



Monteverde Friends School/Escuela de los Amigos

May/June 2022

www.mfschool.org

Finishing One Year, Working on the Next



It was almost eerie working at MFS last week -- no sounds of rushing feet, laughter or voices as students rushed to recess. No sounds of teachers leading classes or students responding.

Our 2021-22 school year ended for students on May 27th. Teachers returned the following Monday and Tuesday to complete closing up their classrooms for the summer.

Administrative staff continue their work getting ready for 2022-23, which starts in just 10 weeks. Since February, they have figured our tuition rates, worked with the Financial Aid Committee to decide on \$90,000 of aid, and chose new students from a long waiting list for the handful of openings we anticipate. MFS is absolutely, totally full for the 22-23 school year!

Aside from some much-needed breaks to catch our breath, administrative staff (just 6 of us) will spend the summer securing Chromebooks for incoming 7th graders (they will keep the computer through high school), doing facility repairs, greeting one new teacher for colegio English, and doing projects like a revamp of our web page.

Before we know it, we'll be back at school with students once again. But it is nice to take a few minutes here to reflect on the various ways we ended the 21-22 school year.

Graduations -- Moving from One Stage to Another



Melody Guindon, our long term Kindergarten teacher, celebrating our Prepa students.



Our 6th graders share some brief thoughts about their transition

As a K-12 school, we had not one but three graduations during the last week of the school year. Whether young or old, we want to recognize our students' achievements, and these graduations are one way to do that.

Our first graduation was for our Prepa students. Our early childhood program includes Pre-K, Kinder and Prepa classes to prepare students for 1st grade. We celebrated those students who completed Prepa and we look forward to seeing them soon as they step up to first grade!

Some of our Prepa students have been with us for three years -- basically, all pandemic years. They have experienced assignments to do at home, virtual classes, hybrid classes, then in-person but with lots of protocols. They have never known school without masks!

Next up were our 6th graders. Their graduation marked the completion of their primary grades. With their move into colegio (grades 7 through 12) they'll now find out what it is like to change classes, to have a different teacher for each subject and face more challenging classes. So we celebrate their transition!

We closed out the week with our biggest celebration for seven of our 11th and 12th graders who completed their studies with us. Costa Rican schools end with the 11th grade; students who wish to continue can complete the 12th grade with us. Often they do that in order to qualify for international colleges. Others like our option of designing a special 12th grade while meeting curriculum requirements. In past years, interesting internships have included things like service in a tropical animal rescue and building a carbon-neutral, wooden cargo ship.

Four of these graduating seniors have attended MFS since kindergarten, so it was wonderful for them to see Melody Guindon, their kindergarten teacher there to celebrate with them!



All seven of our 11/12th grade graduates!



Graduates all dressed up in suits -- likely a first!



With your help, we have been able to offer scholarships for 41 students for 2022-23.

As we gear up for the new school year, though, we have some additional expenses -- Chromebooks, microscopes for chemistry class, and adding play equipment for our youngest students.

Can you help us out? Click below to find out how to make a tax-deductible donation in the U.S., Canada or Costa Rica:



Meetings for Appreciation

Meetings for Appreciation are a beautiful tradition at the Monteverde Friends School.

Throughout the year, we hold mid-week Meeting for Worship each Wednesday morning for 45 minutes (20 minutes for our kindergarteners) with our entire school. In that time, we settle into worship, in the style of Friends (Quaker) worship. Students learn over time to settle into the silence with perhaps an occasional spoken message. Admittedly, though, the sessions do get pretty wiggly toward the end!

We have a particularly special tradition in which our last Midweek Meeting of the year is offered as a Meeting for Appreciation. After a short time settling into silence, each class is called upon one by one. Anyone in that class can stand and talk about something they particularly appreciate -- a teacher, a classmate, a particular experience. Some of the messages have us laughing as they recall something silly that happened, while others get quite emotional especially when thanking graduates or teachers who are leaving.

We hold two of these Meetings. The first includes the entire student body, while the other is held for teachers and staff on the last day that teachers are on campus for the year. Here we thank each other for leadership, for creativity, and for giving our all to the school. Tears are not unusual as we express our gratitude, especially for someone who will not be returning for the next school year.

The practice of silent centering is not very common in today's world, and is often very difficult for those not used to it -- especially children! We find it is often what is mentioned by alums as the best memory or the thing most missed about MFS. As one graduate put it last year, "Until I was in the 10th grade, I hated Midweek Meeting. But something changed then. I started to appreciate the silence and the chance to take a break from worrying about assignments and exams and such."

Hopefully both our students and our teachers/staff come to appreciate these Meetings in that same way!

End-of-Year Celebrations



CRAZY WEEK				
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri
Color Day Wear all one color Día de Color Todo un color en tu ropa.	Pijama Day Wear your Pijama to school! Día de Pijama Usa tu Pijama en la escuela!	CRAZY Look Wear clothes that don't make a comment! Look LOCO Recuerda usar Ponle ropa que se ve bien o ponte un disfraz.	Backwards Day! Wear every thing backwards Día ATRÁS Ponte todo ATRÁS Sin mochila!	Game Day Play games in the morning Día de Juego Juega juegos en la mañana
HAVE FUN!				



Any teacher or parent knows what young students are like as the end of the school year approaches -- eager for vacation, restless, having a hard time concentrating, etc. And of course, this happens just when teachers are exhausted from the full school year.

To liven things up and keep students interested, we have a couple of traditions. There's Crazy Week, where each day there is a different theme -- costumes one day, wearing clothes backwards another day, etc. Lots of fun!

On students' last day of school, we finish the half-day with a performance from each class. There are songs, skits, and performances. We get the most reaction from students when the teachers get up and do something silly at the end of the show -- this year, a dance with umbrellas to celebrate the start of our rainy season recently. The floor was shaking with all the students jumping up and down and shouting their applause for seeing their teachers in such a different light!

We hope you enjoy a few pictures from those two events.





Click below to help us out:

