



PINES MONTESSORI SCHOOL  
— KINGWOOD TEXAS —

# 2011 Annual Report

**Pines Montessori School prepares children for life through learning experiences based on authentic Montessori principles and practices.**

Dear Pines Families and Friends,

Like most parents, I think and dream of what the future holds for my children and what I can do to give them the tools to lead an independent, productive and fulfilling life. I am grateful that my child is part of a school community that provides a supportive environment and diverse opportunities, and that adapts to the needs of my child to deliver an exceptional educational experience. I know that our school is a wonderful place, but I can imagine a future for our school that offers more...

What is the dream that you have for your child? Do you believe that our school is on the path to help your child realize these dreams? What if your child attended a school that could offer all of this -

- An internationally recognized Montessori program that serves as a model for excellence, with sister schools across the globe providing study exchange experiences for middle and high school students
- A close community of caring families that forms the foundation for building strong ethical and moral character and life-long meaningful relationships
- A diverse, international student population approaching 250 students, from 18 months to 18 years old, with high school juniors and seniors being courted by prestigious colleges and universities
- Strong parent, community and donor support, with major foundation grants providing funding for technology, science and the arts
- State of the art buildings and facilities supporting a variety of curricular and extracurricular programs led by community leaders in business, the arts and sciences
- A professional Montessori-certified teaching staff that embraces lifelong learning and enjoys financial security and long-term stability
- A strong scholarship program that helps families stay in our school community and serves as a symbol of the loving and nurturing nature of Pines

Pines is on the path to fully realize this vision...are you willing to help make this a reality? Do you believe that working together, we can create this school? What is the vision that YOU have for Pines?

If you wonder whether this kind of transformation can take place, read about what kinds of things HAVE happened at Pines in the past five years on the inside of this annual report. With the dedicated effort of our parents, our staff, and our community, we CAN create and realize a vision of our school that fulfills our fondest hopes and dreams for our children.

Five years ago, I put a Pines sticker on the back of my old Suburban that says, "TOGETHER WE ACHIEVE THE EXTRAORDINARY!" Great things have happened at our school since that time, and our future is just as exciting and challenging now. I was a toddler parent then; now my child is on the cusp of upper elementary, and I can't think of many things that are more important for her future than the continued growth and success of our beloved Pines Montessori School.

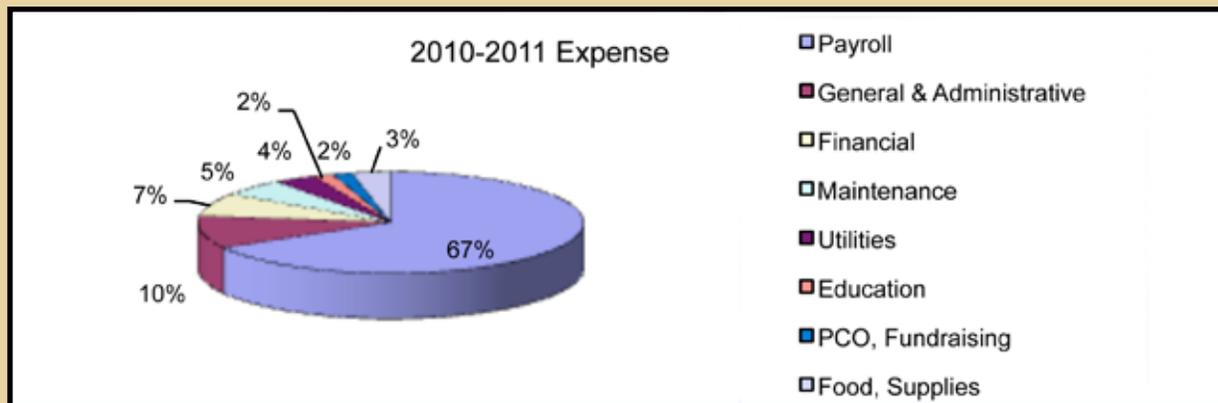
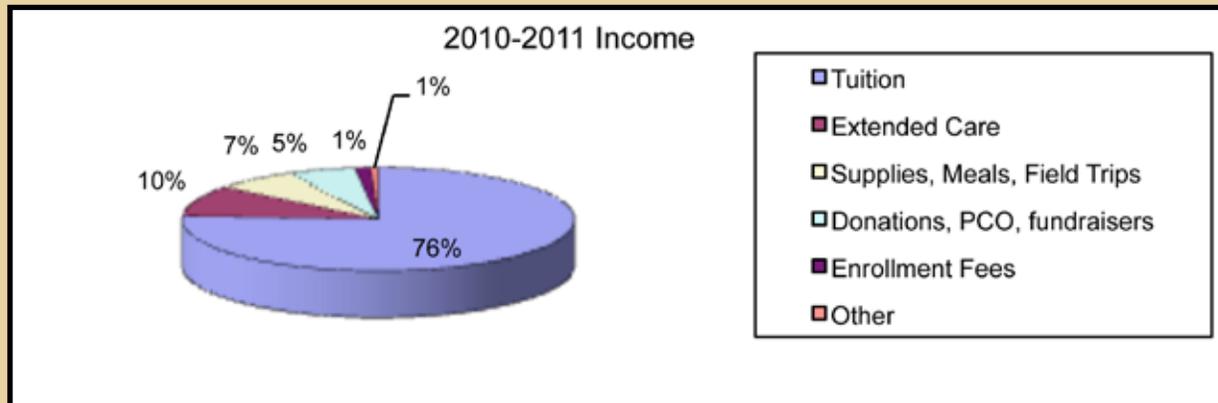
Sincerely,

