



Welcome to the 2011-2012 School Year.

This has been an amazing summer for me. I moved to New York City in June, and have spent the last weeks settling into this school community and getting ready for the new school year. Thanks to the many administrators, faculty, and parents who have stopped by to welcome me and offer positive advice about our dedicated and enthusiastic MMS community.

And to all of you who are returning to MMS or are new to our community ... thank you for entrusting your children to us. Your children will have an invaluable experience at MMS, embarking on a Montessori journey of self-discovery and developing the full range of their talents and abilities in a respectful, cooperative, and diverse community.

During the summer, we have been busy on many fronts. MMS has invested in a new database that will help to streamline our operations, especially in the areas of admissions, development, finances, and student records. Prospective families will be able to apply online this fall, and the links are up on the website. Thanks to the many families who raised their paddles at the Spring Benefit, we have a new playground for the Primary children on the school's garden level. I tried out the equipment myself, and had a lot of fun! We also have done some reorganizing and renovating to make our administrative space more efficient and attractive. Fred Antonoff, the Business Manager, has moved into the office near mine on the main floor. Bertica Spencer, the Primary Division Coordinator, and Karen Paulson, the Music Director, have an office in the administrative suite on the garden level.

In July, I had an opportunity to attend a conference sponsored by the Center for Social and Emotional Education in New York along with Associate Head of School Bob Reveri, Upper Elementary teacher Barb Callaghan, Lower Elementary Coordinator Wendy Reveri, Primary teacher Magaly Gamarra, Admissions Director Heidi Morrison, and Physical Education teacher Adam Bluth. We discussed ways that schools can create and support safe, caring, and democratic communities. You will hear more about what we learned at the first Parents Association meeting on Sept. 13.

Finally, a number of MMS Lower and Upper Elementary teachers, as well as teachers from other schools, participated in a workshop at MMS on math education that was organized by Sian Zelbo and led by Mark Saul, a professor at the Courant Institute at New York University. They are excited about supplementing the Montessori approach to math with new strategies.

As we enter a new phase in the history of Metropolitan Montessori School, we have chosen our annual theme to be "Growing Together." We will guide children as they grow physically, socially, and spiritually; we will participate in listening and learning from each other; we will appreciate the strengths of MMS; and we will work together to make our school community stronger. I have enclosed a book mark as a reminder of the values we embrace at MMS.

September is always an exciting time for the teachers and the children as they join together, seeing old friends and meeting new ones. Teachers look forward to creating a new community of learners in their classrooms; establishing ground rules with the children that will build a peaceful learning environment; and partnering with parents for the success of each child.

I encourage you to participate in the many parent education and friend-raising events, beginning with an **Open House** on Tuesday, Sept. 6, from 5 to 7 p.m. (a parent-only event so that parents and teachers can become acquainted) and the **Family Picnic** on Saturday, Sept. 10 from 12:30 to 3:30 p.m. The website calendar lists up-to-date information at [www.mmsny.org/calendar/](http://www.mmsny.org/calendar/). Check it out today and often during the year ahead. We will also begin our weekly email on Friday, Aug. 26, 2011.

You will find me at the front gate each morning as you drop off your child. Please stop and introduce yourself and your child frequently as I get to know each family. I look forward to this exciting year.

With warm regards,



Brenda Mizel  
Head of School