

I'm smiling to myself as I recall my studies of Dr. Maria Montessori. When her theories were still 'new', people in America could not believe that she wanted to teach YOUNG children. They were in fact, often outraged and felt that 'kindergarten' would be robbing children of their childhoods! Now, look - our own public school system is offering full day 'free' kindergarten classes. How times have changed!

All over CK Montessori, parents of children that are turning 5 are trying to decide whether or not to keep their kids in their beloved Montessori programs for kindergarten. Central Kitsap School District declared in 2014 that all of their elementary school buildings would offer all day kindergarten for free. Why should you invest thousands of dollars in tuition? The key is in the word '*invest*'! **The 5 year old year is a crucial one.** It is in this year that your child develops good learning habits, acquires a sound basis in numbers and math and usually excels at reading. All of this is an 'investment' in how well he/she will do in elementary school and beyond. Once these habits and skills are acquired, he/she will transition into elementary school well-equipped and confident.

In the Montessori world - the sensorial impressions that the children were exposed to as 3 and 4 year olds, come full circle and result in some pretty amazing concepts learned.



*"That 4 bar that I learned about last year - well, when I put 3 of them together, I can see that  $3 \times 4 = 12$*

*AND*

*when I put 4 of them together - it makes a square and when I count them, I see that 4 squared is 16!"*

Obviously, we feel that the Montessori Kindergarten program exceeds the public school program both academically and socially. Our training and our experiences solidify that for us. We do understand, however, that free sounds better than \$\$\$\$. Rest assured that we will respect the choice that you make. This letter is for those of you that are not sure of what to do. In addition, *please know that we do not intend to criticize public schools.* Most of our own children attended or are attending public schools and are doing GREAT! We are fortunate to have a fine, fine school district in CK! There are, however, some real differences, especially in the younger age classrooms. These are just differences. They are not necessarily good or bad - just different. (See the following chart.)

The length of the school day is also something to consider. None of our local public schools offer half day programs. If your child is one that is not ready for a full day of school - he can still do half day Kindergarten at CK Montessori! **Full day Kindergarten is not a requirement.** One of our mothers recently said that her full day Kindergartener comes home so tired that they had to stop swimming lessons and all other extra activities. This is definitely something to think about.

In conclusion, the staff at CK Montessori would like to suggest that you visit each program that you are interested in. Your child will be spending up to 6 hours a day there. An **INVESTMENT**, for sure! Spend some time investigating the curriculums and think about what will be the best fit for your child.

As always, let us know if you have any questions. We invite discussion on this important matter!

Sincerely, *Diana C Zegers*, CK Montessori Administrator

## Comparing Kindergarten Options

	<u>Montessori</u>	<u>Public School</u>
Kindergarteners in class	6	+/- 24
Adult/child ratio	1/9	1/24
<b>END of K year expectations:</b>		
<b>Math</b>	Can do 4 digit operations with addition, subtraction, multiplication and division	Can rote count from 1 to 100
	Can randomly fill in the 100 chart	Can count backwards from 10
	Understands coin values	Can read numbers randomly 1 - 31
	Does hands-on multiplication and 'squaring' of numbers	Can compose and decompose up to 5 (2+3=5, 5-4=1, etc)
<b>Language</b>	Usually reading before kindergarten	Identify the common sounds of consonants and short vowels
	Is learning phonetic rules; magic e, sh, ch, etc	Read 3 and 4 letter phonetic words
	Many are reading chapter books and/or nonfiction books about our unit studies; Africa, insects, etc	Reading Comprehension - evaluated at grade 2
<b>Science</b>	Vertebrates/Invertebrates	Note: the following is for K-1 (there was no listing for just K)
	Animal Classifications; mammal, bird, etc and their parts	Can name plant and animal parts
	Bugs and Insects and their parts; cephalothorax, etc	Habitats
	Plant parts and their functions	Classifying plants and animals
<b>Geography</b>	Can name and identify all continents	Social study skills - what's fair, etc
	Can count to 10 in a language from each continent	Environments meet the needs of certain plants and animals (including humans)
	Understands that people have cultural habits according to the environment that they live in.	Understands that people have cultural habits according to the environment that they live in.
	Can create complex maps of continents and their countries	<a href="http://www.k12.wa.us/default.aspx">http://www.k12.wa.us/default.aspx</a>
<b>Respect</b>	For the individual and their learning style	Teaches primarily to the auditory learners
<b>Multi-age classroom</b>	Same teacher for 3 years	New teacher / new environment = adjustment period
	A chance to be a leader	
<b>Curriculum</b>	Hands-on curriculum which focuses on a complete understanding of concepts, laying a great foundation for future learning - not memorization.	More worksheets and rote learning, etc
	3 year cycle comes to fruition	