*Kathleen Goerner*

Chairman, Board of Trustees

**SACS  
ACCREDITATION!!  
Details Inside**

# Financials at a glance...



## Statement of Activities Fiscal Year 7/1/10 - 6/30/11

### INCOME

|                              |                |                    |
|------------------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Tuition                      | 75.91%         | \$1,154,958        |
| Extended Care                | 9.74%          | \$148,194          |
| Supplies, Meals, Field Trips | 6.79%          | \$103,343          |
| Donations, PCO, fundraisers  | 5.62%          | \$85,583           |
| Enrollment Fees              | 1.29%          | \$19,574           |
| Other                        | 0.65%          | \$9,931            |
| <b>Totals</b>                | <b>100.00%</b> | <b>\$1,521,583</b> |

### EXPENSE

|                          |                |                    |
|--------------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Payroll                  | 66.66%         | \$930,536          |
| General & Administrative | 10.45%         | \$145,928          |
| Financial                | 7.38%          | \$102,958          |
| Maintenance              | 5.46%          | \$76,168           |
| Utilities                | 3.50%          | \$48,867           |
| Education                | 1.67%          | \$23,269           |
| PCO, Fundraising         | 1.63%          | \$22,805           |
| Food, Supplies           | 3.26%          | \$45,480           |
| <b>Totals</b>            | <b>100.00%</b> | <b>\$1,396,011</b> |

Pines is a 501c3 non-profit educational institution, and the school's operational financial expenses are covered through tuition revenues, while major capital budget projects are typically funded through fund raising, donor contributions and other initiatives. The Board of Trustees and the Finance Committee, along with the school's administration, approve a budget that is operationally balanced. Much of the success of Pines Montessori requires our families to continue to donate generously through their tax deductible gifts and contributions.

# Head of School



Pines Montessori School is very pleased to announce that we have earned accreditation from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI), an accreditation division of AdvancED.

SACS CASI provides nationally-recognized accreditation, the purpose of which is continuous school improvement focused on increasing student performance. To earn accreditation, schools must meet SACS CASI's high standards, be evaluated by a team of professionals from outside the school, and implement a continuous process of school improvement. This process began last summer and continued throughout the fall semester. Teams of teachers, Board members and stakeholders met with the Quality Assurance Team. The team spent two days on campus and set about observing classrooms, collecting artifacts and interviewing teachers as well as Upper Elementary and Middle School students.

SACS CASI accreditation is recognized across state lines, which not only eases the transfer process for our students as they move from accredited school to accredited school, but also assures you, our parents and community members, that our school is meeting nationally accepted standards for quality and successful professional practice. We are now listed as an accredited nonpublic school by the Texas Education Agency as listed by the Texas Private School Accreditation Commission (TEPSAC) at [www.tepsac.org](http://www.tepsac.org). Our number is 101-107-001.

