



# The Montessori *Unity* OBSERVER

Published by the International Montessori Society web: <http://imsmontessori.org> Tel. (301) 589-1127

## Accountability in Public Education

by Lee Havis

Today, taxpayer funded public education has grown into a large, corrupt big business that serves many special interests that have nothing to do with good quality education for the students attending. So where in this public education is there any accountability to voters, taxpayers and citizens?

Sadly, the general public is largely unaware of the corruption of government funded schooling since it has only slowly evolved in its operation over a long period of time. Now, we have a massive public school system which has institutionalized political indoctrination of children to become dependent on government, rather than to develop in a free and independent manner in harmony with their own perfect inner guidance of nature.

In Maryland, Governor Larry Hogan has been seeking to provide some public accountability for this public school system in response to a growing number of citizen complaints about fraud and corruption in its local operation. Noting that public education now consumes over 50% of the state's capital budget, he points to the legislature's "reckless, irresponsible, and unsustainable" spending that props up this system that he said could "devastate Maryland's economy". The Governor therefore urged the legislature to stop its "outrageous pandering to special interest groups" which he sees as a major cause of the problem.

In 2018, the Maryland governor proposed an independent state-level accountability commission to investigate and resolve the widespread fraud, corruption, and mismanagement being reported in the public school system. And, in 2019, he renewed his appeal for this commission in legislation entitled "Accountability in Education Act of 2019." Sadly, however, the legislature has rejected this common sense accountability, choosing instead to pile on more irresponsible spending to fuel this system at even greater levels in the state budget.

On February 6, 2019, I testified for the International Montessori Society in favor of the Governor's much-needed accountability commission. In my testimony, I emphasized the critical importance of state-level accountability instead of local efforts alone which would necessarily be controlled by the same officials responsible for the problem itself.

Cont'd. on Page 4, Col 3



Children working at FloMont School in Bangalore, India

## FloMont School in Bangalore, India

The FloMont School, located in the heart of Bangalore, the "Garden City" of India, was established in 2015 to serve children in the age group 2.5 to 9 years of age. **Shahista Ismail** founded this school to meet a need for quality Montessori education in this thriving metropolitan center of computer technology in the southern region of India.

Born in Chennai, India, and brought up in the Middle East (Oman), Shahista comes from a family of educators and developed her interest in early education at a very young age. With the FloMont School, she hopes to provide a model of quality that will overcome misconceptions about Montessori education and inspire the parents and others in the community about the benefit of this "new education". She states, "There is a lot of misconception about the methodology...Therefore, a large part of our mission is to educate our parents and bring about a change in their mindsets regarding the importance of experiential learning. Many parents...are now realizing and appreciating the genius of Montessori."

The FloMont School boasts of seven large well-equipped classrooms, a library, a community dining area and a computer area. Children start their day with an uninterrupted work cycle followed by enrichment program such as STEM activities, music, drama and sports. Shahista says that the school is well on its way to establishing a middle school program on a brand new two acre campus shortly.

At FloMont, Shahista states that "...parents are treated as partners in their child's education. They are given opportunities

to volunteer at the school, as well as observe their children working with Montessori Materials. FloMont also conducts free workshops for the parent community to help them understand the method better and apply it to their own parenting style. Last year, the school conducted the "Montessori Glass House" where parents got a chance to watch children demonstrate complex concepts in Math and Language. This created a huge impression among the parent community and a sense of goodwill for the school. Parent education is an important aspect of the school's mission."

Shahista describes a typical school day with children working with the materials in their classrooms, having discussions in focus groups or working on a project they have decided to research on. She notes also that, "The older children in the classroom can be seen mentoring the young ones and each in turn playing their part towards motivating and helping one another."

Shahista also points out that "Understanding the IMS technology has greatly helped my team in serving our children better. We are a lot more aware as educators and have a lot more clarity regards our work. We are truly happy to be associated with the International Montessori Society, and pride ourselves as a school that is internationally recognized in this way."

For further information, contact: *Shahista Ismail, FloMont World School, #51, 4th Main, 1st Cross, New Thippasandra, Bangalore, Karnataka, 560075, India, shahista38@gmail.com; Tel: 9901555667*



# Unity

by Lee Havis

*"If human unity...is going at last to be organized, it will be done only by an education that will give appreciation of all that has been done by human cooperation, and readiness to shed prejudices in the interests of common work for the cosmic plan..."*

**Dr. Maria Montessori**

from *To Ed. The Hum. Potential*, p. 74

History and experience both teach that man is naturally "social," seeking order, harmony, and unity with others at every opportunity. However, this urge for unity can also come with disunity and conflict when it opposes the harmonious unity of the whole at the same time.

In 1907, Dr. Montessori offered a *new education* to help realize the true unity of all humanity. Achieving this in practice, however, has been difficult due to flawed human nature that clings so tightly to exclusionary forms of unity based on personality or culture. So, while Montessori teaching can frequently achieve successful unity among children in specific situations, it may not materialize this result for the wider adult society at the same time.

In 1979, the International Montessori Society (IMS) emerged with new practical guidance and tools for unifying Dr. Montessori's new education under the inclusive authority of universal laws of nature. Sadly, however, conventional Montessori educators rejected this opportunity for higher mutual understanding committed to laws of nature, choosing instead to remain attached to personality or culture.

## Mutual Understanding

*"It is not enough to say that in humanity there must be mutual understanding. Conditions must be provided so that man can develop in such a way that he is capable of mutual understanding."*

**Dr. Maria Montessori**

from *Four Planes of Ed. (AMI)* p.7

During her life, Dr. Montessori unified followers through the power and authority of her own strong personality. However, this didn't bring a clear mutual understanding of her new education itself. And, in Europe, where she devoted much of her time and attention, even the unifying effect of her strong personal presence was fundamentally disrupted by the terrible violence and disorder of two world wars.

After Dr. Montessori's death in 1952, the Montessori community became even more fragmented as it came under the influence and control of conventional political organizations, commercial interests, and government. In this way, the original purpose of the new education was effectively lost and abandoned

amid the differences and conflicts that arose among the various competing philosophies, personalities, and organizations in the modern Montessori community.

## Common Humanity

*"Cruelties and exploitations, wars and all forms of violence have had to play their part, because men have not yet realized their common humanity"*

**Dr. Maria Montessori**

from *To Ed. The Hum. Personality*, p.77

While it's true that we are all united in the peaceful realm of the spirit, realizing this true unity is opposed by many obstacles that unfold in the outer drama of suffering, coupled with great disorder, conflict, and violence. Although no one seems to know the cause of this condition, everyone agrees that the education of children is at least one important part of the solution.

Historically, governments and nations have sought to advance human unity by organizing some form of universal public education, and then force all parents to send their children to an approved school under the threat of compulsory attendance laws. Unfortunately, this type of public school system, controlled and centralized in government, has brought only political indoctrination and uniform repression of the child's true nature.

Even though Dr. Montessori's new education is the real path for true unity of all, governments reject this approach because following laws of nature in this way conflicts so totally with conventional reality. And, even the most well-meaning educators in the field remain largely ignorant of exactly how to conduct it successfully with children.

In the Montessori community, conventional teacher training dominates the field, focusing on superficial aspects of materials and certification, rather than addressing the real issues of resolving flaws and defects in the human personality. Breaking free from these flaws, even with the best teacher training, however, is still very difficult because the most persistent flaws are so commonly accepted as normal by the hypnotic power of suggestion in society.

## Power of Suggestion

*"The solidarity of adult society...assumes the power of suggestion and the appearance of an absolute truth on which all agree."*

**Dr. Maria Montessori**

from *Formation of Man*, p.69

Many flaws and false ideas in Montessori teaching have become accepted as inevitable or true by the power of suggestion from society through such means as the approval and endorsement of official government. In the United States, for example, the federal government gives its official recognition to one large accrediting agency which sets up standards and requirements

for Montessori teacher education that conform to the surrounding conditions of conventional society. Relying on this official government sanction, the general public accepts the affiliated accredited institutions of this agency as official and authentic in the field, even though they misrepresent Dr. Montessori's new education that brings about the child's true nature.

## New Education

*"Society has built up walls, barriers. These the new education must cast down revealing the free horizon. The new education is a revolution, but without violence. It is the non-violent revolution."*

**Dr. Maria Montessori**

from *Absorbent Mind*, p.215

While IMS represents Dr. Montessori's new education for its commitment to laws of nature, it also offers means to stay connected with other elements of the Montessori community in a

*Cont'd. on Page 3, Col 2*

**Look for the  
May, 2019  
Observer  
featuring  
Success**

ISSN 0889-5643

### The Montessori Observer

Published by  
INTERNATIONAL MONTESSORI SOCIETY

Tel. (301) 589-1127

havis@imsmontessori.org

Worldwide Web:

<http://imsmontessori.org>

Lee Havis, Executive Director

The Montessori Observer is mailed four times each year, in March, May, September and November, to IMS members throughout the world. The purpose is to provide news and information about the IMS work in Montessori education, and to extend awareness of Montessori teaching that brings about the child's true nature throughout the world.

### INTERNATIONAL MONTESSORI SOCIETY

The International Montessori Society is sponsored by Educational Services, Inc., a non-profit corporation organized in Maryland, USA. The IMS purpose is to support the scientific approach to true natural being throughout the world.

### IMS ADVISORY BOARD

Elizabeth Hainstock, Educator, Author  
John Bradshaw, Author, Public Speaker

### SUBSCRIPTION

Subscription to this Observer publication may be obtained by requesting IMS membership, which is open to all individuals for a \$30 annual fee. Associate schools, \$35 annual fee. IMS also recognizes Montessori schools committed to laws of nature. All members also receive a subscription to the Montessori News and other membership benefits.

### IMS ON THE INTERNET

An on-line IMS discussion group, "Montessori Tools and Tips" is available for anyone to join at no charge. To join this group discussion, visit <https://www.facebook.com/groups/montessoritoolstips/>

Copyright © IMS, 2019

## Moment of Peril

by Lee Haviv

### Disinterest of 6-9 Children

In this 6-9 classroom, the teacher is struggling with children who are showing no interest in doing any real serious academic work (See *Observer*, November, 2018). How can she reconnect and inspire her children to the opportunity for normal self-directed work?

**Analysis:** Disinterest here is a condition of general disorder and misbehavior so ANY child is the hub child, requiring a global approach like stage 1, *beginning conditions*, to present children with the basic order of the environment. With elementary children especially, this means to communicate the framework and routines for normal self-directed activity in the environment.

**Practical Advice:** Since the children in this classroom are inattentive and unprepared for freedom in the environment, begin first by keeping them together in a group for a series of orientation meetings. Start by applying the protocol "*be friendly, get acquainted*" to engage in direct conversation to find the interests and ability of each child.

Gather the children to sit together in a circle on the floor and use the technique *questioning* to ask about each child's situation, such as where he lives, family members, and what he likes to do when not at school. In this dialogue, practice the protocol *model good behavior* and *eye contact before talking*, to demonstrate the basic routines of respectful talking and listening to others. If some child interrupts your conversation, use such techniques as *distraction*, *eye contact*, and *clear direction* to focus him back to the present moment reality.

At some convenient point, give the children a walk-around "tour" of the environment, pointing out the various objects and materials. Following the protocol *basis of interest*, listen to what the children talk about, ask you, and what they look at and touch. For example, if a child asks about plants, animals, or a particular place or culture, show a book or activity that relates to that subject. Show examples of what is available for work, such as books, drawing, and simply academic exercises that you have prepared for math and language learning.

