MONTGOMERYACADEMY

Life

SPRING SUMMER 2018

188 Mount Airy Road
Basking Ridge, NJ 07920
908.766.0362
www.montgomeryacademyonline.org

A Message from Mr. Anthony Gebbia

During the 1990s we experienced the most recent panacea in progressive education. That was when we started to see a flood of desktop computers arriving in the public schools. With those desktops came the hope that technology could bridge the gaps between the wealthiest and the poorest school districts. The implementation of technology offered easier access for students who were struggling and for students who had difficulty learning using the classic relationship between teacher and student.
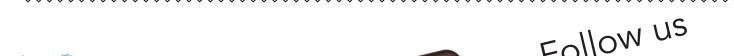
Yet, the disparities between the wealthiest and poorest districts remained and the future didn't materialize as we had hoped. This was not because of a lack of commitment, nor a lack of funding for the hardware. I believe that the promise didn't materialize because we had lost our understanding of what effective schools were meant to be.

At the end of the 19th century, John Dewey wrote about progressive education. At the heart of his philosophy was that education needed to be the opposite of the standard teacher-led didactic model. John Dewey believed that education should be experiential (experience based and hand-on). He posited that there should be thematic units based on critical thinking and problem solving. He believed that education should be highly personalized and concurrently based on collaborative learning projects.
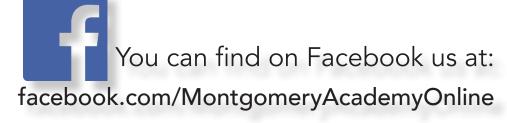
Our first uses of technology didn't match what was truly needed in our schools. Our first uses of technology didn't embrace the idea that effective schools still needed to be collaborative and experiential based.

But that has changed. Technology has finally become transparent enough to be more than the machine itself, but become the medium by which information can be reviewed, distilled, shared, and saved for future students to experience.

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The experience of infusing technology into the lexicon of progressive education taught us some valuable lessons. There is no one "fix" to the disparity between the wealthiest and poorest school districts. Nor did the power of the technology suddenly cure the students who continued to struggle. The speed of the technology was not able to overcome the other needs of those students. We learned that to help our students we still needed to address the whole student.

Teaching to the "whole student" is how we continue to address the needs of those who attend Montgomery Academy. Learning is experiential, learning is based on personal interests and past experiences. By basing the individualization of the curriculum on the individual we can then introduce the global academic needs of each student. We can address math skills using games. We can teach interpersonal skills through the act of volunteering and then working in the community. We address workplace readiness skills in our Make It Real program. Students get over their fear of speaking in public by performing in our school music program and performing in front of an audience. Students learn about responsibility by working with farm animals and caring for horses. Ultimately, our students are learning without knowing that they are learning; and that is because what we do is hands-on and engages each student in a meaningful manner.

What's old is often new again. Progressive education was defined by John Dewey over one-hundred years ago, but is as relevant today as it was then. Learning is an experience and knowledge is an ever-growing collection of experiences. This is part of the reason why our program continues to be so successful, and we continue to seek new opportunities for our students to grow and learn and be part of our community.

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MONTGOMERY ACADEMY CLUB 100 ANNUAL DRIVE 2018-2019

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Cheryl's Curriculum Corner

As the 2017 – 2018 school year begins to wind down, plans for this summer's Extended School Year have been developing. This year we are celebrating our 12th ESY (Extended School Year).

Every year a different theme is implemented to engage students in both academic and social activities. This year's theme is "Reading Takes You Everywhere". Our program will include the following: "Games from around the World", "Out of Space" reading incentives, "World News" TV productions, "World Music", "Wood Projects", "Time Machine" and "World Flora Horticulture". Our summer reading program encourages students to continue reading throughout the summer by offering incentives for every page or book read depending on age and ability. Academics are automatically built into each activity.

Every Wednesday all students take a fun trip to the beach in Randolph. They develop their social skills and peer relationship skills while enjoying a day outdoors. Various field trips are also offered. This year a trip to the local community college Planetarium to see a show about "Black Holes" will take them on a journey through one of the most mystifying, awe-inspiring phenomena in the universe. They will also participate in fun activities such as bowling, the movies and going to a nearby amusement park called Funplex.

Aside from all the activities and trips, our Make It Real Program (MIR) will also continue throughout ESY. Students will have opportunities to volunteer, job shadow and visit various stores and employment places.

The ESY program is a 20-day program in July and hours are 8:30 to 12:30. Every year is a new and exciting program and is offered by the wonderfully dedicated and accomplished staff. Are you ready for some fun?