We are not resting here, however! SACS CASI joins the other national accreditation that we have earned and maintained for the past 15 years through NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children). We are now embarking on the IMC (International Montessori Council) Self-Study Process to earn IMC Accreditation. This process consists of three integrated phases: School Identity and Philosophy, the Self Study and the School Improvement Plan. We truly believe that a school is a place to learn...not only for the children, but that we are all students.

On behalf of the staff of Pines, we are so grateful for the support you, our community and our Board of Trustees give us daily. We love our profession, we love your children and your families and we love Pines Montessori School.

Thank you for another wonderful year!

*Patty Sobelman*

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## Board of Trustees

### ***Executive Committee***

|   |      |
|---|------|
| Kathleen Goerner, Chair-Board of Trustees | 2012 |
| Jeff Choyce, Vice Chair-Board of Trustees | 2013 |
| Francie Stonestreet, Treasurer            | 2012 |
| Anika Jackson, Secretary                  | 2014 |

### ***Member-at-Large***

|   |      |
|---|------|
| Connie Chandler, Staff Relations              | 2013 |
| Laura Dupree, Montessori Policy               | 2013 |
| Kimberly Bidinger, Legal                      | 2013 |
| Mark Wanner, Development and Special Projects | 2014 |

### ***Big Thank You to Mr. Don Arnold***

Mr. Don and his amazing staff has offered our school countless hours of landscaping advice. He was instrumental in the completion of the Wetlands area, the maintenance of the wooden playground structures and the reconfiguration of the toddler playground this school year. We have learned so much from his knowledge and expertise.

*Don Arnold • [www.arnoldlandscapearchitects.com](http://www.arnoldlandscapearchitects.com) • 281-354-4141*

# **Arnold's Landscape Architects & Contractors, Inc.**

### ***A Big Thank You to BRW Architects***

Jeff Choyce and his team of architects designed the Middle School Kiva, a seating arrangement designed to facilitate lessons and Socratic dialogue. Also a HUGE thank you to Mrs. Becky Hall for loaning us her husband, Bud, and to Mr. Art Sobelman, both grandfathers of Middle School students, who together with Ms. Catherine Hall built the Kiva this past summer.

### ***Spring Gala 2011***

Montessori puzzle maps for all Primary classrooms and Elementary biomes were funded through Gala donors Mr. & Mrs. Rick and Patty Sobelman and the McFerrin Foundation.

### ***Playground***

A new P.E. shed was purchased and a new expanded retaining wall was installed for the toddler playground through the generous donations of Mr. & Mrs. Clint and Amy Bennett, Mr. & Mrs. David and Jennifer Bohner, Mr. & Mrs. Philip and Kathleen Goerner, Mr. & Mrs. Gregg and Linda Harris, Mr. & Mrs. Ly and Amy Lim, Ms. Lauren Williams and the McFerrin Foundation.

## ***What Did the SACS Accreditation Report Say?***

The SACS Quality Assurance Review Team looked at seven key indicators:

1. Vision and Purpose; 2. Governance and Leadership; 3. Teaching and Learning; 4. Documenting and Using Results; 5. Resource and Support Systems; 6. Stakeholder Communications and Relationships; and 7. Commitment to Continuous Improvement

We demonstrated excellence in all areas AND we received 5 commendations! Excerpts from the SACS Quality Assurance Review show how we excelled:

### ***Commendation 1***

Pines Montessori School provides outdoor learning spaces that are aligned to Montessori philosophies and maximize student connections to nature.

### ***Commendation 2***

The Head of School's vision of creating and maintaining an authentic Montessori School has led to a complete transformation of the school's educational approach and practice.

### ***Commendation 3***

The collegiality among the teachers and staff supports a learning environment for students that nurtures a sense of caring and belonging.

### ***Commendation 4***

The development of Pines Infinity Science Park fused the integration of the Montessori model of physical education and creativity with an outdoor playground and nature habitat in which children experience science through play and exploration of their environment.

### ***Commendation 5***

The Board of Trustees and the Head of School have exhibited inspirational and exemplary leadership in the development of the Blueprint and the refinement of the organizational direction of Pines Montessori School.

We are now listed as an accredited nonpublic school by the Texas Education Agency by the Texas Private School Accreditation commission (TEPSAC) at [www.tepsac.org](http://www.tepsac.org). Our number is 101-107-001.

***CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR CHILDREN, OUR STAFF, OUR PARENTS, AND OUR BOARD OF TRUSTEES ON A JOB WELL DONE!!***



**SACS  
ACCREDITATION!**

# *Pines Moving Forward*

Over the past five years, our school has undergone a significant transformation as a direct response to the needs of our community. To ensure the long term success of Pines, systematic changes were made to the school's academic program, financial policies and procedures, and facilities. Several years of dedicated service by staff, parents and board members has produced dramatic results and fundamental changes in the structure and function of Pines. We have weathered several challenges and enjoyed fantastic success in several key areas; our hard work and dedication has paid off for our children, our families, and the greater community!

With our success comes a new set of challenges that will require all of us to work together, and I am asking each family to support the school with their time, talent and treasure to create and shape the exciting future of our school. These are happy kinds of challenges to have! We must continue to expand both the size and strength of our educational programs to accommodate the needs of our growing elementary and middle school.

In the next few years, Pines will need a major addition to the size of the buildings currently housing our elementary and middle schools. As our school population continues to grow, we will add another Lower Elementary classroom, followed by another Upper Elementary classroom, and continue to expand our Middle School. The growth of these programs must be supported to sustain the school into the future!

Our developmental goal is to reach 100% participation in our Annual Giving Campaign and raise \$19,000. Every family's participation in this drive is critical because this is one important factor that can determine whether Pines is awarded the various educational grants we need to move our program forward. We have the other pieces in place, as you can see from the major accomplishments we have made over the past few years:

## ***Academic:***

- SACS Accreditation, with five special commendations. This is a HUGE accomplishment that distinguishes our school from our competitors and proves what we already know – Pines has an outstanding school program!
- NAEYC Accreditation, which establishes the excellence of our toddler and primary programs
- Elementary and Middle School Robotics Team success, with impressive performance against bigger schools with more established programs
- Development of the Pines Fundamental Values and Beliefs, or “The Blueprint”, which articulates our commitment to Montessori philosophy and methods and provides guidance in every aspect of our school



### ***Financial:***

- The first independent financial audit in the history of the school resulted in a confirmation that our current financial policies and practices meet the highest professional standards
- Our mortgage was refinanced at an historically low interest rate that has allowed us to accelerate the payment of our loan principle amount and entertain the real possibility that we can pay off our mortgage in a 5 to 10 year window
- Our budget process allows our school to operate within our means, and resulted in the payment of December bonuses to all our dedicated staff members.

### ***Facilities:***

- Our beautiful campus, which is over 30 years old, has never looked better!
- Regular maintenance is scheduled to keep the buildings and Infinity Park in good working order
- Several major commercial projects have been completed in the past few years:
  - Repair of long term plumbing issues in the elementary building
  - Replacement of the wooden fence around the campus perimeter
  - Replacement of the primary commercial air conditioning unit
  - Restoration and construction of the boardwalk and fence in the backyard wetlands area
  - Construction of the baseball field and addition of the athletics shed
  - Reconstruction of the retaining wall in the toddler play area
  - Cleaning, waterproofing and maintenance of the play structures of Infinity Park
  - Replacement of the sail over the primary playground area
  - Replacement and repair of the primary building roof.

This impressive list of accomplishments over the past five years proves that we CAN meet this new challenge! In the next five years we will:

- Pay off the mortgage, which will position the school to build permanent structures that will support our expanding Montessori program for the next 30 years and beyond
- Continue to build our elementary and secondary school by developing our staff to accommodate the increasing enrollment in these programs, with the possibility of establishing a high school program
- Continue to work toward accreditation with the International Montessori Council, which has the most stringent requirements for Montessori education

Working together, I know we can mold Pines into a school that meets and exceeds our dreams!

