



COBB SCHOOL
MONTESSORI

Montessori for the AI Future

Why Montessori Education
is the answer for a future led
by Artificial Intelligence

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and more!

Cobb School Montessori Team

2024-25 **STAFF, TRUSTEES & VOLUNTEERS**

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The child is capable of developing and giving us tangible proof of the possibility of a better humanity.

- Dr. Montessori

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Building a better
world through
educating the
whole child.

Vision

Mission

To empower children to discover **their individual and collective potential** by fostering independence, academic excellence, compassion, collaboration, and a love for learning.

Cobb School Montessori prepares children to engage thoughtfully and responsibly in an interconnected world through authentic Montessori practices, strong family partnerships, and an inclusive community.



Values

- **Respect:** We foster respect and compassion for others and the environment.
- **Responsibility:** We fulfill the child's natural desire to become responsible, contributing members of the family and community.
- **Independence:** We guide children to become independent, critical thinkers.
- **Integrity:** We provide the foundation to live life with honesty, humility, and integrity.

Dear Cobb Community,

As we look toward Cobb School Montessori's future, we do so in a world where the rise of artificial intelligence, the relentless flow of information, and the realities of climate instability are redefining the future our children will inherit. These forces bring both profound opportunities and complex challenges, prompting us to ask: How do we prepare children for a future we cannot fully predict?

Our charge as educators is to look beyond the pressures of the moment, to the child in front of us, as a promise of what tomorrow could be. We steward Montessori's vision of a world where humanity is at its best and individuals use their unique gifts in the service of a collective purpose. We must support the child's capacity to respond to change with resilience, courage, and creativity, and prepare them to take their place and thrive in an interconnected global society. In this moment of change, the Montessori philosophy, which has remained steadfast for more than a century, proves not only relevant but also essential.

Montessori education fosters the human capacities that have enabled us to survive and thrive—exploring, creating, adapting, solving problems, and seeking purpose—by engaging the hands, mind, and heart in meaningful, real work. Opportunities for choice, independence, and initiative enable the youngest of children to strengthen these innate capacities and grow into their best selves.

Preparing children to be responsible global citizens begins with fostering an understanding of the wider world they are part of and depend on. Through rich experiences, outreach, and a curriculum that celebrates the diversity and interconnectedness of the world, children develop the broad perspective and the nuanced understanding they need to make thoughtful decisions, exercise discernment, and act with compassion and responsibility. Classrooms that value every voice, engage in dialogue, and work through conflict honor human dignity and educate for a better world. Cobb is committed to delivering an education that is firmly grounded in these Montessori principles.

This important work is only possible because of the strength of our community. Over the past year, your partnership, contributions, and steadfast belief in our mission have enabled our children to thrive in this unique environment, fueling our ability to prepare the next generation to meet the future with purpose and promise.

We look forward to continuing to serve your children,



Subha Sankaran
Head of School

“Adults must defend children. We adults must see the real humanity in children, the humanity which will take our place one day, if we are to have social progress. Social progress means that the next generation is better than the one before.”

- Dr. Montessori



Cobb School Montessori Strategic Plan, 2025-2028

50 Years Forward

A legacy renewed, a journey continued, excellence reimagined.

In fall 2024, we launched a community-wide planning process that included surveys, focus groups, and several full-day summits. We sought input from families, staff, trustees, alumni, and students. The plan that emerged focuses on what matters most for children—program excellence, a beautiful and safe campus, resilient operations, and a strong, inclusive community.

We are grateful to everyone in our community who has been such a thoughtful, engaged part of this process. Your input has helped us create this shared vision for the future of Cobb.

These priorities are not abstract ideals, they will come to life through clear annual goals developed by leadership, administration, and staff. We will remain focused on achieving and maintaining these strategic objectives, and we will be accountable to each other as we move forward.

This plan calls on all of us - trustees, educators, and families- to carry the mission forward with clarity, courage, and collaboration.

We invite you to not only read the plan, but to join us in bringing it to life... shaping the future, together.



**Join Us in
Shaping the Future**



We welcome community input and partnership on our Strategic Plan. Scan to read the full plan and see how you can get involved.



Focus Area #1

Authentic, Empowering, and Enduring Montessori Program

Keep Montessori at the center while supporting the whole child and strong academics; invest in teachers and partner closely with parents.

Whole Child • Academic Foundations • Inclusive Practices
Leadership & Service • Empowered Educators • Parent Partnership

Focus Area #2

Thriving Campus

Care for a safe, beautiful, sustainable campus—indoors and out— and plan facilities to match our program now and later.

Safety • Inspiring Spaces
Sustainable Infrastructure • Smart Utilization



Focus Area #3

Resilient Operations

Lead strategically and steward resources so we can sustain quality, strengthen enrollment and access, and fund our future.

Strategic Leadership • Financial Stewardship • Enrollment
Retention • Purposeful Philanthropy

Focus Area #4

Inclusive & Impactful Community

Grow a culture of belonging, amplify Cobb's story, and impact beyond our campus.

Inclusive Governance • Belonging
Partnerships & Outreach • Storytelling & Visibility





Featured Article

Montessori for an AI World

Future-Ready from Day 1

BY MARCIE BRADEN
DIRECTOR OF ADVANCEMENT & AMI ADMIN

Some of the most influential innovators of our time—Jeff Bezos (Amazon), Larry Page and Sergey Brin (Google), Julia Child, Yo-Yo Ma, Jimmy Wales (Wikipedia), Taylor Swift, and Bill Gates (Microsoft)—are known not just for what they accomplished, but for how they think. They didn't simply follow instructions or memorize formulas; they questioned assumptions, explored freely, and pursued bold ideas with persistence and creativity. It's no coincidence that all of them are alumni of Montessori schools.

In a world increasingly shaped by artificial intelligence, where answers are instant, automation is everywhere, and traditional knowledge is at our fingertips, the ability to think differently is no longer optional. *It's essential.*

With AI agents ready to instantly answer any question you can pose...what do we teach our children to prepare them to use these tools?

In interviews with economists, learning-science researchers, and AI thought leaders, several “human-plus-technology” competencies have emerged that experts believe will serve children in an era when humans will use, shape, and sometimes compete with advanced AI. These leaders, many of whom are grappling with the reality of AI for their own children, cite skills like critical thinking, adaptability, empathy, creativity, collaboration and strong executive function as quickly becoming the most valuable human assets of the future. These are the very qualities that Montessori education has quietly and consistently nurtured for over a century. The Montessori method holds steadfast in an approach laid out by Dr. Maria Montessori; a pedagogy based in observation and backed by science and has the greatest hope of preparing children for an uncertain future. The American Montessori Society Innovation Think Tank released an open letter in 2025 echoing this, “Our research consistently shows that the Montessori Method



ri World

is already paving the way for our children to thrive in the age of artificial intelligence. By encouraging exploration, independence, and deep engagement with materials, Montessori education nurtures the very skills that AI demands.”

