



Shrewsbury Montessori School

Growing Bright Minds from Age Three through Grade Six

June 17, 2020

Dear Shrewsbury Montessori School Community,

We hope this letter finds everyone safe and healthy. As this school year has come to a close, it is amazing to reflect upon the events that have transpired over the last three months. As we sat at the Back-to-School BBQ enjoying fun times, camaraderie and hoping that we would win the raffle, we could not have predicted that months later a pandemic would change our lives dramatically. As events unfolded, it was a testament to our teachers and staff that they were able to adapt quickly to provide continued quality teaching that continually evolved. Also as amazing, is how you, the families, quickly adapted to the new environment. We understand this was not an easy process while having to balance new paradigms of working from home while expanding into new roles as teachers, amongst other challenges. With your guidance and support in partnership with our faculty, it was wonderful to see our children continue to adapt, learn, and grow.

Throughout this time, our school was under the strong leadership of Mrs. Maria Mihopoulos. She worked closely with the board, staff and faculty well prior to school closure to develop contingency plans should the need have arisen, as it did. We were well ahead of the curve in comparison to all the other schools in our area to continue to seamlessly provide the quality education that you depend upon. She effortlessly was able to continue to guide the school through the challenges of the COVID-19 environment while spending countless hours on webinars and meetings in that effort. Maria was put on the spot last year when asked to be our interim Head of School. Without hesitation, she said yes and was able to be a known face and a voice of stability for our administration, faculty and community. She was able to continue to guide our school on its upward trajectory as we planned our expansion and elevated our Montessori curricula. Knowing her strong connection to SMS, she dedicated her time and effort to ensuring our children and teachers were engaged and cared for. I know many of you got to know her through various programs and mornings in car line. Her warm and charming personality was always on display. Maria has served our community as a student, parent, long standing board member and interim Head of School for which we are immensely grateful for. We thank her for her service and all that she has done and wish her well for the future.

As you know, Ms. Amy Shen was named the Head of School in April of this year. She has just started in this role and is ready to continue to move our school forward in these challenging times. Amy has been working with a transition committee comprising our administrative team and board members. She was continuously being informed of activities at SMS and has been ready to continue our efforts at SMS seamlessly. Along with our COVID Response Committee, we have been actively planning for every possible contingency for our educational program. As of now, based on available information, we are planning for students to return to school in the fall with guidelines mandated by the state, though we are also patiently awaiting specifics. In the interim, we continue to make plans for remote learning or a hybrid remote and in school program as we monitor changes in our environment. We look forward to working closely and in partnership with Ms. Shen to provide the healthiest and safest environment for our children to learn and grow.

As Ms. Shen has stated in her letter, we will have a communication plan in place to keep you informed on plans and activities at SMS. We know that many of you have questions and we hope that we can give you answers as we gather more information from the state in the days to come. If you do have any questions, please do not hesitate to email the board at board@shrewsburymontessori.org. Thank you everyone for your understanding, caring and resiliency. We have a strong future ahead of us.

Sincerely,

SMS Board of Trustees

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