*Kathleen Goerner*  
Chair, Board of Trustees

# 2011 Spring Gala Donors

*Pines Montessori thanks the many generous parents, teachers, and community donors who provided sponsorships, auction items, raffle prizes, and advertising to make this event a success. Please consider utilizing their services and businesses to show appreciation for supporting our school.*

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| Alley Theatre                           | Four Seasons                               | Rico's Mexican Grill                   |
| Allison's Dance Academy                 | Dr. & Mrs. Douglas & Carol Greve           | Sam Houston Race Park                  |
| Amaryllis Floral Designs                | Gayle's Hallmark                           | Ms Hope Sarver                         |
| American Art Resources                  | Mr & Mrs Gregg & Linda Harris              | Scentsy                                |
| Arturo's Hair Designs                   | Mr. & Mrs. Philip & Kathleen Goerner       | Schlotsky's Deli                       |
| Mr & Mrs Bryan & Jackie Beck            | Fritz Guthrie                              | Sears Hardware                         |
| Mr & Mrs Clint & Amy Bennett            | Mr. & Mrs. Beau & Catherine Hall           | Sharky's                               |
| Ms Kimberly Bidinger                    | Mrs. Rebecca A. Hall                       | Ms Margot Shurig                       |
| Mr & Mrs David & Jennifer Bohner        | Her Healthcare (Dr Noel Boyd)              | Silverlight Photography                |
| Bill's Cafe                             | Houston Airport Marriott Hotel             | Mr. & Mrs. Michael & Amanda Snowden    |
| Bridgeway Software                      | Houston Museum of Natural Science          | Mr. & Mrs. Rick & Patty Sobelman       |
| Patrick O'Donnell                       | Houston Symphony                           | Spring Creek Restaurants               |
| Carrabba's                              | How U Doin Tavern                          | St Joseph Medical Center               |
| Catfish Cove                            | Mr. & Mrs. Phil & Debbie Hughes            | Starbucks Town Center                  |
| Chachi's Mexican Bar & Grill            | Italiano's                                 | Mr & Mrs Christopher & Debbie Sterling |
| Mr. & Mrs. Darryal & Connie Chandler    | Ms Barbara Jackson                         | Mr. & Mrs. Scott & Francie Stonestreet |
| Cherished Designs                       | James Avery Craftsman                      | Mr & Mrs Mark & Kelly Stromberg        |
| Chez Nous                               | Jennika's                                  | Taste of Texas Restaurant              |
| Mr & Mrs Frank & Courtne Christophersen | Kings Crossing Travel                      | TGI Fridays                            |
| ComedySportz-Houston                    | Kingwood Urgent Care                       | The Children's Museum of Houston       |
| Countdown to Success                    | La Boucherie                               | The Conservatory Day Spa and Salon     |
| Creative Branch                         | La Madeleine                               | The Mudpie Company                     |
| Cyndy's Nails                           | La Torretta Lake Resort & Spa              | Tin Roof BBQ                           |
| Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion         | Landry's                                   | Tour 18                                |
| Cyrese & Company                        | Mr & Mrs David & Desiree Latimer           | Toys & Candy on the Park               |
| Ellen Delap                             | Luby's Fuddruckers Restaurant              | United Studios of Self Defense         |
| Design 139 (Amy Beasley)                | Massage Heights                            | Vision Source                          |
| Designs Two U                           | Mercury Baroque                            | Mr & Mrs Lee & Jessica Warren          |
| Dirt Road Divas                         | Mercury Tanning                            | Ms Cynthia Welborn                     |
| Discount Tires                          | Minuteman Press of Humble                  | Wilkinson & Bidinger, P.C.             |
| Mr. & Mrs. Mike & Libby Egan            | Mountasia Family Fun Center                | Mr & Mrs Boris & Amy Woytowich         |
| Mike Egan Painting                      | Music World Entertainment                  | Mr & Mrs Montie & Debbie Wren          |
| Eye Trends                              | My Fit Foods                               |  |
| Mr & Mrs Scott & Joy Fields             | Mr & Mrs Jeff & Christina Nieland          |  |
| Fiesta Azteca Restaurant                | Ms Shura Normand                           |  |
| Mr & Mrs George & Mary Foreman          | Mr & Mrs Stephan & Sara Perry              |  |
| For Emmy                                | Pet Ranch                                  |  |
| Ms Anne Marie Finch                     | Pines Montessori School Staff and Teachers |  |
| Fireheart Photography                   | Mr & Mrs Luiz & Rose Pizzamiglio           |  |
| Mr & Mrs Dave & Laura Fortin            | Mr & Mrs Keith & Celina Probyn             |  |
| Foster Auction Company                  | Rachel's Hallmark                          |  |

\*We hope every donor has been included, but if you were inadvertently left off the list, please know how much you are appreciated.

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