AI Provides Easy Answers, Montessori Encourages Critical Thinking & Creativity

Like many of us in professional settings, I have come to rely on AI agents to help with my daily tasks, especially writing. I was an early adopter and proponent of artificial intelligence as a tool, but my research for this article gave me pause. A 2025 MIT Media Lab study used EEG scans over a four-month essay-writing experiment. Their findings were alarming...the ChatGPT group's EEGs (vs. the writers who relied only on their brains) showed 47% fewer active neural connections and weaker alpha/beta waves tied to sustained attention and memory. The promise of artificial intelligence is the world's knowledge at our fingertips, the answer to any question almost instantly. Science shows, however, that easy answers can be detrimental.

A study by UC Davis found that people who attempted and failed to recall information often remember the corrected version better long-term

than those who never got it wrong. Indeed, “productive struggle” boosts the development of myelin—the brain's white matter that accelerates neural connections, essential for mastering new skills. We see this in writing; by putting our ideas on paper we trigger new thoughts, we edit, we revise and we think more deeply about our subject. AI is a shortcut that is robbing us of this valuable struggle that deepens our intelligence.

Critical thinking, creativity, and the space to make mistakes are fostered from the very beginning of the Montessori journey. “In our world of today, so many seem to be lured to seek immediate answers through technology and AI, but Montessori children are gifted the freedom to explore with wonder, possibilities of various solutions and to marinate in endless curiosity. In our classrooms, answers to questions are NOT instantaneous...children have time to explore different ideas and to make mistakes. We have deep respect for the value of making mistakes and learning from them,” shares Primary guide Carol Ebersol.

Dr. Montessori understood this foundational human need for exploration when she designed her pedagogy. Even before brain scans gave us concrete evidence of the importance of making mistakes, Dr Montessori designed materials to be self-correcting to enable the child to identify mistakes themselves, fostering independence.

This exploration begins in the YCC classroom. Take for example a deceptively simple material, the Object Permanence Box. Watching a child interact with the box, we see their curiosity... “where did the ball go?” but also their cause and effect thinking and understanding the consequence of their actions (“I dropped a ball, it reappeared.”) This simple activity also demands persistence through error, sometimes the ball doesn't go in cleanly or it rolls away. Children often progress to creative exploration with the box, experimenting with dropping objects other than a ball into the hole to see what happens.

In a Primary classroom, the Movable Alphabet is clearly a tool to develop language skills, but its design enables critical thinking, creativity, and even trial and error. Children “test” their phonetic hypothesis as they spell words and experimentation is low-risk and inviting,

What do experts say about the future of education?

“While AI accelerates productivity, emotional intelligence, cultural understanding, and human judgement remain indispensable-especially for leadership roles.”

Christian Klein, CEO, SAP

“AI is great, but students forget what they never had to wrestle with.”

Everyday AI Podcast
Episode 304

“[AI’s] real value lies in discerning what’s important. You need to have good judgment of how to use it, and then you have to have the flexibility to take that knowledge and do something useful with it.”

Jay Graber, CEO, Bluesky

unlike paper and pencil, errors are easy to adjust... simply swap and rearrange letters. We see children advance in their use of the material, beginning to tell creative and original stories. They analyze sounds, syllables, and patterns, practicing discrimination and decision-making as they choose letters. Through lessons on the material they learn to self-correct (“this word doesn’t look right” or “my friend can’t read it”) building confidence and capability.

We don’t have to observe an Elementary classroom for long to see a flourish of critical thinking and creativity – from dioramas to plays to bridges constructed out of popsicle sticks. Each school year begins with wonder and the telling of the Great Stories, five sweeping impressionistic lessons that span the birth of the universe, the coming of life, the emergence of humans, the invention of language and the development of numbers. From these engaging lessons, the spark of creativity and questioning is born. Rather than providing all the facts, they serve as an invitation to curiosity to a range of topics that speak to different children. One child might be inspired to learn more about the Big Bang, another about how fire changed society, still a third about how language



developed into playwriting. The Great Stories are about following wonder wherever it leads through self-driven exploration, supported by the guide. Many an elementary child has been frustrated when a question sparked by a Great Story is met with a gentle question from their guide rather than an answer.

Student: “If the continents used to be together, how did animals end up in different places?”

Guide: “What do you think might have happened when the land slowly moved apart?”

Student: “Maybe the animals got stuck on the land they were on when it moved away?”

Guide: “That’s an interesting theory. How could we find out more about how animals spread on Earth?”

Student: “I could look at the Timeline of Life, or maybe find a book about animal migration and fossils.”

It would be easy enough for a guide to answer the question, but encouraging students to really think about the answers themselves and then research on their own creates productive struggle. AI and generative models can supply quick answers, but it's humans who must question assumptions, check biases, and choose among options. We must have the curiosity, creativity, and critical thinking to create the right prompts for artificial intelligence. It's this commitment to allowing children to pursue their interests, to encourage them to think deeply and explore that sets Montessori apart from contemporary education styles.

In a meta-analytic 2023 study by Randolph, et al, researchers found that for non-academic outcomes, like critical thinking, creativity, executive function, and social skills, Montessori students outperformed peers by 0.33 standard deviations, a striking indicator of well-rounded growth, especially in the skills deemed important for AI future-readiness. Each Montessori material in every classroom is designed thoughtfully and encourages children to analyze patterns, compare dimensions, and problem-solve. This commitment to fostering human curiosity and giving children the tools for self-exploration will prepare them to think critically, and differently in a future dominated by easy answers.

Technology is Changing the Future Fast, Montessori Prepares Children to Adapt

Since the 2010s, technologists have cried, "teach children to code," and yet we're now faced with a future where human coding might

become obsolete, The Washington Post cited a 27% reduction in programming jobs over the last two years. This can be partially attributed to routine coding roles becoming automated by AI tools, and increased productivity among coders. A GitHub survey found that 92% of responders have begun using AI coding tools in their daily work. Even if AI won't make coding entirely obsolete, it will likely impact the number of available jobs in this sector but more than anything it underscores how we don't really know what skills may be important in the future. Cobb Head of School and Primary and Elementary Trained MontessorinGuide, Subha Sankaran, says, "In the fast paced tech-driven world, it is even more apparent that specific skills can become outdated almost overnight. What remains essential is the ability to learn, adapt, and keep a growth mindset."

In light of this uncertainty, OpenAI Chief Economist Ronnie Chatterji calls out adaptability as the biggest differentiator for prospective employees over any single credential, noting "resilience, flexibility, and agility" will be highly desirable. He specifically states adaptability as one of the things that he's teaching his own children to thrive in an AI future.

Here too, Dr Montessori was amazingly prescient. Her deep understanding of human nature and the pace of change in the world around us, led her to create a pedagogy with flexibility and adaptability at its core. In a 1946 London Lecture, Dr Montessori said, "We must help children from the very beginning. We must give



Most people think about a Montessori education in terms of pink towers, metal insets and indoor shoes. But to those lucky enough to experience authentic Montessori, we see that it's more than just the materials. It's about creating a space where children learn to learn. It's about creating citizens of the world. It's about setting the stage for independent thought and focused work.

