

ANNUAL REPORT

WYOMING VALLEY MONTESSORI SCHOOL

JULY 1, 2024-JUNE 30, 2025

MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL

Dear WVMS Community,

When I look over the pages of our Annual Report, I am overwhelmed with gratitude for our friends who make up our community of giving. No matter the size, every gift to the Annual Fund is tremendously meaningful as it helps our school grow and stay strong.

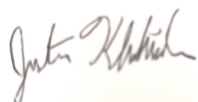
We have increased our goal for this year's Annual Fund because we are so proud of the commitment we see across our community from alumni, board members, faculty and staff, friends, grandparents, and our current families.

We have been working on celebrating our community this year with more student showcase events to share with our whole community starting with our assembly to celebrate International Peace Day and continuing with celebrations of art, international cultures, and STEM.

As I write this letter, we have just enhanced our green spaces thanks to the generosity of donors to construct the WVMS Courtyard and Peace Garden for students and families to gather and celebrate nature. Our teachers have been hard at work on a new digital platform. Montessori Workspace allows teachers to record, observe, and track student progress with Montessori works in a digital space that follows the child from their first moments in toddler to their final steps in Upper Elementary which will form a digital portfolio of progress over time.

Your gifts make these advancements and more possible along with supporting the costs of running a school each and every day. We cannot thank you enough for your support. We are looking forward to our community of giving help us reach this year's goal of \$25,000!

Sincerely,



Justin Kleinheider
Head of School



OUR MISSION, OUR SCHOOL

The mission statement of Wyoming Valley Montessori School is “Inspiring children who will change the world.” The School, together with its families, builds the foundation for a lifetime of learning. We do this by providing a respectful Montessori environment that supports children’s natural desire to learn, guiding them to fulfill their potential for intellectual, social, and ethical development.



WVMS is an active institution in its local neighborhood. Our children and their families have abundant opportunities to contribute to and become part of the community. During the 2024-2025 school year, WVMS efforts supported the Greater Pittston Food Pantry, Church of Christ Uniting Food Pantry, the United Way and Keystone Mission.

Wyoming Valley Montessori School welcomes children 18 months through 12 years to its Toddler, Primary, and Elementary Programs. We are an independent, non-profit co-educational day school in Kingston, Pennsylvania, fully accredited by the American Montessori Society and the Middle States Association Commission on Elementary Schools.



The School was founded in 1970 by a group of parents interested in the educational philosophies of Dr. Maria Montessori. It opened its doors to twenty students and one teacher. Today the staff numbers more than twenty-five and the enrollment is over one hundred and twenty children. We are located in the Wyoming Valley of Northeast Pennsylvania, just across the Susquehanna River from Wilkes-Barre.

WHY CHILDREN LOVE MONTESSORI

CHILDREN LOVE TO LEARN HERE

Children spend each day with enthusiastic fellow students and creative, dedicated teachers. Children learn at their own pace with lots of encouragement and engaging materials. Their classroom is a place of beauty, simplicity and order. They know that we care about them and respect them, and they want to come to school.

CHILDREN LEARN ACTIVELY HERE

They are excited about their work because Montessori gives them so many ways to discover and explore their world. Our curriculum is challenging to the most able student and flexible enough to address many learning styles. It encourages children to see connections in their knowledge, to ask questions, and to create new ideas.

CHILDREN JOIN A FAMILY HERE

Students say they feel at home here. Our teachers have a lot to do with that. Trained to observe and respond to the intellectual, social, and emotional needs of the “whole child,” they foster the growth of their students’ sense of self worth and confidence. They help children reason, cooperate, and care. We also recognize that parents, children’s most important teachers, are an integral part of the school community. Children benefit from strong home-school partnerships.

CHILDREN BUILD THEIR FUTURES HERE

A Montessori education enables children to feel positive toward learning, toward themselves and toward others. Our goal is the development of confident, motivated, lifelong learners. Our graduates make smooth transitions to other systems of education and do well in their academic careers. We are now welcoming our second generation of students, the children of our earliest graduates.



