



eyes wide open

THE SPRINGMONT NEWSLETTER - ALUMNI EDITION

Winter 2019

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Building Towards our Future

Last year the Board of Trustees embarked on an update of the school's Strategic Plan, resulting in the development of a five-year plan focused on four main pillars - Faculty, Families, Format and Facilities.

- Facilities improvements including the new playground, Landschool renovations, new science and technology equipment in Elementary classrooms, Toddler and Primary kitchen enhancements, new presentation technology in Middle School and security improvements to entry doors are either complete or underway. In addition, a new activity bus has already made additional Field Trips and outings easier and less expensive.
- This year's Springmont Fund is focused on Faculty, aiming to increase funds available for faculty professional development and allowing for the creation of a dedicated faculty workspace. Investing in those who invest in our students is a valuable and meaningful use of our fundraising dollars. Additional resources will be focused on developing a more substantive and standardized faculty evaluation system, and over the next five years, Springmont aims to increase faculty compensation to 85% of Fulton County public school salaries.
- This year's Families initiatives include bolstering the role IMPACT, Springmont's parent organization, plays in school events and the addition of parent ambassadors to the admission process. Parental help in increasing the school's visibility via organic marketing is invaluable. Everyone can help by sharing our social media content and posting reviews online!
- Format is really about curriculum. Montessori is often misunderstood and not everyone understands the difference between an AMI Montessori experience and the various for-profit options popping up all over the metro area. Documentation and marketing of the scope and sequence of our curriculum will distill and display these significant distinctions.



Earlier this year, parents gathered for a Head of School Coffee. Those in attendance were kind enough to share their stories of how they found Springmont and why they stayed. It seems that in addition to loving our faculty, parents choose Springmont's unique and individualized approach to learning because it balances academics with freedom, broad exploration and opportunities to be self-directed, build confidence, hone creativity and find one's voice. It was fantastic to hear about so many thriving students who love our school!

Springmont Loves Our Alumni

We continue to be impressed (but not surprised) by the incredible accomplishments of our alumni. We were excited to see so many alumni and families back on campus for the Springmont Festival, Montessori Mile & Alumni Brunch on October 5th.

We want to share your stories with families currently at Springmont. Many are new to Montessori and have questions about the paths our students take after Springmont. As a result, we have begun a monthly Alumni Spotlight in our newsletter. This feature helps us keep in touch with our alumni as well as connect our current parent community with the impressive students who have gone before their children. If you are interested in sharing your experience in an Alumni Spotlight, please reach out to Lauren Stevenson at l Stevenson@springmont.com.



Additionally, Springmont will host an **Alumni Panel on Thursday, January 9th, 2020**. If you completed your 6th or 8th year here, we would love for you to join us. The evening will begin with a half hour to mix and mingle followed by an hour-long semi-formal panel conversation.

If you are in Atlanta and interested in being a member of the panel, please also reach out to Lauren Stevenson at the email address listed above.

Landschool Renovations

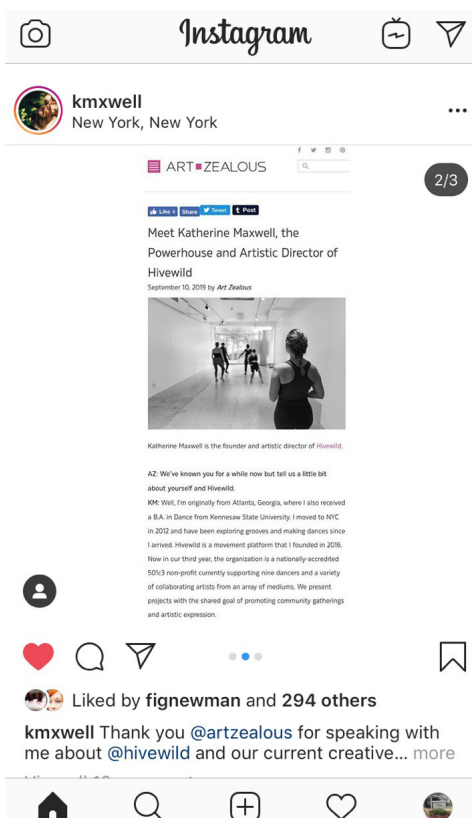
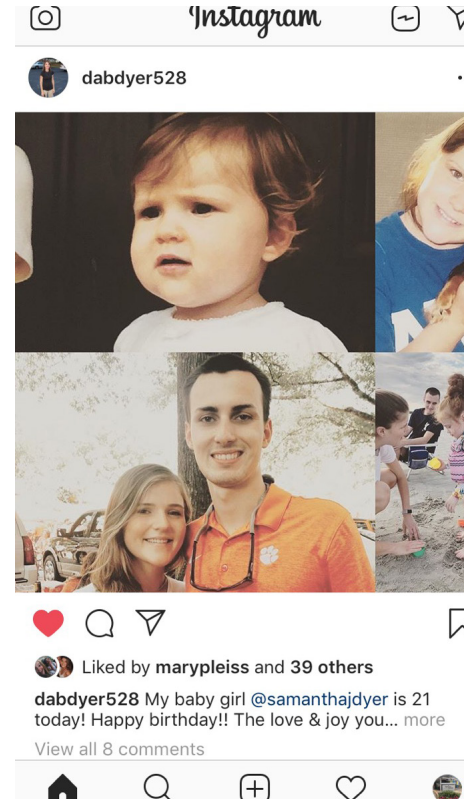
Say good-bye to the old Landschool kitchen! New appliances, upgrades and renovations are underway thanks to those who generously donated to the 2018-19 Springmont Fund.