These are the children who are innovators, peacemakers, and change agents.

- KARA VIRELLO,
6th year parent



What's more crucial: investing in a child's education during their teenage years or in their formative years? At which stage are they more receptive, less burdened by biases, and able to learn in harmony with their natural learning style?"

- Tyler Whitehead, Cobb Alum '01

them the right environment because they have to adapt themselves to a strange new world."

To help create this resilience, Dr Montessori created mixed-aged classrooms and open work cycles to habituate children to new roles and daily challenges. AMI Montessori classrooms have a single guide who presents lessons to children. Children must have patience, making alternate choices, and exploring their environment without constant adult supervision. While public schools clamor for one material per child, Montessori emphasizes limits and constraints as a way to help children learn to be adaptable and self-disciplined. In the Young Children's Community we see limited seating at the snack table, forcing children to take their turn, building flexibility and emotional regulation. Primary children must wait their turn for a favorite material, as it's often the only one on the shelf. This builds patience, decision-making (which material should I choose instead?) and adaptability as the child must navigate choices and turn-taking.

At the Elementary level, adaptability is less about taking turns with materials and more about navigating complex social, intellectual, and organizational challenges. We see this in collaborative work choices where children must adapt to partners' working styles, ideas and pacing. We see this too in research projects and open-ended studies that require children to generate ideas and seek out their own solutions, adjusting when a resource isn't available

or changing direction if an approach doesn't work. Elementary classrooms also offer children roles and responsibilities from caring for animals and tending the garden to taking photos and organizing supplies that require continuously being open to new ideas and ways of working. Children at the Elementary level also engage in community decision-making, bringing problems around social conflicts or classroom direction to the rug, where they have to be flexible and open to new ideas and perspectives. They are guided through compromise and collaboration, helping them create shared solutions.

This strength in adaptability and cognitive flexibility in Montessori children has evidenced-backed research. In a peer-reviewed 2006 study, Lillard & Else-Quest, found that "at age 5, Montessori students scored better on the cognitive flexibility test than conventional students" with a standard deviation of 0.61. Montessorians in classrooms around the world understand this innately. In an article entitled, "How Montessori Education Teaches Adaptability," Fishtown Montessori says, "It is impossible to control your environment all of the time or expect everything to remain the same. The Montessori classroom is a place that is in constant motion...the conditions are never set in stone, and that gives students a chance to learn to function in many settings."

Ms. Sankaran highlights this strength, stating, "Montessori schools have the unique advantage of a brilliantly designed method that nurtures enduring capacities and habits of mind. Through our structure, environment, and pedagogy, we not only support the mastery of skills and subjects but also give children the time and space to wonder, seek answers, and build confidence rooted in independence. They learn to persevere, to lead and collaborate, and to adapt their strengths to a variety of situations. These are the capacities that will serve them for life."

While Dr. Montessori might not have had an AI-driven world in mind when she conceived her pedagogy, the design of the classrooms fosters the adaptability and resilience that children need to thrive in any environment, whatever the future may hold.

Foundations for a Life of Learning

Beyond Care: Montessori YCC

Montessori Young Children's Community (YCC) provides an environment centered not just on keeping children safe and engaged, but on supporting their growth as capable, independent, and curious human beings. Unlike traditional daycare, Montessori YCC offers:

- **Child-Led Exploration** promoting autonomy, confidence, and deep engagement
- **Trained Montessori Guides** who observe, guide and support, not direct, each active learner
- **Intentional Environments** designed for independence and foster coordination and real-world skills
- **Meaningful Work** that builds concentration, self-regulation, and intrinsic motivation
- **Collaboration and Community** that fosters communication and empathy

In a world shaped by AI, information will be everywhere and easily accessible. It will be the uniquely human skills of creativity, adaptability, focus and empathy that provide the advantages to thrive. Montessori nurtures these traits from the very beginning—preparing children not just for school, but for a future where how they think and who they are will matter more than what they know.

Montessori, a Thoughtful Choice for the Future

Every family is balancing schedules, needs, and values. While traditional daycare may offer longer hours or logistical ease, Montessori YCC offers something uniquely powerful: a developmental environment rooted in respect, independence, and the joy of discovery that will help children become confident, capable and curious learners for today, and tomorrow.



90%

**of synapses form by
the time a child is 3.**

The experiences your child has in these early years shape the architecture of their brain for life.



The future will reward those who can think deeply, solve creatively, and adapt with purpose. Montessori builds that foundation from the very beginning.

Montessori: Building Future-Ready Skills from the Very Start

In a world where information will be instant, the skills that matter most are the ones Montessori children develop every day through hands-on exploration, freedom within structure, and meaningful work. Here are just some examples of each skill on display from YCC through Elementary.

CRITICAL THINKING & CREATIVITY 	YCC Object Permanence Box builds curiosity and problem-solving	PRIMARY Language Composition children create original stories and experiment with language	ELEMENTARY Great Lessons encourages follow-up research and projects that incorporate art, music, drama, writing, and more
ADAPTABILITY 	Limited Seating at the snack table encourages children to wait their turn, building flexibility and emotional regulation.	Limited Materials builds patience, decision-making, and adaptability as children navigate choices and turn-taking	Scientific Experiments require children to adjust their thinking and hypotheses with changing variables based on real-world outcomes
COMPASSION 	Grace & Courtesy saying 'please,' 'thank you' and helping peers lays the groundwork for empathy	Peace Table children are taught to understand others' perspectives when resolving conflict through guided conversation	Class Meetings students lead dialogue around community challenges, giving everyone an opportunity to voice their opinion
COLLABORATION 	Meal Preparation working side by side to prepare food, set the table, and enjoy community meal time	Large Format Group Math assembling complex multiplication charts together fosters communication and collaboration	Group Research Projects choosing topics and a general approach, dividing roles and building shared presentations
EXECUTIVE FUNCTION 	Work Rug Use choosing, organizing, and returning materials to their proper place	3-hr Work Cycle develops planning, self-monitoring, task initiation and completion as well as impulse control and deep concentration	Work Journals tracking and managing multi-day projects with teacher support encourages time management, planning, and follow-up

Montessori Builds the Brain for a Changing World

Executive Function is a set of cognitive processes that include working memory, self-regulation, and cognitive flexibility. Strong executive function is what helps us with important tasks like prioritization, focus, time management, goal setting, problem solving, emotional regulation, and following directions, among other things. Skills that are important not just for children, but for adults throughout our lives. Studies show that strong executive function underpins “self-regulatory skills that are important to academic and life success; in fact, self-regulation at age 4 predicts health and wealth outcomes at age 32.”

And yet, experts are sounding the alarm on executive function decline, with emerging studies showing the negative impacts from technology. Neuroscientists warn that large-scale outsourcing of cognitive load like we see in reliance on answers and tasks from AI agents, “may reduce overall brain plasticity over time.” Sal Khan, founder of Khan Academy said it clearly, “When the tool thinks for them, kids lose the habit of staying with the problem.”