OUR ORGANIZATION

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

A Board of Trustees dedicated to the mission of the school governs the Wyoming Valley Montessori School. For 2024-25, our Board Consisted of:

Hussein Kazimi (President)
Mark Ferretti (Treasurer)
Matthew Cannavale
John Karavis
Kathy Harrington
Jerry Nichols
Tony Ross (Solicitor)

Lori Murphy (Vice President)
Danielle Westgate (Secretary)
Maria Fedor
Sander Gottlieb
Brigitte Henry
Bill Frey

ADMINISTRATION

The administrative team at WVMS is dedicated to ensuring efficient operations, promoting excellence in education and supporting faculty and families alike.

Administrators for the school term were:

Justin Kleinheider—Head of School
Charlene Decker—Director of Finance and Operations
Lynn Klein—Director of Admissions and Outreach
Kara Taylor—Director of Teaching and Learning
Michelle Kleinheider—Director of Development and Alumni Relations
Irene Stitzer—Administrative Assistant
Linda Zinga—Front Office Coordinator



FACULTY AND STAFF

Head Teachers either are certified through the American Montessori Society (AMS) or are working toward their certification. Primary and Elementary Program teachers also hold Private Academic School certification through the Pennsylvania Department of Education. The Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare licenses toddler staff. WVMS was honored to have the following staff in 2024-2025:

TODDLER

Lynn Benkowski—Lead Teacher
Shanaa Hall—Assistant

Allison Marino—Lead Teacher
Marie Bealla—Assistant

Hilary Peterson—Lead Teacher
Caitlyn Seelye—Assistant

PRIMARY

Donna Kneal—Co-Lead Teacher
Shelby Becker—Co-Lead Teacher

Michelle Melendez—Lead Teacher
Kimberly Reinert —Assistant
Samantha Lanza—Assistant

Jonelle Kime—Lead Teacher
Kerri Scherer—Assistant

ELEMENTARY

Kara Taylor—Lower El Lead Teacher
Karen DiPietro—Assistant
Alexandra Runde—Assistant

Danny Klein—Upper El Lead Teacher
Amy Weinschenk—Upper El Lead Teacher

SPECIALS

Dirk Dekker—Instrumental Music
Lee Ellis—Choral Music
Elaine Rash—Library

Alexandra Runde—Spanish
Denise Thomas—Art

PARENT ASSOCIATION

The WVMS Parent Association furthers the school's vision through volunteer work, education and special events, all provided through its own fundraising activities. All parents and guardians of children enrolled in Wyoming Valley Montessori School are members of the Parent Association. Meetings are held monthly, open to all, and no dues are collected. By getting involved in P.A. activities, parents can make the most of this opportunity to get to know other Montessori families and become an active parent of the school community outreach and organize fellowship events.

P.A. officers are elected to serve two-year terms. Alana Rinaldi served as P.A. President during the 2024-25 school year. Some of the activities sponsored by the P.A. included Fall Festival, Trunk of Treat, Winter Festival, Sweetheart Dance and Field Day.



Field Day



Sweetheart Dance



Fall Festival



Winter Festival

FISCAL YEAR 2025 FINANCIALS

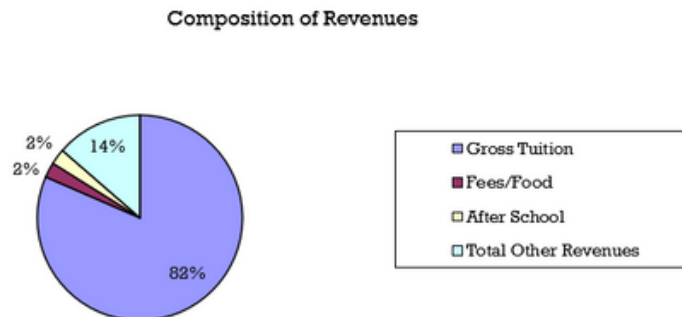
Wyoming Valley Montessori Association, Inc. D/B/A Wyoming Valley Montessori School

Statement of Activities
For the year ended June 30, 2025
Per Independent Accountants' Review

	<u>TOTAL</u>
Support and Revenue:	
Tuition and fees	\$1,268,411
Contributions	166,100
Fund raising events	73,925
Government grants	8,762
Investment income	77,183
Miscellaneous	576
Total Support and Revenue	<u>1,594,957</u>
 Expenses:	
Program Services	980,256
Supporting Services:	
Management and General	343,448
Fund raising	37,018
Total Expenses	<u>1,360,722</u>
 Increase in Net Assets	234,235
 Net Assets, Beginning	<u>1,246,011</u>
 Net Assets, Ending	<u><u>\$1,480,246</u></u>

