FOLLOW THE CHILD MONTESSORI SCHOOL

2018-19 ANNUAL REPORT

Head of School Letter

Dear FCM Community,

It is a special opportunity for me to write this letter for the 2018-19 Annual Report--my last year as FCM's Head of School. My realization that every school event was my last became more profound as the school year progressed.

I have been in awe of FCM's evolution over the last 15 years--from a start-up school, full of productive energy and an "all hands on deck" mentality, to a brand new school of 200 students on a beautiful wooded campus with more opportunities for professional development for staff and expanded parenting support opportunities. None of that could have been possible without our community's support, our staff's dedication, and our unwavering commitment to Montessori principles. The challenges were abundant; however, the quest for our new identity as a larger school wishing to maintain its intrinsic "small community" values was always exhilarating.

I have been in awe of the school's evolution over the last 15 years

What a journey it has been. I am honored to have championed the FCM cause and growth for the last 15 years.

With thanks,

Dominique Mouthon

Chair Letter

Dear FCM Community,

Welcome! Throughout the 2018-2019 school year, we reflected on our past and future as we prepared for the Head of School transition. We celebrated the strong period of growth that FCM experienced under Dominique's leadership. In the fall, we gathered to celebrate meeting our Capital Campaign goal and completing the campus master plan. In June, FCM family from past and present came together to celebrate Dominique. In honor of her service, the Board announced the creation of The Fund for Montessori Excellence, FCM's first endowment.

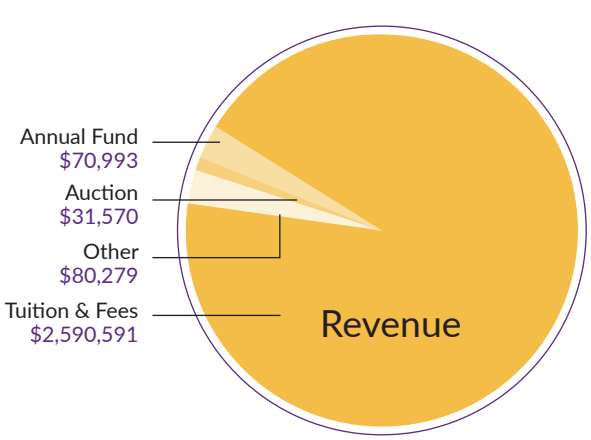
Throughout the year, Dominique and Rebecca worked together to ensure a stable transition. We were fortunate to have Rebecca join us on two occasions for all-school events. We are thrilled to welcome her and her family to FCM!

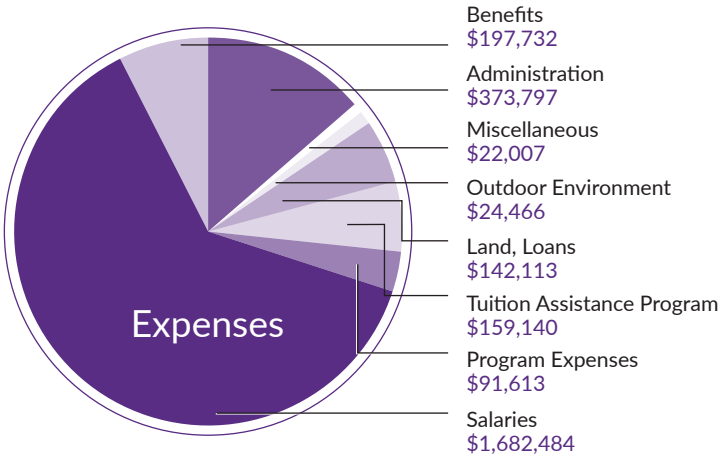
The Board continued to invest in professional development for our teachers, tuition assistance for our families, and diversity and inclusion trainings for our board, staff, and parents. We continue to look for ways to support FCM's incredible teachers and staff as we commit to FCM's mission of providing the highest quality Montessori education to our students.