Educators across the country have already noticed the impact of technology on children, with many noting “critical-thinking and attention spans have been demolished.” A PNAS Nexus experiment in 2025 showed that blocking mobile internet on phones for even two weeks improved sustained-attention scores and well-being, providing casual evidence that constant connection drains focus. Studies from UC Irvine highlight this decline: the average user in 2004 switched tasks after 2.5 minutes vs a mere 75 seconds in 2012 and a measly 29.6 seconds in 2025.

Once again, we find solutions to these problems in the Montessori pedagogy. Dr. Montessori understood the importance of interacting in the real world, long before the advent of technologies like YouTube, Instagram, and AI. “The child gives us a beautiful lesson - that in order to form and maintain our intelligence, we must use our hands.” Montessori weaves executive function into every layer of the classroom experience, rather than treating it as an



isolated skill to be trained. Any observer who has stood outside a Montessori classroom in awe of the beautiful rhythm of children working independently, quietly, and with deep concentration appreciates this, “I was surprised to see such young children so independent and self-motivated, with such focus, such calm and quiet,” shared one parent with MariaMontessori.com.

Truly, this emergence of strong executive function is magical. In a YCC classroom it manifests as children choosing, organizing, and returning their work to the proper place on the shelf. Along with gentle encouragement from the guide to complete their task from start to finish. We see children exploring the room, observing their peers engaged with deep concentration, and already practicing the respect of leaving their friends to their work.

Primary classrooms maintain a 3-hour work cycle in the mornings, allowing children the time to plan, initiate a task, and complete their work. They too choose from shelves the materials on which they’ve had lessons. They are responsible for rolling out a rug, or securing a table for their work. Daily, children practice self-restraint and impulse control in moving carefully around a mat of materials laid out by another child. Older children begin to develop a sense of time management, understanding how long they have to complete and return a work to the shelf before going outside for recess. The deep concentration that is seeded in a Primary classroom as cutting cucumbers for an extended period of time translates into an Elementary child who will persist at the difficult task of long division.

In Elementary, we see executive function skills solidify and emerge as those we recognize as critical for success in middle school, high school, college, and eventually careers. Children are tasked with maintaining their own work journal, recording their efforts and reflecting with their teacher weekly on tasks left to accomplish. They take an active role in managing their education, ensuring they are getting the lessons they need and progressing through materials. They manage their time, navigate deadlines, plan their workcycle, and make independent choices while balancing pursuit of passion projects against required follow-up work.

Evidence from randomized studies show that Montessori has measurable advantages in executive function skills that will be critical to be human in an AI-world. A 2017 study by Lillard showed that Montessori preschoolers demonstrated greater improvements in executive function ($d=0.35$) compared to control groups. Even younger children benefit: a 2018 study showed 3-year-olds in Montessori settings acquired improved inhibitory control and cognitive flexibility with robust effect sizes, with more Montessori children choosing challenging puzzles than their peers...a sign of cognitive perseverance. As technology continues to erode this skill and experts impress upon us its importance in the future, study results consistently show that Montessori environments support stronger executive function development, better preparing children for what's to come.

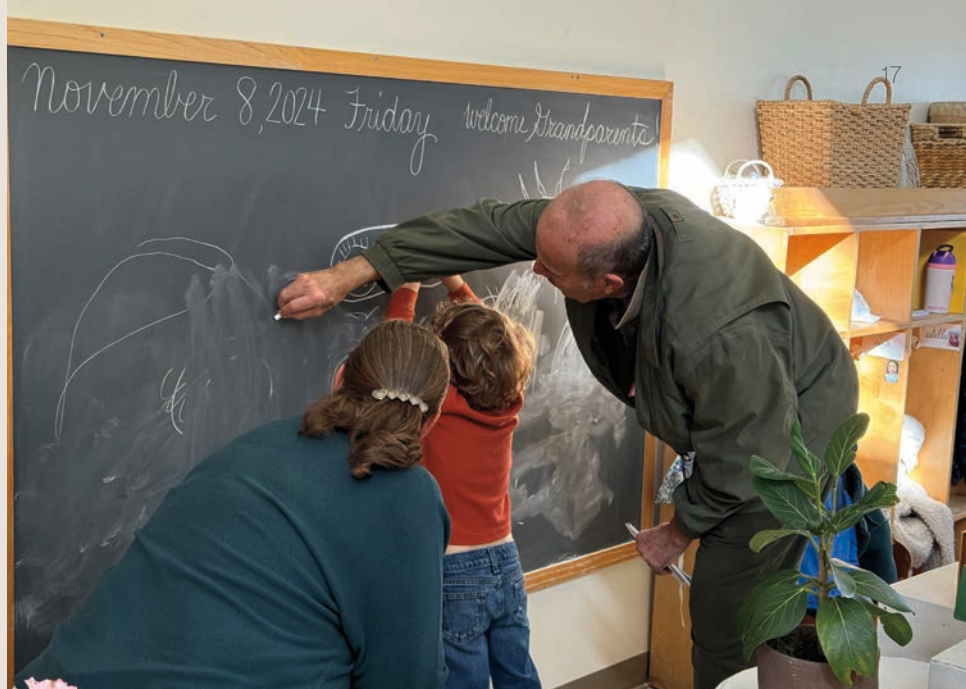
The Heart of Montessori: Skills that Shape Humanity

While this article highlights critical thinking, creativity, adaptability, and executive function, Montessori also cultivates other equally vital human skills that will be essential in an AI future. Emotional intelligence, collaboration, and compassion are ingrained in the Montessori experience which strives to instill grace and courtesy, creating responsible global citizens. In *Citizen of the World*, Dr. Montessori said, “we have the possibility to form the citizen of the world and the study of the young child is fundamental to the peace and progress of humanity.” On the eve of an AI revolution, never has the idea of humanity’s place in our world been more fragile or more important.

The “Law of Accelerating Returns” argues that technological change isn’t linear...it’s exponential. Each breakthrough enables the next to come faster. In his book, *The Age of Spiritual Machines*, the father of this law, Ray Kurzweil forecasts, “technological change so rapid and profound it represents a rupture in the fabric of human history.” This coming “rupture” elicits fear in many parents, and with good reason, but we must not let fear dominate our reaction to AI. When spellcheck arrived on the scene in 1981, launched by IBM, it too was a controversial tool, “critics worried that making spell checking too easy would make writers lazy and careless.” There are few today who haven’t embraced using spellcheck, and we would be hard pressed to find those arguing seriously that it has degraded our writing as a whole. So, like spellcheck, we can embrace AI as a tool that can augment human capabilities for the better.

But just as we didn’t stop teaching our children phonetics, we must remain focused on those human skills that will help us thrive in an AI-future. These skills are woven into the fabric of the Montessori pedagogy and embraced by the guides who shepherd children every day. If Montessori helped shape some of the most original thinkers of the last century, it is exactly the kind of education we need to shape the ones who will thrive in the next. I have never been more confident as a parent that Montessori is the right place for my children. ■





Classroom Moments

At Cobb, the classroom is more than a place of learning. It is a space where wonder unfolds, independence grows, and joyful discovery happens every day. This year, classrooms from YCC to Upper Elementary were alive with curiosity and engagement.

