



## Hello Meher Friends



**Mrs. Muñoz**

**T**he holidays are quickly approaching, and although so much is different, the feeling and excitement of the season can

still be felt through the children. The

holiday decorations around the school were met with smiles and approvals. The gifts for the Toy Drive and the food for the Food Drive started arriving. The holiday crafts are displayed beautifully in the classrooms and holiday songs can be heard. Our little Meher world is a place of joy Monday through Friday where we can feel like things are somewhat normal.

I want to thank our wonderful staff for their hard work in making Meher a place of caring and stability for the children. Your loving touch and kindness towards the children is such an amazing thing to witness. I would also like to thank all of our parents for your trust and kind words of encouragement and support. We are an amazing team and working together with

you in the care and teaching of your children is an honor.

Happy Holidays to you all and may peace be with you during this holiday season and the New Year. Be safe during our winter break and we look forward to being together again January 4.

Peace and love,  
Adela Muñoz

## A Report From Mrs. Rivera



**Mrs. Rivera**

**H**ello dear parents, once again I am back writing my newsletter to inform you of all the exciting events and or activities that occurred in November. The children were excited as I changed the month of our calendar from October to November!

They saw the beautiful design drawn on it; fall colors and that of pumpkins; big and small in sizes, bright orange and shades of yellow and red colors.

There were two holidays celebrated in November. The first was Veteran's Day, November 11th. We discussed our heroes and veterans who gave their lives in order to attain peace, independence and freedom for our country. We mentioned firefighters, policemen, guards, as heroes of our times.



The children were quiet as I told some stories about the war; how people would be united in their work towards a common

goal of peace, how people suffer when there is war and how heroes who survived the war tell great stories of their actions. The children began to understand the importance of the work people do together to attain peace.

The other holiday was Thanksgiving Day! Before this day came I asked the children what they are thankful for in their lives. We wrote their replies on the chalkboard: teachers, parents, family members, friends, food, pets, school, clothing, and the earth to mention a few. I read a beautiful book, "Giving Thanks" donated to us by the Lahoda brothers: Henry (a graduate child in my class) and Max, a student of Ms. Lopez.



To the Lahoda family, Thank you so much! The children enjoyed the inspiring stories I read to them. Our party was successful

and fun! Food was ordered by the school and the children went home that day with good treats, work folders and great projects they did with the artistic help of Ms. Mills and Ms. Martinez. They are displayed in the staircase and hallways of our classroom.

These will all be brought home on Friday, the 18th of December.

We have two great children that are November birthday celebrants. They are Jemma Huang and Silas Robbins; both turned 3 years old. Both celebrated their birthdays in our classroom.

The children are learning to be more understanding and caring for one another. In class, they work independently with the lessons and materials they have been taught. The older children are crazy with puzzle maps, the 3rd box of the color tablet, polishing works, short chains, writing numbers 1-100 (especially writing the numbers

they have the tendency to write backwards) and phonics.

They will be reading soon! The younger

ones are thriving using right manners and conduct. They are steadier in their work and have high interest and put effort into the lessons given them.

We had our Charleston Wrap Fall Fundraiser this month and thank you all dear parents for your support and generosity.

As always, I am indebted to Ms. Mills and Ms. Martinez for their patience, care and love for our children in class. Aside from the beautiful art work, they are able to maintain discipline and guidance for all the children. I am truly blessed to work with both of you.

Friendly reminders: we have our December activities going on right now: Toy and Canned Food Drive, and exchange gifts for the children on the 18th of December (that will be the last day of school with a Christmas party). Please help us to supply the needy this month of the year. We can





make a difference by caring and sharing a little of what we have. Rewards come in many ways unexpectedly.

Thank you once again. Have a safe and delightful celebration of the holidays to one and all!

Mrs. Rivera, Ms. Martinez and Ms. Mills

## A Report From Ms. Lopez



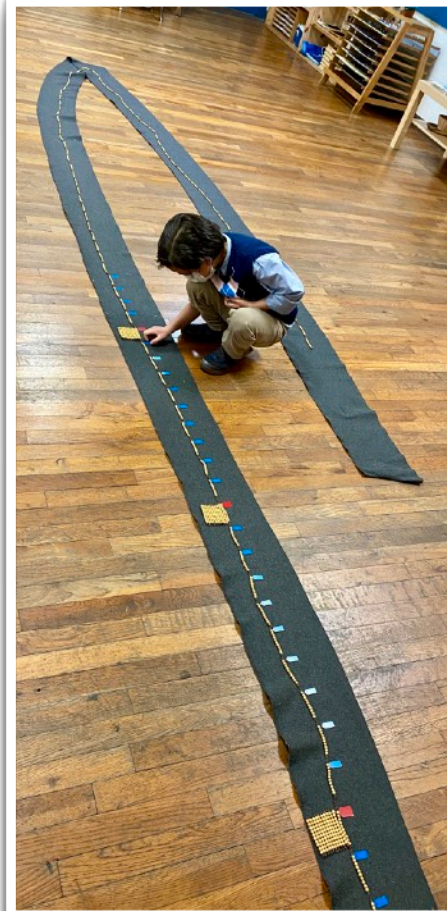
**Ms. Lopez**

**H**appy December everyone! We finally made it to the most wonderful time of the year. Our classroom is full of so much excitement as we prepare for this joyful time. The children are keeping busy creating decorations and ornaments for our classroom and Christmas tree.

They've been punching out many Christmas related shapes and decorating these shapes with Mrs. Suh. The children really enjoy their arts and crafts time with her.

### **November recap:**

The children really enjoyed our Thanksgiving luncheon. We rearranged the tables in a way so that the children were able to



enjoy everyone's company, but at a distance. They wore their turkey hats and they each shared what they are thankful for. We sent home the placemats the children made, and we hope that you all got a laugh out of it just as we did.

This month we've had or will've had our

1. Parent teacher conference
2. Yearly food and toy drive
3. Christmas celebration

The children have been practicing Christmas carols to perform. Please look out for an email in the next few days for more details on our celebration. Our last day of class before winter break is December 18 and we will resume class on January 4<sup>th</sup>.

I hope you all have a joyful and restful vacation. Please stay safe and remember to wear your mask. See you all in 2021!

Happy Holidays!

Ms. Lopez and Mrs. Suh

## A Report From Mr. Mindes



**Mr. Mindes**

### **H**ello Meher Families

Winter Break is here! In the recent past - in fact, last winter - it felt like there was more: more families traveling, more social gatherings, more school parties, even more traffic.

However, one thing that's the same is the

energy and excitement on the Meher playground! At recess, or after school, you'll still hear children laughing hysterically, while racing about with no particular purpose, or at least none to the supervising eye. A friend once said to me "Remember when you were a kid and you would just suddenly take-off running for no particular reason?"

I see it now every Monday through Friday after 3pm!

## Winter Solstice

With the holiday season upon us and the celebrations that come with it, our class is preparing to recognize a lesser known day - the Winter Solstice (December 21 this year). If you live in the Northern Hemisphere, it



marks the day with the shortest amount of daylight. Formally speaking, it occurs when the sun's perpendicular rays fall on the Tropic of Capricorn, the circle of latitude approximately 23.5 degrees south of the equator. The concept of Winter Solstice - solstice is derived from the Latin and translates as "sun stop" - requires a number of prerequisite lessons on angles, perpendicular lines, lines of latitude, movements of the earth, and the tilt of the earth.



For our Winter Solstice festival, we have decided to copy of a few ideas from other civilizations and countries that celebrate the day (Native Americans for one); the students

have discussed including a dance, a poem, and even some simple, but hopefully savory, dishes!

## From Ms. Wildhaber, Director of our Altadena Campus School News

### Altadena Campus



I would like to start this newsletter by thanking all the families who participated in our Charleston Wrap Fundraiser. With 17 out of 18 students participating, we had a 94.5% participation

**Mrs. Wildhaber** rate! Both classrooms made a combined total of \$2,292 in sales, with an additional \$1045 in straight-up donations checks. Although we may be a smaller school this year, we are still mighty.

I would like to give an extra special thank you to Allison Linamen, Lou's mom, and Allison Diaz, Clayton's mom, for accepting the duty of room parent for each classroom for the fundraiser. I know the responsibility created extra work in their lives, and we are very grateful that their hard work helped to pump up so many families in participating.

Additionally, I would like to thank all the alumni families who supported Meher this year when I reached out. Valentina Sweetland, Mateo Sanchez, Ellen and Clavin Harrer, Maelin O'Connell (and her grandparents), Ande Jaye MacCalla, Westley Lim, and Julia Mackinlay all chose to make a purchase or send a donation. Meher is humbled by such an outpouring of support in this, especially challenging, year.

### A Few Reminders:

Please remember to close the playground gate every time you enter the campus to check-in or pick up your child. We have had at least one child try to run out when they saw an open gate. Also, please remember, we are still only allowing one





family into that playground at a time. If another child's adult is already inside the playground, kindly wait outside the playground until they have exited the playground. The School

will be closed from December 21st-January 1st, for Winter Break. Meher will reopen on Monday, January 4th.

If you are going to travel during this time, please be safe. If you are traveling out of the county or to other areas highly impacted by COVID-19, your child must quarantine for 14 days at home before returning to the school.

On a closing note, the holidays can be a time of sadness and frustration on a good year. Those feelings are likely to be magnified this year due, in large part, to COVID. My mom shared a quote with me she stumbled across on social media, that I think it sums up 2020 well, "This year is not about thriving. It's about surviving." We will survive the holidays, and, possibly create new traditions along the way.

### **Mrs. Wildhaber's Classroom**

It is hard to believe the year is almost over. While it feels like it took extra long overall to get to December, in the classroom, the months have breezed by. The kiddos have settled into a rhythm in the classroom. As a teacher, it is exciting for me to observe the ways they are working together, who they are asking for help, inviting to work with them, and the activities

they find engaging. They have become a tight-knit community.