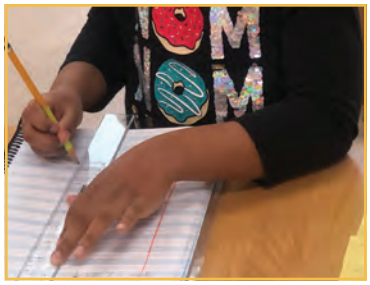
Thank you for your support of FCM!

Charlotte Holton & Charles Lau,
Chair & Vice-Chair of the Board of Trustees

2018–19 Financials







The Steps Forward Capital Campaign

2014-2018

In 2001, FCM opened its doors to 60 students on a rented half-acre campus on Ridge Road. Just a decade later, the school was thriving and continuing to grow, but bursting at the seams of its campus. The Board of Trustees actively searched for a new location for seven years before making the decision to purchase the Harden Road property.

In 2013-2014, the school launched the FCM Steps Forward Capital Campaign to help finance this enormous undertaking. FCM was committed to a purpose-built campus that would include classrooms built to Montessori specifications and an outdoor environment designed by NCSU's Natural Learning Initiative. This move transformed our facilities and program offerings, allowing FCM to move from 8000 square feet on less than one acre to 17,000 square feet on more than four acres.

FCM moved from 8,000 square feet on less than one acre to 17,000 square feet on more than four acres

The campaign and building project included several phases spread over a number of years, including the Felix Challenge for the Outdoor Learning Environment in Spring 2016 and the final phase of the campaign for the Children's House Outdoor Extension in Spring 2018. Throughout the campaign, countless community members contributed to making this dream a reality. We are forever grateful for the generous support of our wonderful community.

With gratitude,
FCM Board of Trustees

Gardens and Grounds Work Days

Thank you to the volunteers for caring for our outdoor environment, creating safe spaces for our children to play, and nurturing our plant life on Gardens and Grounds workdays. Projects this year included:

> Building raised garden beds on the OLE and Children's House Extension

> Regrading the stream on the OLE

> Planting irises, lilies, and a gardenia

> Installing a basketball net

Caring for our outdoor environment, creating safe spaces for children to play

It's been a joy to see our community contribute their time to enhance our beautiful campus. I look forward to our 2019-20 work days.

Carson Smith
Gardens and Grounds Coordinator

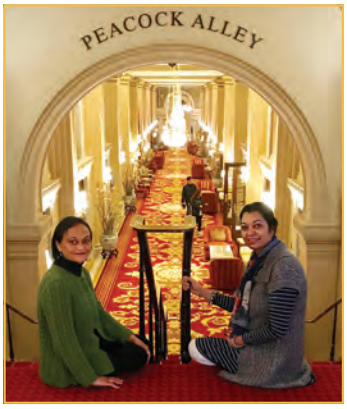
New Faces at FCM

We welcomed two new employees to FCM this year:

Phardia Adibe
Red Fox,
Assistant Teacher and Afterschool

Brandi Schuetze
Purple Finch, After School/
Late Day Assistant Teacher

2019 Annual AMS Conference in Washington, DC



"I learned new ways to use Montessori materials"

It was exciting to have the opportunity to attend the Annual AMS Montessori Conference in Washington, DC early last spring. The myriad workshops and presentations were inspiring and productive. I gained a new and more in-depth understanding of lessons I have been presenting for over 30 years to elementary students. It was a true professional development experience!

One of the workshops particularly enhanced my approach to helping children progress from the concrete to the abstract in their comprehension of mathematical processes and concepts. I learned new ways to use Montessori materials to present some basic concepts that are not always covered in our Montessori Math albums. As soon as I returned to the classroom, I applied these methods to strengthen students' understanding of more abstract concepts such as counting money, telling time, and numeration.

I am grateful for the opportunity to attend this and other conferences as they help to ensure that I can create a learning environment where children flourish and gain confidence as they navigate their time in Lower Elementary.

Ranjana Patel
Lead Teacher, Emerald Lower Elementary

Thank You to Our 2018–19 Annual Fund Donors

Every Child. Every Day.