These moments, both big and small, are the heartbeat of a Montessori education. They reflect the careful guidance of our teachers, the thoughtful preparation of the environment, and the incredible potential of each child when given the freedom to explore at their own pace.

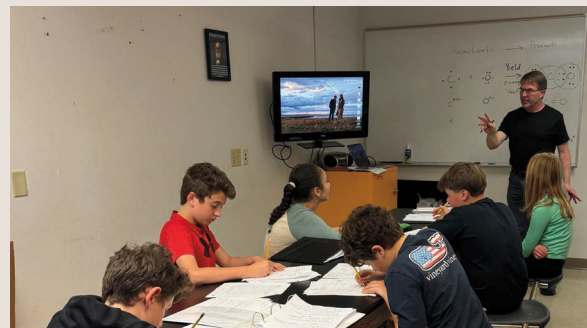
We are deeply grateful to our dedicated faculty and staff, whose passion and patience create the conditions for this magic to happen. And to our families, thank you for trusting us with your children and for supporting their journeys with such care. The learning that happens at Cobb is remarkable not only for what children know, but for who they become.





"Cobb School offered our daughters a retreat to a simpler world. Guided by the framework of the Montessori method, they flourished in reading, writing, public speaking, and developed an intellectual curiosity which cannot be extinguished. It has become evident that the mastery of these timeless skills provide the foundational strength and resilience to prosper in our complex and confusing society." – Louisa Walsh, P'23, P'25





2024-25 Highlights

A Year of Community

At Cobb, community is more than a word, it's the heartbeat of our school. This year, our calendar was full of opportunities for families to come together in celebration, support, and connection. From the laughter of Trunk or Treat and the energy of the Family Dance to the warmth of our Heritage Potluck and the festive spirit of the Country Fair, every gathering reflected the deep commitment of our families to one another and to the school.

None of it would have been possible without our extraordinary parent volunteers. Whether organizing events, coordinating classroom support, decorating for a celebration, or stepping in wherever needed, parents showed up with enthusiasm and generosity time and again. We are especially grateful to our Parent Association, whose leadership, creativity, and behind-the-scenes efforts helped bring so many of these moments to life. Their work, big and small, has made a lasting impact, helping build the joyful and inclusive community we cherish.

Thank you to each and every parent who contributed your time, talents, and heart this year. You helped create memories and strengthen the bonds that make Cobb such a special place. We can't wait to see you at our upcoming events for 2025-26 - mark your calendars!



Family Dance Volunteers



Family Skate



Heritage Potluck



Heritage Potluck



Heritage Potluck



Family Dance



Wolfpack Game



Gather with Friends



Heritage Potluck



Trunk-or-Treat



Country Fair



Country Fair



Heritage Potluck



Country Fair

Mark Your Calendars for 2025-26

Country Fair - Friday, October 10th 4-6pm

Trunk-or-Treat - Thursday, October 30th

Grandparents & Special Friends Day - Friday, November 7th

End-of-Year Party & Fundraiser - Friday, May 8th

Celebrating Milestones

At the close of the school year, we gathered to honor students completing their Primary cycle, those moving up to Upper Elementary, and our graduates preparing for new adventures beyond Cobb. We also celebrated two dedicated Trustees whose nine year terms are coming to an end, Jennifer Kulicki and Brigitte Richter – thank you for your service.

In a heartfelt address, alumna and new Trustee Amanda Joseph reflected on how her years at Cobb shaped the path she walks today. Teachers were recognized, and students were warmly welcomed into their new levels with a handshake and a flower from a peer—a Cobb tradition that beautifully symbolizes growth, belonging, and continuity.



We are so proud of our 6th year graduates...it's time to fly!



Will Evans

Renbrook School

"I have been learning from my mistakes, and I have been inspired by my classmates."



Marley Jones

Watkinson School

"Thanks to experiences like MMUN, I became someone who isn't afraid to meet new people."



Ryder Lyles

Henry James Middle School

"I've become more responsible and take my work more seriously."



Lucas Rome

Kingswood Oxford

"When the sixth years leave, we leave spaces to be filled rather than gaps in our community."



Peyton Walsh

Renbrook School

"You should never give up on this journey, always keep trying, and one day you will get there."



Lorenzo Virello

Kingswood Oxford

"I learned so much about intelligence, friendship, and just being a good person."



Colby Zatyryka

Suffield Middle School

"My life is a symphony, with all its different movements and complicated forms."



Elliana Zatyryka

Suffield Middle School

"Seeing the work in primary looks so easy now, it's amazing to see how far we've come."

The Miracle Tree: The Opera Returns to Cobb School

This spring, after a four-year pause, Cobb's Opera roared back to life. Elementary students presented Cobb's 21st Opera, *The Miracle Tree*, a vibrant production in which Amazonian animals band together to protect a threatened Kapok tree, a symbol of interdependence in the rain forest and our shared planet.

The production grew out of the Elementary program's study of global biomes and ecosystems. Every Elementary student participated, auditioning for roles, learning songs, crafting movement patterns, and creating their costumes and sets.

The show was shepherded with heart and stamina by director, Maureen Hilsdon. Parent Blake Seers volunteered to shape choreography, lighting, and sound, transforming rehearsal blocking into true theater. Mr. Chris designed and built lush rain forest sets that transported audiences beneath the canopy, while parent volunteers stitched animal costumes, sculpted props, painted scenery, and loaded trucks.

When the house lights dimmed and the first rain forest calls echoed across the auditorium, the crowd leaned in. By curtain call, children in jaguar spots and macaw wings stood hand-in-hand before a glowing Kapok, reminding us that stewardship starts small, and grows when a community shows up together.

Welcome back, Opera. We missed you. ■

Photographs by Andrea Boden, Kimberly Hatch, and Aaron Lyles.





The Opera

Behind-the-Scenes



“

Theater has a unique way of benefiting children's creativity, confidence, and self-expression while also bringing everyone together as a community to create shared memories.



2024-25 Annual Report

A Letter from the Board Chair

Thank you for your steadfast support for our mission. Our Annual Fund received record-breaking donations last year, with a 15% increase in the total number of donors, including many past staff members and many first-time donors. This is a testament to the depth of commitment across our entire community, which continues to expand every year. Even more inspiring, alumni giving grew by an extraordinary 410%, showing that the Cobb experience leaves a lasting imprint long after graduation.

With 55 paddles raised for our “Filling the Shelves” campaign last spring, we surpassed our \$50,000 goal in minutes, enabling us to expand resources for learning and growth in ways that will benefit Cobb students for years to come. It was remarkable to see the pallets of beautiful new Montessori materials arriving this summer, and we appreciate everyone on staff who worked to prepare the classrooms and literally fill the shelves!

We are growing and evolving as a campus, but the heart of Cobb remains the same: a commitment to Montessori principles that nurture independence, curiosity, and resilience. The world needs more Montessori kids – little acorns who think critically, act compassionately, make those around them better, and then give back when they become strong young trees themselves. Thanks to your continued support, Cobb will keep preparing them. Thank you for being part of this extraordinary journey. I look forward to seeing you on campus.

