the Town Loop. This semester's photography students, as well as some alumni, will be showing their digital images, pinhole photos and more.

There will be an opening reception on Friday, June 1, 5:30 to 8 p.m. The show runs through the end of June.

The Staff and
Board of Directors of Wilmington Montessori School
Cordially invite you to attend the

Graduation Ceremony for the Class of 2012



Wednesday, June 6, 2012 at 10 a.m. in the Gym
Please join us in honoring our graduates!

Donate Baby Items to Westside Family Healthcare this May

This month, Helping Hands is collecting baby items for the patients of Westside Family Healthcare. It would be much appreciated if you put items such as diapers, formula, bottles, wipes and baby shampoo in the marked bins by the front desk.

Thanks so much for your generosity, and thanks to Room 19 for the wonderful posters decorating WMS's halls! For more information, please contact Amanda Lewis at aamlewis@hotmail.com.



Goal—
\$80,000

Today—
\$65,655



Support the 2011-2012 Annual Fund

What does the Annual Fund support? Reading, writing, teaching, exploring, experiencing, understanding, growing, learning—CHILDREN.

Make your contribution online:

Visit www.wmsde.org/giving and click "How to Give."

Donate in person:

You can also request a donation envelope and make your contribution at the front desk.

WMS is a tax-exempt 501(c)3 organization and contributions are tax-deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law.

For more information, contact Jennifer Burns at 302-475-0555 or jennifer_burns@wmsde.org.

Thank you for supporting WMS!

Got Creativity?

8- to 14-year-olds:

Spend a week designing your own clothing line in Passion for Fashion Camp or solve engineering challenges using the principles of physics, environmental design and your own imagination in Junkyard Warriors Camp.

Online [registration](http://www.wmsde.org/camp) is available. Visit www.wmsde.org/camp to learn more, or contact Cass Winner at 302-475-0555 or cass_winner@wmsde.org.



Looking for co-op hours? How about tuition credit?

Check out our...

BUILDING COMMUNITY REFERRAL PROGRAM



New families come to learn about WMS every day. One of the questions we always ask is "How did you hear about us?" Most people answer, "from a friend."

We're thrilled that our current families recommend WMS to their friends and help our community to grow.

The "Building Community" referral program is a way for us to give back to the people who help build our community in this way.

Families who meet the requirements outlined at www.wmsde.org/buildingcommunity will receive a **\$750 tuition credit or 30 hours of co-op.**

Spread the word and invite friends to schedule a private tour by calling 302-475-0555 or emailing admissions@wmde.org, attend our next Montessori Monday on June 18 at 9:30 a.m. or consider hosting a Montessori event at home.

As you spend time with your friends and family, we encourage you to explain the benefits that you see in and around WMS classrooms and share your personal WMS story with others.

For more information or to find out how you can help promote WMS, contact Theresa Conaty, Admissions Officer, at Theresa_Conaty@wmsde.org. To learn more about upcoming admissions events, visit www.wmsde.org/admissionsevents.



Receive live updates from WMS on your computer or mobile device:
www.twitter.com/wmsde



Check out our Facebook page for WMS news, photos and event information:
<http://www.facebook.com/WilmingtonMontessoriDE>

Our Mission

Wilmington Montessori School is a collaborative learning community rooted in Montessori principles, inspiring the joyful discovery of self and a passion for learning and independent thinking. We empower children to be knowledgeable and responsible contributors to the global community.

WEDNESDAY WEEKLY SUBMISSIONS

Have a submission for the Wednesday Weekly? E-mail Wednesday-Weekly@wmsde.org by 4:30 p.m. Friday each week for possible publication in the following week's issue.

Note: Submissions may be modified for space constraints and/or content clarity.