Annual Fund Co-Chairs:
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Red Door ($5,000+)

Dede and John Boswell
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Peace Pole ($2,500-$4,999)

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The Fund for Montessori Excellence

In Honor of Dominique Mouthon

Throughout her years at FCM, Dominique championed Montessori excellence in our classrooms, across our campus, and within our programs. Last spring, to honor her passion and commitment, the Board of Trustees announced the creation of FCM's first endowment.

The Fund for Montessori Excellence will provide teachers and staff with resources to deliver the highest quality Montessori experience for FCM's children. It will also strengthen FCM's long-term financial well-being, ensuring that generations of children will benefit from an outstanding Montessori education.

Last June, as we gathered to celebrate Dominique and her years of service, we were honored to announce that our community had contributed more than $50,000 to The Fund for Montessori Excellence. Thank you to the generous donors whose gifts to FCM's first endowment will continue to enrich our school for many years to come.

Our community contributed more than $50,000 to The Fund for Montessori Excellence

Endowment Contributors

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Georgia and Alex Sgouros
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Starr and Phil Snead
LaRose and Bill Spooner
Martha and Reich Welborn

Diversity & Inclusion

Issues related to all forms of diversity, including race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, and other factors, are prevalent in our children's lives. We seek to learn more about these issues and how we can support our community members. Supporting diversity and inclusion not only strengthens our community, but provides a richer learning environment for all our students.

In Spring 2018, the Board announced the launch of FCM's Diversity & Inclusion initiative, with the goal of strengthening our commitment to being a welcoming and affirming community. We began with a focus on gathering information and providing education. Last year, we sponsored three workshops on implicit bias, for the board, for the teachers and staff, and for our parent community (in partnership with the FCM-FA). Our teachers reviewed classroom books and materials to ensure they are adequately representative and we hosted a Parent Power Lunch on gender.

Supporting diversity and inclusion strengthens our community

FCM's Diversity & Inclusion Committee, made up of parents, staff, and trustees, seeks to provide programs and resources to our staff, students, and parents, and to continue to look for ways to nurture a welcoming and affirming environment for all members of our community.

Charlotte Holton
Chair, Diversity & Inclusion Committee

FCM Family Association

The FCM Family Association (FCM-FA) exists to provide pathways for families to engage with each other, the school, and the greater community. In the 2018-19 school year, the FCM-FA served to meet our four key goals:

1) Foster information sharing among parents
2) Support teachers
3) Organize non-curricular community service projects
4) Build and serve the community

The FCM-FA exists to provide pathways for families to engage

New this school year was the introduction of the FCM-FA Family Forums. Held in the fall and spring, these gatherings brought together the parent community for a chance to socialize, discuss topics as a parent group, and gather as families afterwards for a potluck Sunday supper.

The fall forum topic was *"How to Improve the Service of FCM-FA in our Community"* and was led by Liz Summers, Geri Harris, and Beth Johnson. The spring forum topic was *"Diversity, Inclusion, and Implicit Bias"* led by NCSU Diversity Professionals, Amy Circosta and Beverly Jones Williams. We look forward to the 2019-20 forums and discussions with you!

FCM-FA Co-Chairs
Beth Johnson: betheiserloh@gmail.com
Geri Harris: geriharris.3@gmail.com

Community Building Events

Rise Against Hunger (RAH) January 27, 2019

Many are the joys of working together! We packed more than 7,775 meals that were sent to Haiti. Upper Elementary students Evan Bledsoe, Jordan Feldman, Kishan Virdy, and Benjamin Parrish led an all-school coin drive to raise funds for our RAH event. After visiting each Children's House and Lower Elementary classroom to share facts about world hunger and holding signs every morning for a week at the morning carpool, the team raised $967.37! This exceeded the amount needed to hold the event on our campus. We are so proud of our school and our Upper Elementary students for their generosity and passion to support Rise Against Hunger.

Parent Co-Chairs:
Emily Fera
Pete Proimos

Students raised $967 to support Rise Against Hunger

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