



THE MEHER SCHOOLS



# Wednesday Messages

January 15, 2020 • Parent Resource Center: [www.MeherSchoolsParents.org](http://www.MeherSchoolsParents.org)

## Earlier Start and End Dates for the 2020–21 School Year

To bring our school calendar more into alignment with local school districts', we'll be shifting the start and end dates of our school year a week earlier beginning next year. Instead of starting after Labor Day, students will return on August 26. The elementary school year will end June 4 and the preschool year a week after that.

This change comes at the request of parents who have children in schools in neighboring districts. Last year we surveyed and met with parents and staff to discuss the potential change. Both indicated a preference for shifting the schedule a week earlier. So we are!

Our shortened summer this year will result in a one-time change in our summer program. Instead of two four-week sessions, there will be one session. Parents will have the option of signing their children up for four or six weeks.

We'll be sending the 2020–21 academic and 2020 spring-and-summer calendars this week via *eNote*. We'll also post it in the Parent Resource Center.

### Monday Is a Holiday

Martin Luther King Jr. Day, a national holiday, is next Monday, January 20. School will be closed that day.

## Life Cycle in the Garden



First graders rake and shovel leaves that fell on the playground during recent storms. They (along with both kindergarten classes) hauled the leaves up to the Seven Circles Garden in wheelbarrows.

There they put some of the leaves on the soil as mulch to prevent erosion and nutrient depletion. They added the rest to the compost bins, where they'll decompose in a couple weeks—and be ready to nourish the next crop!

## Save the Date: Founders Day 2020

We'll be celebrating Founders Day, the shared birthdays of our school and its founders, in the afternoon and evening of Saturday, February 29. The theme will be compassion, diversity, and inclusion. There will be food, discussion groups, and a performance by our White Horse Youth Chorale. Watch *Wednesday Messages* and *eNotes* for more information in the weeks to come. In the meantime, mark your calendar!

## Tips for Parents by Susie Kohl

# *Using Humor to Promote Harmony*

**S**EVERAL SECONDS (OR MORE) OF SILLINESS can bring about cooperation in the most difficult situations.

For example, when we're trying to get everyone ready for school quickly, our tone usually gets more serious: "Do it now." "Move more quickly, without getting side-tracked." Getting distracted by humor for a few moments often lubricates things to move along more effectively than pressure. Asking a child if his shoes go on his ears when he's supposed to put them on his feet can change everyone's mood—especially ours.

Since humor presents a little puzzle for the mind to unravel, it takes the child's mind off doing something she doesn't want to do. Laughter warms our child's heart because it sends the message that we enjoy being playful even if it's just for a moment. Every time we use (non-sarcastic) humor with a child, we also provide a role model for relating well to others. Children who laugh easily engage with others more skillfully.

Of course, remembering to inject a lighthearted tone when we have a goal to achieve, like getting children to bed or into their baths, isn't easy. But those are the times when sharing a giggle helps the most. Since science tells us that the act of smiling actually makes us feel more positive, reminding ourselves to lighten our expression when we need our child to do something is often the first step toward a harmonious process.

### **"Crafty" Fourth Graders Raise \$520 for Preschool Family, Third World Farmers**



The fourth grade recently held a two-day craft sale to raise money for Heifer International and a preschool family whose infant son was in the hospital. They raised \$520 selling hats, scarves, bracelets, bags, pillows, wrapping paper, and ornaments they'd made. They donated \$400 to the White Pony family and the rest to Heifer International to buy rabbits and chickens to help families in developing countries become self-sufficient.

Owney, school librarian Thea Montandon's Maltese-shih-tzu, took a particular liking to this hat, so she bought it for him.

#### **Nurtured Heart Corner**

*Promoting Children's "Inner Wealth"*

## **Celebrating the Little Things**

Sometimes the best opportunities for noticing greatness are in the smallest moments. We can try to comment on how a child enthusiastically shares facts about her favorite animal, puts his lunchbox back into its place, or runs her hardest during the entire basketball game. Bringing forward moments of "greatness" that aren't big and obvious helps us remember that life is made up of the small choices we make every day. Many times, children take part in wonderful moments that get taken for granted. Let's celebrate them instead!