With warm regards,



Brian Sullivan, P '24, P '26
Chair, Board of Trustees

OAK TREE GUILD

\$10,000+

Chad and Denise Alfeld ♥
Subha Sankaran and Ravi Ramanathan •
Brian and Marisa Sullivan ▣
Anonymous, 1 Donor •

ACORN GUILD

\$5,000–\$9,999

Clarence B & Joan F Coleman Charitable Foundation
Andrew and Michelle Creed ▣
Jennifer and Leonard Kulicki ♦
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Michaelynn Ware and Tom Miller, Jr. °
Chris and Gina Quimby
James Rollins and Natalie Mackiel
Donald and Jill Seagraves
Helen Thomas ♥
Betsy van Gemenen ♥
Michael Vogel and Katherine Kenney °
Louisa and Nicholas Walsh •

BENEFACTORS

\$2,500–\$4,999

Guillaume Briere-Giroux and Jennifer Lierer °
Janet and Tim Ellsworth ★
Helena and Newell Grant, Jr. •
Iain and Linda Sorrell ♦

1974 FOUNDERS SOCIETY

\$1,974–\$2,499

Mary Anne Creto and William Rusch ♥
Perry Wasserbauer '03 •
Emily van Gemenen '01 •

SUSTAINERS

\$1,000–\$1,973

Melissa Bernardo and Michael Rodriguez °
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\$500–\$999

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 and Kristen Clarke Brielmann
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 Praneet Wander
 and Andrew Scatola

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\$250–\$499

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Liss Couch-Edwards
 and John Monagan ◦
 Peter and Kitty Friedman ■
 Lee and Brynna Geiselmann ◦
 Antony Giunta '05
 Alejandro Gonzalez
 and Laura Posada •
 Michael Grappone ◦
 Christine Hayden and Peter Keane ◦
 Nolandre and Jevine Johnson
 Mary Catherine and Brenden Kane
 Paul and Kerry Kendall
 Alexander Kulicki '13 ◦
 Sean and Katherine Leary
 Anne Lee ■
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 and Samantha Weragoda
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 Charitable Trust •
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 Mark and Sasha Zatyryka •

SUPPORTERS

\$100–\$249

Linda Allain
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 Eric Amodio
 Bob and Gail Banta ■
 Elizabeth and Cullen Bonner ◦
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 Mike and Jenn Brown ◦

Mike and Christine Bryant •
 Michael Burke and Caitlin Allday
 Kathleen Campbell
 Joselyne Canchanya Berrios
 and Erick Martinez Cruz
 Mark Cerulli
 Catherine Coco and Tyler Young ◦
 Gwen Couch ◦
 Elisa Del Valle Cardona
 and Suri Seymour ◦
 Suzanne DeRosa ◦
 Tom DeRosa
 Kristen and Matthew Diamond
 Maxwell Dietter and Carli Freeman
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 Peter and Carol Ebersol ■
 Holly Eccleston
 Elizabeth Feng '34
 Matthew and Karen Filler ★
 Aleksandr and Ruslana Frenkel
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 Carol Geiselmann
 Dale Golowne
 Daniel Gooley
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 Newell Grant, Sr. •
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 Kimberly Hatch and Alexander Liptak ◦
 Tiana Hercules
 Morgan and Ryan Jennings
 Crystal Jones ◦
 Carol and Steve Kaplan
 Meredith Kaplan and Blake Seers ◦
 Michael and Fiona Kerr ♥
 Ashley and Chris King ◦





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 and Benji Sprecher
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 Ann Burnett
 Bodeene and Lyle Cairdeas
 Ashley Canter Meredith
 and William Meredith
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 Frank Cardona
 Mario Cardona •
 Shashi Chandna
 Stacy and Jesse Chandna •
 Meng Chen and Alan Chan
 Susan and Jeffrey Clarke
 Irene Coleman
 Theresa and Fran Coleman
 Mia Colopy •
 Noel Conklin •
 Madeline Creed '24
 Corey and Sarah Cusick
 Michael and Rosemary D'Orlando
 Wesly Delaney
 Sarah DeRosa •
 Ezra and Katherine DeTroy •
 Naomi Ericson '23 •
 Bill Evans
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 Lauren Firestone, *Alum*
 Devan Ford
 Lindley Friedman, *Alum* •
 Molly Friedman, *Alum* •
 Iris Frontany
 Lindsay Gallo •
 Karen Gavell •
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 Chrisann Johnson
 and Michael Williams
 Sandra Johnson
 Sasha Johnson •
 Amanda Joseph '12

Susan and Robert Kirby
 Zachary and Shayna Klomberg •
 Ella Kulicki '14 •
 Maciej and Jennifer Labinski •
 Cedreya Lanier
 Wesley Lawler '32
 Gerry Leonard and Kathleen Allen ■
 Chao Lin and John Winter •
 Hugh Lyles
 Kristin and Karim Mabrouk •
 Debi and John Mackiel
 Brennan Maine '03
 Patrick and Judy Maloney •
 Christine Manning
 Jessica Marino
 Marissa and Michael Marra
 Brian Mascalo •
 Dana Mascalo •
 Jack McArdle and Jacki Romano •
 Mandy and Scott McClelland
 Marisa Montinieri •
 Susan Mozzicato
 Quinn Mulligan '23
 Sumesh Nair
 and Sreeja Satheezchandran
 Andrew Nelson
 and Vera Richardson •
 Daanyaal Nieves
 Jaliyla Nieves
 Safiya Nieves
 Randall Northrop and Julie Relyea •
 Michael O'Connell
 Ruth Palomino and Denis Arrospide
 Timothy Ratchford
 Abby and Martin Richardson •
 Sandra Robair

Ame Schroll
 Drew and Taryn Schroll
 Russell Seymour and Connie Cline
 Dan and Hallene Shaffer
 Connie Sleeves
 Vivian Soares
 Lisa Sorrell '03 •
 Melanie Stepka
 Robert and Rita Stepka •
 Amy and Scott Stevens
 Jacob Studenroth
 and Allison Frey Studenroth •
 Jennifer Torres •
 Benjamin Waldie
 and Melinda Hinners-Waldie ★
 Harrison Wasserbauer '06 •
 Maral and Adam Wozniak
 Bo Xie and Jia Kang
Anonymous, 6 donors

COMMUNITY CIRCLE **UP TO \$99**

D C Agrawal
 Elysa Aimar
 Tala Al Sabouni and Waile Ramadan
 Eleanor Alfeld '13
 Lia Angelides •
 Barbara Balnis
 Imonnira Baruah
 and Venkatapathi Raju Penmethsa •
 Lourdes Bastas
 Julia Beach '08 •
 Anne and Rodman Black, Jr. ♥
 Augustus Boden-Gaura '28
 Kay and Matteo Bonetti
 Jo Braden •