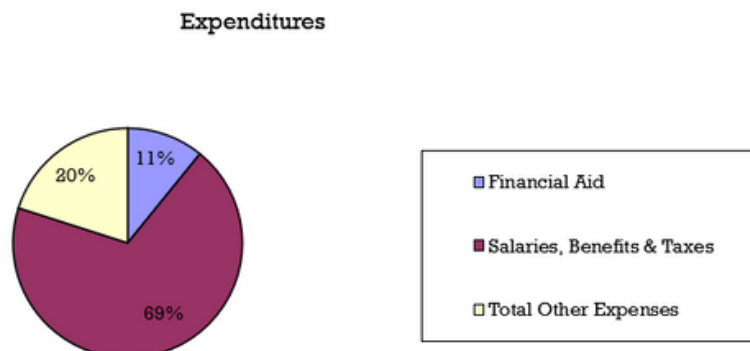
At WVMS, our primary source of income continues to be tuition. Timely payments by our families help ensure a smooth cash flow and assist in meeting the monetary demands of running the facility. With our strategic plan calling for a portion of gross tuition to be made available in financial aid discounts, we solicited grants and relied strongly on our two main fundraisers to supplement income: The Annual Campaign and Spring Gala.

COMPOSITION OF REVENUES



As with most businesses, our largest expense is the payroll category. Wages, taxes and benefits take up the large majority of our operating budget. Standard operational expenses such as building maintenance and repairs, utilities and insurance consume a substantial portion of funds, as well.

EXPENDITURES



THE 2024-2025 WVMS ANNUAL CAMPAIGN

Thank you for everyone who contributed to our 2024-25 Annual Campaign. Our giving “clubs” recognize individuals, families and businesses voluntarily promoting Montessori education through participation in the Annual Campaign.

Thank you for supporting the 2024-2025 WVMS Annual Campaign. Our donor level, or “clubs,” names come from classic Montessori materials, many designed by Dr. Maria Montessori herself.



Pink Tower Club--\$2,000 and Up

Mr. Justin and Mrs. Michelle Kleinheider

Thousand Chain Club--\$1,000 to \$1,999

Mr. Jason and Mrs. Danielle Westgate

Mr. Dierk and Mrs. Andrea Wessel

Mr. Steven Cooper and Mrs. Brigitte Henry

Golden Bead Club--\$500 to \$999

Mrs. Maryjane Henry (*In Honor of Caroline and Nora Cooper*)

Mr. Hussein and Mrs. Amanda Kazimi

Mr. Steven and Randi Piascik

Mr. William Frey & Dr. Irina Melnik

Benevity

Moveable Alphabet Club--\$200 to \$499

Mrs. Carol Fisher

Mr. Brett and Mrs. Charlene Decker

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Green

Mr. and Mrs. Zachary Brady (*In honor of Sue McLaughlin and Catherine Kuklewicz*)

Ms. Donna Kneal

Mr. and Dr. Reidel

Dr. Mohammad and Mrs. Karen Tashkandi

Mr. Jan Wessel

Mr. Matthew Bamberger and Ms. Julian Grant

Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Lombardo

Dr. Edward and Mrs. Jonela Fourgas



Mr. Dennis and Marianne Puhalla

Dr. Griffin and Mrs. Shelby Becker

Dr. James and Mrs. Lori Murphy

Mr. John and Dr. Shelly Karavis

The PepsiCo Foundation

Dr. Mark and Mrs. Kristin Ferretti

Mrs. Kim McNulty

Practical Life Club--\$100 to \$199

Mr. and Mrs. Donald Werts
Mr. and Mrs. Frank Parra (*In honor of Eliana Parra - Class of 2018*)
Dr. and Mrs. Kurt Field
Mrs. Linda Zinga
Ms. Ann Fino
Mrs. Rita Mecadon
Mrs. Bonnie Ziegler
Mr. and Mrs. Danny Klein
Dr. Joesph Yoo and Dr. Linda Yan
Mr. & Mrs. Frank Hughes
Dr. John Metza & Dr. Evan McClennen
Mr. Sander Gottlieb and Dr. Michelle Pramick
Ms. Karen Becker
Ms. Jean Warrington (*In honor of Jackie Lekstrom, founding teacher*)