Back in the group, hand out a three-ring binder to each child, and show how to prepare a "daily log" to identify and write down things to do each day. Divide the log into sections with topics, such as math, geography, science, reading, and writing. Have each child write his name and date on the first page, and begin making a list of things that interest him. For any child who can't write, ask an older child to help. Otherwise, have non-writing children draw pictures instead.

Based on topics in the daily logs, invite each child to do that activity, or explore the environment to consider whatever alternatives there may be to follow up a specific interest. If at any time, there is distracting fantasy talk or

Cont'd. on Page 4, Col. 2

## Unity Cont'd. from Page 2, Col. 3

wider dialog on the subject of Montessori education as well. For example, IMS has led in the establishment of an inclusive accrediting agency for the entire Montessori community, which welcomes not only the IMS "true natural" (laws of nature) philosophy, but also those that follow culture or personality philosophy as well.

Still, IMS strongly supports "true natural" Montessori teaching with practical tools, such as a specialized "technology" for conducting this approach in a scientific, objective manner that was never possible before. Even with all this knowledge and support, however, each individual teacher must follow her own unique path of development in the practice of this approach with children.

### Path of Development

*"It is not in human nature for all men to tread the same path of development...Every human personality has its own way of doing things."*

Dr. Maria Montessori  
from *Absorbent Mind*, p.144

Creating the new education is at once a vast global work with others as well as a personal daily task of interacting with children. At this personal level, your path of development in this work begins by imagining the child as an unknown spiritual being, having his own perfect inner guidance for self-directed true natural being. Then, you proceed to observe children with this image in mind, removing flaws and defects in the environment around each child you are observing at that time.

Happily, the IMS technology includes a set of specific "protocols" that approximate laws of nature to guide your actions from one moment to the next. Following these protocols, therefore, you can effectively create the right conditions for a young child to shift from his ordinary disorderly, inattentive behavior, to a state of true natural being which occurs in a moment of profound concentration on some particular piece of work.

### Concentration

*"The child...comes out of his concentration...to perceive the world anew. He becomes aware of his classmates in whom he takes an affectionate interest. Love awakes in him for people and for things. He becomes friendly to everyone."*

Dr. Maria Montessori  
from *Absorbent Mind*, p.66

Dr. Montessori discovered that the young child in the right conditions will come to a moment of deep concentration on a specific piece of work, which then brings him into a normal state of true natural being. In this new "normalized" state, the child then shows a remarkable sense of community with others, which Dr. Montessori validated from her research of 40 years all over the world.

### Sense of Community

*"There is among children an evident sense of community...the emotional life reaches a high level, and the children's personalities are normalized, a kind of attraction makes itself felt."*

Dr. Maria Montessori  
from *Absorbent Mind*, p.231

Today, practitioners seek to bring about the child's normal state of being by imitating exactly what Dr. Montessori did in her original observation experiment in 1907. In practice, this involves a series of steps and stages to shape the environment in such a way that the child can come into a remarkable state of harmonious community with others. However, before reaching this ideal true natural state, each child must acquire an inner functional unity of mind and body by working with materials in the environment during the critical first plane of development from birth to age six.

### Functional Unity

*"...muscles should always serve the intellect and thus preserve their functional unity with the human personality."*

Dr. Maria Montessori  
from *Discovery of the Child*, p.81

Montessori teaching brings about normal functional unity within each child by his working with materials in an intelligent, goal-directed manner. For this, the young child must have access to a wide range of materials that stimulate his interest in work. However, along with these materials, you must also create and sustain the right unity of conception among the adults involved to assure that all share the same spirit of commitment to laws of nature.