Jacob Joseph '17
 Rebecca and Shaun Kelleher
 Jennie and James Kelly
 Avalon Kendall '24
 Malakai Kendall '27
 Su Gym Kim and Youngran Jheun
 Lina Kosloski
 Eleanor Lardner '17 ◦
 Isabel Lardner '12 ◦
 Riayn Lavoie
 Olivia Liggio and Brennen Halvorson
 Rosanne Liptak
 George Lockshier '32
 Susan Lyles
 Sheryl MacInnis and Matt Calabro ■
 Diana Malchoff
 Eden Malkowski '24
 Eliza Maloney '16 ◦
 Lesa Marino
 Olive McArdle '24
 Thomas McKeon
 Marlowe Melaragno '33
 Pamela Miller
 Jacqueline Montanez
 Marilyn Moreau
 Julian O'Brien '23
 Darshani Olano ◦
 Oleg and Michelle Ouchakof •
 Sean Pahwa '23
 Shayla Parker and Caitlin Shaw
 Rudy Pelletier and Politimi Nasiakos
 Angela Petrow
 Prospero Posada
 Jackie Presutti
 and John Tobias Rowe
 Benjamin Radmore '16
 Vincent and Laura Radmore ◆
 Talia Ramadan '33
 Nandini Ramanathan '17
 Nikhil Ramanathan '23
 Melinda and Peter Read
 Jennifer Reed
 Amy Resh
 Carolyn Riley '12
 Robin Rines
 Maddie Ross ◦
 Ellen Savran
 Kathy Schiller ◦
 Randy Schoenfeld
 Rainer and Maria Schumann ■
 Benjamin Scudder '13
 Lucy Scudder, *Alum*
 Walter Scudder, *Alum*
 Steve and Camille Shaffer ◦
 Jack Shaffer '22

Nancy and Glenn Shapiro
 Gracyn Shaw, *Alum*
 Haydn Shaw '16
 Jeb Shaw, *Alum*
 Sara Shultz
 Suzanne Sinacori
 Euan Sorrell, *Alum*
 Caroline Strapp '12
 Elisabeth L. Strapp '15
 Neil Sullivan '24 ◦
 Ray Tanguay
 Christine Taylor and Can Dogrucan
 Genesis and Norris Taylor
 Betty Tegel and Rosanne Liptak
 Steve Thomas
 Katie Thompson '03
 Matt and Joy Vacca
 Sujatha Weragoda
 Suzanne Weragoda
 Abby White
 Amelia Williams '33
 Frank Winter '24
 Brandon and Cara Woods •
 Catherine York
 Janet Zahradnik
Anonymous, 3 donors

MATCHING CONTRIBUTIONS & BUSINESS DONATIONS

Amogen Foundation
 Benevity Charitable
 The Ensign Bickford Foundation
 The Ethel Walker School ◦
 Fevo Enterprise
 Fidelity Charitable
 J. McLaughlin ◦
 Raytheon Technologies ◦
 The Walt Disney Company

THANK YOU TO OUR CONSISTENT COBB FUND DONORS!

- ♥ = 25+ years
- ★ = 20-24 years
- ◆ = 15-19 years
- = 10-14 years
- = 6-9 years
- = 3-5 years

We make every effort to ensure accuracy and completeness in our Annual Report. If you believe your donation or information has been unintentionally overlooked, please let us know. We deeply appreciate your support and would be grateful for the opportunity to correct any errors.

2024-25

Growing our Culture of Giving

We are so grateful to our community for your participation, at all levels.

Each gift, no matter the size, helps us to reach our annual goals, enabling us to offer the highest quality Montessori education and programming on our beautiful campus.

5x

Alumni Giving Growth

Thank you, alumni! Your gifts are among the most meaningful as you move beyond the walls of Cobb out into the greater world!

98%

Current Parent Giving

We reached an astounding 98% giving among our current parents. Thank you for your partnership and support.

100%

Trustee & Staff Giving

We are grateful for the gifts from our teachers, assistants, Trustees, and staff.

Ensuring the Future at Cobb

Cobb's endowments play a vital role in sustaining and enriching every aspect of our mission. They provide a dependable source of funding that supports our community today while securing our strength for tomorrow. Each endowed gift contributes to one of four key pillars outlined below. Together, these pillars ensure that Cobb continues to offer an exceptional Montessori education rooted in joy, purpose, and possibility.



Pillar #1: Long-term Stability

Creating strategic reserves to plan boldly and weather uncertainty.

- The Cobb School Fund
- Castellani/Thomas Endowment
- Rainerio O. Reyes Endowment
- Winton-Black Endowment

Pillar #2: Financial Aid

Supplementing
tuition to strengthen
diversity and
belonging in every
classroom.

- Cobb School Financial Aid Fund
- Rebecca Crocker Scholarship Fund
- Willem van Gemeren Friends Forever Scholarship



Pillar #3: Staff Support

Recruiting, training,
and retaining
amazing teachers
and staff.

The Mary Lou Cobb Endowment



Pillar #4: Program Enrichment

The “extras” that makes
Cobb extraordinary.

- Niels and Willem van Gemeren Memorial Endowment
- Ruth Josephson Animal Fund



Fueling Cobb's Next 50 Years

Celebrating Endowment and Legacy Gifts

From the moment Chad and Denise Alfeld entered Cobb Montessori as parents in 1997, they have been ardent champions of the school and the mission and pedagogy on which it was built. So when Cobb celebrated its 50th year in 2024, they decided to honor the school, asking themselves “how do we give in a way that helps the school make it to the next milestone?”

Their answer was a \$25,000 commitment to the Mary Lou Cobb Endowment Fund, honoring both the founder who greeted them on their first visit to campus as well as the faculty nurturing the generations of children who move through these hallways.

“We have been part of the Cobb School family since 1997, and our gift to the Endowment reflects our deep belief in Montessori

education and our commitment to the school's long-term stability. We are especially honored to support the Mary Lou Cobb Endowment Fund, which both celebrates our beloved founding Head of School and provides vital support for teachers through salaries and professional development,” shared Denise.

Unlike Annual Fund gifts, which help the school meet its operating budget each year, the Endowment principal is invested in perpetuity; only a careful draw (of about 4%) supports the operating budget each year. That steady stream insulates Cobb from swings in enrollment, economic downturns, or emergencies, exactly what helped keep our doors open during the pandemic. The Alfeld's gift joins \$1.5 million in our total endowments built by generations of Cobb families. ■



Our gift to the Endowment reflects our deep belief in Montessori education and our commitment to the school's long-term stability.

2024-25 Endowment & Legacy Gifts

We are grateful to the families and individuals who made contributions to Cobb's endowments this year—investing in the long-term strength and stability of our school.