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A Message from
Mr. Thomas Nolan

As another school year is coming to a close, my mind naturally turns to reflection on the year and the students' growth. Some of the students have been here for an extended time and some have just started within the last couple of weeks; yet all the students have exhibited their own growth based on the various experiences they have had in their time here this year. The growth for some is emotional, for others it is academic, and yet for still others it is social growth with new friendships. Some have made leaps and bounds in one of these areas and still find challenges in other areas while some students have had smaller growth across the board in various areas.

It's at this time of the year that I have found it important to step back and take a clear, hard, objective look at where each student began his or her journey at the very beginning here. It's in this reflection that I become aware that we (staff, parents and students alike) often desire the growth to be more, to be faster and/or to be different than what has actually occurred. I then remind myself of what has been accomplished and how important each single step is for authentic and lasting long term growth over time. As children, we don't often skip crawling before walking or walking before running; we don't start our lives with solid food before we become proficient with a liquid diet; and we don't usually swim an award-winning backstroke without trying an uncoordinated doggie paddle. With this in mind, let's work to celebrate the steps each student has taken. Let's remember that skills spiral and grow over time to add up to the goals we have set. Let's be sure that we excitedly tell the children often how proud we are of the individual steps they have taken as unique and awesome people! Let's remember the work and the efforts that students are committing in coming to school each day and facing the unknowns and challenges presented in their learning and growth. The end of the school year marks the perfect time to celebrate where we have gotten so far together as a collaborative, committed and caring team.

While we are giving the children this necessary support and positive feedback together. Let's also remember the importance of recognizing the end of the year as also providing us the importance of closure. Closure is recognized as a necessary variable in being able to appropriately close one door to enable us as individuals to fully open a new door. Closure is why we celebrate graduations, retirements, and promotions so often. With closure, we have a marker of where we have been and how that place contributes to the next place we are going. Closure provides us a clear reminder of current growth and our future potential as we take the next step. Let's together celebrate moving on. Let's celebrate the new experiences and opportunities that will take place for continued learning in the many individual ways that it will for each child as a special and unique person. Let us celebrate together the year that has been and be excited with anticipation for the next school year to come! Growth does not come from remaining stagnant; growth comes from the newness and change that a new year will bring!

I wish you a summer that you enjoy greatly.