### Unity of Conception

*"The human personality, or the care of it, is broken up. On the one side is the home...on the other is the school...There is no unity of conception."*

Dr. Maria Montessori  
from *Absorbent Mind*, p.13

Dr. Montessori's first "Children's House" experiment was ideal for pure scientific observation since the parents and teachers were both highly receptive and obedient to Dr. Montessori's specific guidance and direction. This unity of conception was possible because the parents were poor and illiterate and the teachers untrained in other teaching methods. Today, however, this condition is hard to duplicate due to the heavy influence of government and modern ideas about the care and teaching of children. So, now, teachers and parents typically maintain deep prejudices about children and education that result in many errors in their Montessori teaching.

Cont'd. on Page 4, Col. 1

## Unity

Cont'd. from Page 3, Col. 3

### Errors

*"Errors divide men, but their correction is a means of union."*

**Dr. Maria Montessori**  
from *Absorbent Mind*, p.248

Although errors naturally occur in following any experimental approach, you must still correct them when they do. Today, the IMS technology now provides the means for correcting these errors in a very reliable, scientific manner. Even so, however, deep unconscious errors can divide your efforts with others who may not share your vision of the child as the same point of union for all.

### Point of Union

*"...the child must be considered as a point of union, a link joining the different epochs of history...."*

**Dr. Maria Montessori**  
from *Absorbent Mind*, p.66

With the support of IMS technology, you now have means for creating the new education to ultimately realize the unity and harmony of all in your present moment experience with children. Happily, this spiritual unity reveals the child as the point of union for a universal truth that will also materialize itself eventually in outward form as well. In this way, your personal present moment experience of the child gradually becomes an outward unity as well in the form of a peaceful harmonious new and better humanity in the world.

### IMS Recognizes Montessori Schools

Is your school committed to laws of nature? If so, your school is qualified for recognition as a Montessori school with IMS. For more details, visit the IMS website, <http://imsmontessori.org>, to see a list of these recognized schools and to apply to join this family of IMS recognized Montessori schools.

## Moment of Peril

Cont'd. from Page 3, Col. 1

idle misbehavior taking place, direct the distracted child back to the group meeting location to think about and write down something to do before getting up and moving around again.

For each new day, add different exercises and activities based on what the children show interest to explore. If possible, meet with each individual child outside of the group time to conduct some evaluation testing to determine his level of ability in areas of math, reading, and writing. Based on this testing, give individual lessons, focusing especially on the primary task of "reading". So, for example, be sure to have sandpaper letters, and simple phonetic readers to show that letters make sounds, and sounds together make words. For math, provide manipulative materials and problem worksheets for children to practice at their level of interest and ability.

For children who remain unable to find work on their own, keep them in the group location for special attention to organize activity to do each day. At the end of each group work session, call for a total group meeting to discuss what was accomplished during the session, allowing children to practice their social conversation and interaction skills with each other at that time.

Once the children have settled into the orderly routines of free movement and activity around the environment, use a group meeting to offer a major "great lesson" to inspire and encourage the children about the expansive unfolding reality of the whole cosmos. In this way, the children will gain even greater interest to explore the environment, and function at a higher, more serious type of learning in the group.

## Addressing Government Interference

In a recent visit by a government licensing official, the co-owner of a new Montessori school was informed that the school can no longer use the name "Montessori" in its title because the curriculum, materials, and staff training requirements do not meet minimum standards. For example, the regulations require that there shall be no mixing of ages 2-6 and any teaching staff must have government-approved certification, which includes preparation in non-Montessori philosophy. The other co-owner wants to comply to keep the school open, even though it would disturb if not totally destroy the school's purpose to follow laws of nature. What to do? *Answer in Observer, May, 2019.*

## Accountability

Cont'd. from Page 1, Col. 1

I also pointed out that a state-level commission is only a modest first step to more substantial accountability that is needed to bring real quality and value in education. For example, there must be greater support for parent choice and competition in the free market field of private education. Parents must have alternatives to the public school monopoly, including Dr. Montessori's new education which cannot function within the confines of a centralized government system. Ultimately, real accountability in education will only come as parents can freely choose from a full range of available alternatives, including the "new education" schools that offer such a clear contrast to the uniform government curriculum and instruction provided by the typical public school.