Speaking of community, the class has been learning what it means to be a part of a community for the last month. We briefly touched on it with our hygiene drive in October. Then in November, with our food drive, we talked about community again, with how the food drive items go directly to the Altadena Community Church for their weekly food pantry pickup. Through this discussion, the kiddos learned how a community

can be a group of people that are close to each other, like neighbors, but it can also be a group of people who are close to each other through a group, like our school community.



I was so proud of the kiddos when they caught on to the concept of community and caring for their community when a classmate brought in *The Lorax* for me to read. For those who are unfamiliar, the basic premise is that the Onceler moved to a lush area, full of vegetation and animals, and started to cut down trees to make clothing with the tree tufts. The Lorax is a speaking creature who kept trying to warn the Onceler of all the harm he was doing to each plant or animal by cutting the trees and disrupting the ecosystem. Through guided questions as I read the story, the kiddos understood how the Lorax was trying to help save the plants and animals, and how the Onceler was the one destroying them.



One child got the concept fully and exclaimed, "He's not taking care of his community!" This opened the floodgates for the rest of the children to share their knowledge of the community and how to take care of each other like the Lorax was trying to. It was a great story day.

Another great thing that has been happening during story time, is when we read about animals. Some of the kiddos have been bringing in books that do a deep dive about a certain animal and the way that animal lives. When we read about how polar bears only live with mom and one or two cubs until living a mostly solitary adult life, I asked if they would do well during covid times and why or why not. The kiddos said yes because they only live with the same family, and because they stay away from other polar bears they're good at social distancing. Orcas would not do well during covid times because they swim in groups of 40, with lots of different families swimming together.

Because this pandemic has been going on for so long with drastic ebbs and flows, I

feel that trying to talk it out, in a safe, somewhat silly way, helps to instill a sense of calm in the children. If we talk about it as a group, they know we are all having similar experiences and feelings. A bonus of having such a small group of children is that they are so engaged during storytime, that we sometimes spend thirty minutes reading books and elaborate on themes in the stories. We are having some deep discussions in class and I am loving every minute of it!

School Shirt Day is this coming Friday, the 18th. Let's keep our 100% participation streak going! For November's 100% participation treat, I am taking a break from slime. The kiddos will do a fun project in class on the 18th, as a way to make the last day before break more enjoyable since we are not having our traditional winter program and potluck this year

I hope everyone is able to enjoy their winter break as much as possible.

Until Next Month,  
Althea Wildhaber



## A Report From Ms. Tinajero



**Ms. Tinajero**

In November, the children were very excited to see all the decorations change again in our classroom. We finally had our first birthday in the classroom and it happened to be mine! The children showered me with gifts all month, from

drawings, homemade necklace and bracelet, and homemade cards. I am a very lucky teacher.

The children were very excited about the Thanksgiving arts and crafts they were able to make since they got 100% last month for School Shirt day. We read books and talked about what it means to be thankful, and the children had some very interesting

conversations about what they're thankful for.

Unfortunately, we did not have a multicultural feast this year because we thought it would be better for the children to bring their own lunch.

However, we did have fun with the extra arts and crafts I brought to the classroom. Thank you

Ms. Tinajero and Ms. McCray



## Thank you Meher Montessori School

***MAOF would like to thank Meher Montessori School for their food donations to our Community . Thanks to Meher Montessori School we will be able to provide food to needy families. MAOF serves 500 families every week at our food bank. A sincere thank you from MAOF and the community to Meher Montessori School .***



# Study finds Montessori education obliterates the difference between high- and low-income kids

This is from an article from [Big Think Web Site](#) from November 2017. Please read the entire study from the University of Virginia published in [Frontiers In Psychology](#)

Researchers tracked academic achievement, social cognition, executive function, and creativity in a longitudinal study of kids across the socioeconomic spectrum.

Researchers and educators have identified early childhood as one of the most important developmental periods in a person's life, setting in place patterns that can predict life outcomes. This is not surprising given the fact that the human brain goes through profound changes in the first six years, most of which appear to be permanent.

In addition, economic analyses have shown that educational interventions aimed at preschool programs have the highest return on investment. Yet, there is little consensus on what kinds of programs should be widely implemented and have the most positive effects.

A recent longitudinal study from the University of Virginia has been published in the journal [Frontiers in Psychology](#). The results show marked differences between the two approaches, with the Montessori education leading to better

performance on several measures and, importantly, to more equalized outcomes between groups of children coming from different socioeconomic backgrounds.

The Montessori group also made substantial headway in closing the income achievement gap. While at the beginning of the study, kids from low-income families were performing significantly worse than those from high-income families, after three years of attending a Montessori preschool this difference had statistically disappeared. In comparison, the achievement gap was preserved in the control group.

***“... by the end of the third year Montessori children fared significantly better on measures of academic achievement and social cognition, were more likely to have a growth mindset (a belief that intelligence is not fixed and one can master new challenges by putting effort into developing new abilities) and had a relatively more positive attitude towards school activities.”***