SCIENCE LAB
ROCK CANDY

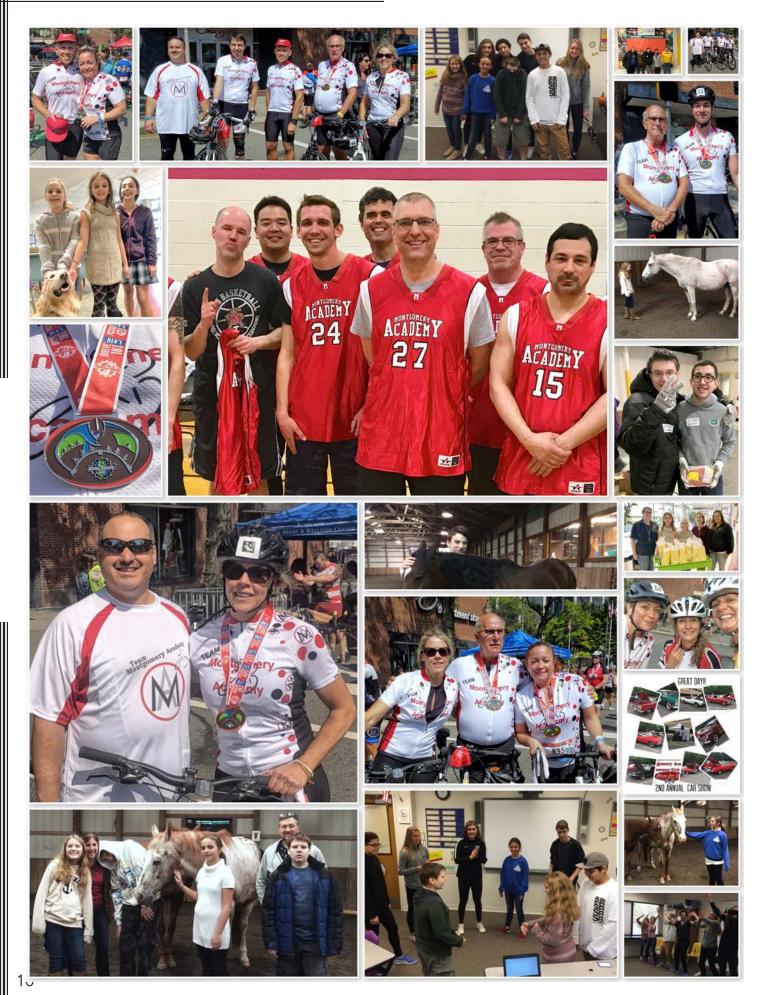E4's California Rolls

I ♥ SUSHI

Most students attend Montgomery Academy because the traditional public school setting was not able to meet their individual needs. We are equipped to appeal to the more unconventional student by offering a more unconventional format in which to learn. While we do use textbooks and employ the more traditional styles of teaching, these are not the only, nor the primary, means of educating. Whenever and wherever possible, hands-on experiential techniques are used. Building models, dioramas, exploring the campus environment, role playing, field trips, cooking, and other hands-on methods are used regularly. Our classrooms and halls reflect what is being studied, drawings, murals, reports and projects are all proudly displayed.

Life Space Interview techniques are also used to encourage dialogue between staff and students. Montgomery Academy does not use a behavior modification program (i.e., no rewards, punishments). The consequences should be natural and logical, and tied to a skill that the child needs to develop. For example, if a student becomes angry and tears a bulletin board, the student is required to repair the bulletin board and apologize to the other children that may have been impacted by their actions.

The Life Space Interview technique lets the students use their own words through writings and dictations to increase their skills and knowledge. They develop a functional, purposeful, and meaningful approach to the use of language as an expressive tool. We know that the students we teach are growing up in a world filled with video games, television, and email- and find they are frequently disconnected as a result. At Montgomery Academy students are actively involved in their own learning and urged to connect and communicate with us, their families and each other.

Admission to Montgomery Academy usually begins when the prospective student's school district furnishes the appropriate student records for a preliminary screening. These records are reviewed by our admissions team and an intake interview is scheduled if the student appears to be a good candidate for our program. The intake meeting involves the student, parent(s) or guardian, a representative from the school district and members of our professional staff. Acceptance is determined by the collective assessment of how the particular student's needs can best be met and if the student and his/her parents feel that Montgomery Academy is the appropriate fit.

If you are interested in seeing our program in action, please contact our main office at 908-766-0362 to schedule a tour or to speak with the member of our staff who is best equipped to answer your questions.

https://stores.inksoft.com/montgomeryacademy

Montgomery Academy Apparel

Montgomery Academy

2018-2019 School Calendar

School Hours: 8:30-2:15 (Early Dismissal: 12:30)
ESY Hours: 8:30-12:30
188 Mount Airy Rd. Basking Ridge, NJ
Phone: (908) 766-0362   Fax: (908) 766-0936
Nurse's Direct Fax: (908) 382-1418

July (T=20 days, S=20 days)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

August (S=16 days)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

September (T=18 days, S=16 days)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

October (T=23 days, S=23 days)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

November (T=18 days, S=18 days)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

December (T=15 days, S=15 days)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

January (S=21 days, T=21 days)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

February (S=18 days, T=18 days)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28		

March (S=20 days, T=21 days)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

April (S=16 days, T=16 days)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

May (S=22 days, T=22 days)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

June (S=14 days, T=14 days)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

Events

July
July 2 — First Day of ESY
July 4 — Closed-Independence Day
July 30 — Last Day of ESY

September
Sep 3 — Labor Day
Sep 4 & 5 — School closed/Inservice
Sep 6 — First Day of School for Students
Sep 19 — Closed-Yom Kippur

November
Nov 8-9 — Closed-NJEA Convention
Nov 16 — Early Dismissal/Staff Inservice/ASAH
Nov 21 — Early Dismissal
Nov 22-23 — Closed-Thanksgiving Break

December
Dec 24-Dec 31 — Closed-Holiday Break

January
Jan 1 — Closed-New Year's Day
Jan 21 — Closed-MLK Day

February
Feb 15 & 18 — Closed-President's Break

March
Mar 18 — School closed/Inservice

April
Apr 19-26 — Closed-Spring Break

May
May 27 — Closed-Memorial Day

June
June 19 — Early Dismissal
June 20 — Early Dismissal-Last day of school for students
Senior Graduation-Held on last day of school

Report Card Marking Periods
End of 1st MP November 14
End of 2nd MP January 30
End of 3rd MP April 12

Progress Report Periods
End of 1st Period October 11
End of 2nd Period December 14
End of 3rd Period March 8

Legend
12:30 Dismissal
School Closed
Closed-Inservice

Calendar includes 3 emergency closure days. If deemed necessary, days will be added to the end of the school year.
If no days are used for emergency closures, days may be subtracted from the end of the school year.