



THE LAMPLIGHTER

SPEMS Monthly Parent Newsletter



March 2015

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The school will be closed March 9-13 for spring break

SAES accreditation process begins

SPEMS has begun the process to become accredited by SAES (Southwestern Association of Episcopal Schools.)

SAES serves Episcopal schools diverse in size, scope and location throughout the states of Arizona, Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas.

SAES is the only Episcopal accrediting association in the United States and is recognized by both the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) www.nais.org and the Texas Private School Accreditation Commission. (TEPSAC) www.tepsac.org

There are many versions of Episcopal schools, but we are connected by common purposes in worship and common goals in education to provide the best education possible to our students in a unique environment. We model a strong Christian faith, moral character and a genuine professional commitment to best educational practices.

SPEMS uniquely Episcopal and Montessori

SPEMS is fairly unique in being one of *only three* Episcopal schools recognized by SAES that is *also Montessori*. Montessori and Episcopal complement and reinforce each other to provide an environment that respects open inquiry and encourages lifelong learning. There is a faithful relationship between host churches and Episcopal schools that must be nurtured to ensure the continuation of the school.

The purpose of accreditation is to document and encourage the excellence of the ministry each of us has been called to. Accreditation has four components.

SAES accreditation process begins (continued from page 1)

Four components of SAES accreditation

First, there is a commitment to a set of general principles (*Documents in Adherence to Standards*) that help establish and distinguish an Episcopal school from other types of educational institutions. Among these principles are philosophy, training and the excellence of the environment. As Christians we are called to stewardship and the stewardship of our opportunities is a call from God to *excellence*.

Second, there is a commitment to creating a long-term plan with goals that are unique to each school. Just as each child is unique, each school is unique. It is these written goals – like a distant star – that gives us a point of reference for our journey. There is power in the written word to help focus our concentration and activity. This part of the process is an internal self-scrutiny known as the *Self Study* that culminates in a detailed report.

Third, an accreditation team visits the school to verify the information provided.

Fourth, all the documents are reviewed by the *Accreditation Committee* and accreditation status is approved or recommendations for improvements are addressed. Once approved the written documents of accreditation help to evaluate our progress in reaching our goals. Both the internal and external reviews bring helpful recommendations for the purposes of validation and on-going school improvement.

The whole process is to take what is in our hearts and in our heads and put it on paper so we might hold ourselves better accountable to achieve, with excellence, the call we have been given.

Process will take two to three years

The process can take between two and three years and will involve all communities of the school students, staff, parent's board and church. We will keep the communities informed as the work progresses.

Spring Carnival on Friday, March 27



Egg Hunt set for April 2

SPEMS will hold its annual Easter Egg hunt on the grounds of Lambermont on Thursday, April 2.



Parents are welcome to join in the fun.

POP! POP! POP! song

Pop! Pop! Pop!

[Clap hands three times.]

Pour the popcorn in the pot.

[Pretend to pour into a pot.]

Pop! Pop! Pop!

[Clap hands three times.]

Take and shake it 'til it's hot.

[Hold hands together and shake.]

Pop! Pop! Pop!

[Clap hands three times.]

Lift the lid. What have you got?

[Pretend to lift the lid.]

Pop! Pop! Pop! Pop! POPCORN!

[Clap hands five times and with the last clap spread arms far apart.]



Toddlers love to make music!

Toddlers are little sponges absorbing all things from their environments and surprising us with their growing vocabulary and new behavior. Each day they surprise us (and sometimes confuse us) with their new words and actions.

Many of these are acquired in toddler music class, which is led by Kathy Kelly. Why is Lucy (my granddaughter) doing rolling hand motions? Why is she pretend pouring and announcing loudly, “**Pop, Pop, Pop!**?”

I was fortunate to join in a class and all was revealed... We are scheduling a date for parents to join our toddler music class. In the meantime, in the left column are some songs to help your toddler on his or her journey of discovery!

**WIND, WIND, WIND
THE BOBBIN song***

Wind, wind, wind the bobbin

Wind, wind, wind the bobbin

[Roll hands one over the other]

Pull, pull, pull

[Starting with hands close together, pull hands apart twice]

Tap, tap, tap!

[Tap fists together three times.]

**This is an old nursery rhyme. It dates from the cloth mills found in the north of England during the 1890's. It has a simple melody and repetitive words and actions, so little ones are able to join in easily.*

News from the Primary 2 room:

How does your garden grow?



Even though winter is still upon us, our class has had opportunities to tend the new herb garden. Ms. Dana has had us labeling our herbs on wooden stakes.

We've planted lavender, cilantro, thyme, dill and so much more. All the plants are doing

beautifully, despite the chilly weather. We look forward to using them in future cooking projects! – **Ms. Norma & Ms. Bea**

We welcome Barbara Rapelye to our staff

We are pleased to announce that **Barbara Rapelye** has joined the school as Development Associate.

Barbara will be working with the Head of School, the Advancement Committee and the School Board on all aspects of fundraising. She is looking forward to getting to know everyone.

Staff heading to AMS Conference

All the lead teachers and head of school are heading off to Philadelphia during the spring break to attend the AMS Conference.

The American Montessori Society (AMS) is the foremost advocate for quality Montessori education, an innovative, child-centered approach to learning. AMS sets the high professional standards that inform Montessori education as practiced in AMS-accredited schools and taught in AMS-affiliated teacher education programs.

Thousands of Montessorians from around the world will assemble in Philadelphia to share information, create new bonds and renew old ones, and embrace their enthusiasm for the Montessori Movement.

SPEMS staff members will attend workshops and hear keynote speakers Maria Gravel, Julian Bond, Jennifer Senior and Jack Andraka. Attendance at the conference has been made possible by funding from Region 20. The staff members look forward to sharing their experience at the conference with students, parents and colleagues. You can read more about the conference at www.amshq.org.



THE LAMPLIGHTER Photo Gallery

March 2015

Children taught parents the Montessori way at our recent Lesson Night...