Red Rods Club--Up to \$99

Mr. & Mrs. Tomar Taylor
Mr. Dirk Dekker
Ms. Elaine Rash
Ms. Denise Thomas
Mrs. Karen DiPietro
Ms. Lynn Benkowski
Mr. and Mrs. Lee Ellis
Ms. Samantha Lanza
Ms. Alexandra McKitsh
Mrs. Kimberly Reinert
Ms. Nancy Kerstetter
Mr. and Mrs. Corey Kime
Ms. Michelle Melendez
Ms. Shanaa Hall
Ms. Allison Marino
Ms. Caitlin Seelye
Mr. and Mrs. Anthony Manganiello
Ms. Jaquayia Sykes
Mrs. Lorraine Mortimer
Mrs. Peggy Gerek
Dr. Thomas Mackaman and Dr. Andrea Grant-Friedman
Ms. Carolyn Oravitz
Mrs. Patricia Kresge
Anonymous
Mr. Richard Gibbons
Ms. Susan Bryant
Mr. Anthony Ciliberto (*In memory of Joan B. Ciliberto*)
Mrs. Agnes Klynowsky
Anonymous
Mr. and Mrs. Larry Markley (*In honor of Tyler Markley*)
Mr. and Mrs. Scott Weinschenk
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Runde
Mr. Matthew Cannavale
Mr. and Mrs. John Harrington
Mrs. Hilary Peterson
Anonymous
Ms. Kerri Scherer

Spring Gala 2025



The 2025 WVMS Spring Gala was held Friday, April 4 at Fox Hill Country Club. The theme of the night was an Evening in an Enchanted Garden. The evening included a silent & live auction, live music and a sit down dinner. Thank you to the the entire Gala Committee for a successful event!

Sponsors

DIAMOND--HOST

UCFW Community Federal Credit Union

DIAMOND--ENTERTAINMENT & AUCTION

Einstein Construction Group

PLATINUM

Champion Builders, Inc.

M. Abraham

GOLD

Mt. Airy Casino

O&S Maintenance

SILVER

Geisinger Anonymous

Gorman Graphics Commercial Printers

Eric Marisco at Creative Interior Imagery

BRONZE

AAA Tree Cutting, LLC

Bonner Chevrolet

Luzerne Bank

Richard A. Wooditch, CPA

Avenue Restaurant

Apollo Group Inc.

Dr. Mark and Kristin Ferretti Family

Dr. James and Lori Murphy Family

Dickson City Hyundai

Girard J. Mecadon, Attorney at Law

Summit Pointe Builders

Hometown Health Care of NEPA

The Happy Mama Place

Tony Domiano Auto

Kasper Reality

Dr. Mohammad Tashkandi & Charles J. Scrobola

MD at Digestive Care Associates

MONTESSORI STARS

George & Maryellyn Ewald

Smith Tire & Service Center

FRIENDS OF MONTESSORI

Wyoming Valley Veterinary Hospital

Troy Street Coffee

Voitek

Honesdale National Bank

Ali Family

Gebhardt Family

EITC and Scholarship Donors

The Pennsylvania Educational Improvement Tax Credit Program (EITC) allows businesses to donate to our scholarship program in return for a PA State tax credit of up to 90% of their donation. For 2024-2025 students and families eligible to receive EITC funds must have an annual household income of not more than \$108,444 with an allowance of \$19,088 for each additional dependent.

WVMS extends a heartfelt thank you to the organizations that support our scholarship funding efforts through the EITC Program. In 2024-2025, these generous donors were: Fidelity Bank, i2M, Luzerne Bank, NBT Bank, N.A., PNC Bank, The United Way of Wyoming Valley and Topp Business Solutions. We also were fortunate enough to have a few foundations provide parent-direct EITC applications: Bravo, Bridge Educational and Commonwealth Charitable. The donations WVMS receives from these organizations make our educational experience available to the most capable students regardless of their financial circumstances.

Accreditations and Licenses



State Board of Private Academic Schools