The new kitchen will not only add functionality and efficiency but will also reduce our use of paper products, further aligning us with our core value of Stewardship of the Environment. Thank you to parent volunteers David Borchardt, Nathan Fox, Greg Lamps, Brian Livesay, Allison & Hank Meisinger, and Hamilton Williams for starting the process by tearing out walls and old fixtures. We look forward to sharing the results of the professional contractor's installation soon.

Landschool visits are a favorite part of the Springmont student experience and we are forever grateful to the generous (anonymous) family who donated the property to the school during the 2000-2001 school year. These new improvements will enhance the Landschool outings for years to come.



As Seen on Instagram



On The Farm: Actually...In the Greenhouse!

By Michelle Wolfersberger, Outdoor Science Education Teacher



If you're ever looking for me, chances are you'll find me in one of our two greenhouses with some students deciding which vegetables and herbs to grow for the upcoming season! If you've been to campus lately, you have probably seen the greenhouse outside the Fine Arts Cottage, we also have one inside our basement, and it's a great place to start seeds, both winter and summer. During the summer, the basement's cooler temperatures result in less-stressed seedlings that don't require as much attention as they would in the outdoor greenhouse where they dry out faster than we can water them! In the winter, the grow lights, fans and heat mats keep seedlings warm and cozy until it's time to put them outside in the gardens. When school began, we started our seeds in the indoor greenhouse largely because air and soil temperatures were still too

high to sow seeds directly in the soil.

In addition to meteorology, there's also some math involved in seed starting! Beginning with Atlanta's first predicted frost date (which averages November 13), we worked backward using the number of days to harvest for a particular vegetable to select the best planting date. Sow too early, and seedlings won't survive the heat. Plant too late, and tender plants will be killed off by frost, excepting those like kale that do better with a touch of frost which makes its leaves a little sweeter. Of course, there's no way to predict the exact date of our first frost – our earliest was October 25th and our latest was December 6th, so we just cross our fingers!



During the fall we grew herbs including basil, marjoram, parsley and oregano. Students also grew radishes, cabbages, kale, cauliflower, broccoli and Brussel sprouts. Elementary children who come to Open Studio and Middle School students help to clean out the vegetable garden, amend the soil with our homegrown compost and either transplant or direct-sow seeds for the new season. We will begin planning the next planting in January and sow in February for spring and summer crops. It's always time to grow something! See you outside!

2019-20 Springmont Fund to Benefit Faculty

For several years, expenditure of Springmont Fund dollars has focused on facilities. A look around campus demonstrates how a superlative investment in learning and playspaces tangibly enriches the student experience. While facilities are a worthy and important investment, it is the dedicated and skilled faculty that truly inform the Montessori experience for our students.

This year, leadership has earmarked Springmont Fund dollars to invest in the people who invest in our students. The most notable items within the plan are an increase in the budget for professional development and establishing a space on campus for staff to congregate, plan and recharge outside of their classrooms.

While plans to change the campus over the next several years are developing, strategic investments made now will support the beloved faculty who instill a love of learning in our students for years to come.