2024-25 ENDOWMENT DONORS

Anne and Rodman R Black, Jr.
Marcie Braden and Daniel McArdle
David Ciarcia and Beth Rumsey
Mary Lou and Michael Cobb
Joseph and Jennifer Lardner
The Paneloc Corporation
Diane Peterson
Subha Sankaran and Ravi Ramanathan
Rodney and Maureen Scudder
Peter Schrobenauser and Geena Clonan
Beth and Christopher Strapp
Brian and Marisa Sullivan

LEGACY GUILD

We are deeply grateful to the members of our Legacy Guild, who have included Cobb School Montessori in their estate plans, ensuring that their commitment to Montessori education will benefit generations of students to come. *Have you included Cobb School Montessori in your will or estate plans? Please let us know so we can thank you and ensure your wishes are honored (recognition optional).*

Anne and Rodman R Black, Jr.
Courtenay Crocker
Helen Thomas

Help Secure the Future of Cobb with a Gift

Make a gift to support one of our pillars – program enrichment, financial aid, faculty and staff, and operations.

Learn more about Endowments and Planned Giving at cobbschool.com/legacy



Endowment Impact Profile

Supporting New Guides, Shaping Future Generations

Maddie Ross has been an assistant at Cobb School Montessori for years before taking the next step in 2023: becoming a trained Montessori guide. With support from the Mary Lou Cobb Fund, she completed her AMI training and joined the Lower Elementary team as a lead teacher in 2024. Her training was transformative, both personally and professionally. “The training gave me the tools to recognize the spark in each child, and to help them see it in themselves,” Maddie says.

This drive was apparent throughout the year in Maddie’s classroom. Her lower elementary students were naturally curious and driven, exploring a wide range of topics that pushed the bounds of Maddie’s knowledge. To serve her students, stay ahead of their interests and urge them forward, Ms Maddie found herself researching new topics each night to come back to the classroom with new ideas and knowledge for her students. From learning about new animals to quantum mechanics, this is the drive of a Montessori educator. In her own words, “Montessori opened the world to me in a way that made sense and sparked deep motivation. It lit a fire in me to keep learning...not just for me, but for my students too.” Each of our teachers carries this spark and drive for our students. ■

2024-25 Development

Annual Giving

1st Time Donors

34%

\$252k

Annual donations are critical to closing the operating gap.

Each year, the generosity of our community brings us closer to bridging the gap between tuition and the true cost of a Cobb education. This year we raised the bar by engaging more donors, increasing participation, and making meaningful strides toward financial sustainability.

Your support helps ensure that every child continues to benefit from the rich, nurturing, and thoughtfully prepared Montessori environment we are proud to provide.

AVG DONATION

\$658

370

Total Donors

“ Why I Give

Sonia Ericson, P '23, P '26

As a parent, I appreciate that the children are educated to be good and decent people with the tenacity to push through whatever challenge, change or hardship that lies ahead. As a manager, I appreciate that Cobb provides the education needed for the modern workforce: thinkers about the world's current challenges and creators of solutions amidst a constantly shifting environment. As a human on planet Earth at this moment in time; **I cannot think of a better investment in our world than educating children to take on the challenges that lie ahead.”**

Did You Know?

Tuition only covers 83% of educating a child at Cobb. The remaining **\$5,200 per student** comes from the generous gifts made to our Annual Fund each year. Your support is vital in allowing us to keep tuition as affordable as possible for all families.

Tuition 83%

**Your generous support is
what helps close the gap!**



Financial Statement

Income

Area	%
Tuition	83%
Auxiliary (Camps, clubs, etc)	8%
Fundraising	7%
Endowment	2%

Expenses

Area	%
Staff (Salaries, Benefits)	78%
Program (Materials, Curriculum)	11%
Campus/Property	8%
Other	3%





Thank you for helping us exceed our annual financial goal!

This year, our community came together in inspiring ways to support Cobb through both the Bead by Bead Giving Challenge and our annual Auction at Holcomb Farm.

The Bead by Bead Giving Challenge captured the spirit of our mission—every gift, no matter the size, added up to make a real difference and helped us exceed our \$50,000 goal for giving day. Elementary children participated in a Jog-a-Thon, getting sponsors and running laps in the Great Hall to support the school. We were blown away by their efforts - together, they ran the equivalent of 217 miles! WOW! Parents, alumni, grandparents, and friends joined in, helping us build the 10-chain.

Our Auction at Holcomb was a night to remember! With attendance and participation up, the room was full of energy and generosity. Thanks to our auctioneer, current parent and Trustee James Rollins, and our incredible bidders, we raised \$52,000 to Fill the Shelves in our new classrooms. From the lively auction floor to the joyful camaraderie, it was clear that this community not only gives generously but has a blast doing it.

Together, these efforts have helped strengthen our programs, enhance our learning environments, and ensure we are ready for the future—bead by bead, and gift by gift. Thank you for your gifts of both time and money!





2025-26 Campaign for Cobb

The Alphabet of Giving: Letters Become Words, Words Become Actions

This year, we launch our Alphabet of Giving...gifts will sponsor letters and words which will be added to a collaborative piece of word art telling the story of Cobb. Just as letters build words, and words tell stories, every contribution – large or small – will building something lasting for Cobb.



Learn More





#CobbCares

At Cobb, service is an essential part of how we grow as individuals and as a community. This year, students, families, and our Parent Association led meaningful efforts to give back – organizing a can drive, a clothing swap, a park clean-up, and the Giving Tree to support families in need.

From visiting seniors at McLean to supporting local organizations, these acts of care reflect the values we strive to instill in our children: empathy, responsibility, and compassion in action.



I was motivated by wanting to help the earth after learning about global warming at school.

-Pablo G-P, on helping organize a clothing swap

Cobb Alumni Care

Annabelle Jacobs '17 is an exemplary Montessori global citizen and embodies the spirit of Cobb's grace and courtesy. She currently serves as Chapter Manager for the College Mentors for Kids at the **University of Virginia** and was one of just five recipients of the **Paul E. Schmidt Mentor of the Year Award**. Congratulations, Annabelle, you inspire us!



Cara Thompson '23 graduated from **Henry James Middle School**, receiving recognition and numerous awards for academic achievement, athletics, leadership, and integrity, including the **Mrs. Peter's Award** for leading with respect, responsibility, and integrity, even during challenging moments. We can't wait to see what else you do, Cara!



Alumni News



Congratulations!

We send the warmest of congratulations to **Michael Castellani '07** and new fiancé Hannah McKeen who were engaged on an idyllic July day at the ruins of Skipness Castle overlooking the Isle of Arran in Scotland.



Above: Caroline Burnett at her Cobb Graduation and College Graduation

Caroline Burnett '15 graduated Summa Cum Laude from **Salve Regina University** with a major in Criminal Justice and Criminology and minors in Spanish, French, and Women's Studies. She is currently working at the Rhode Island Attorney General's Office as an Extraditions Paralegal and plans to attend law school next fall.



Owen Reed '19 graduated from the Watkinson School, earning a Global Studies dual diploma and was honored with the Watkinson History Award and the Theodore Sizer Award for intellectual curiosity, collaboration, and responsibility. This

summer, Owen plans to travel with friends, play ultimate frisbee, and work a summer job before heading to **Tufts University**.

Adam Joseph '15 graduated from **Bates College** with a B.A. in Sociology and a minor in Religious Studies. While at Bates, Adam served as president of the Manic Optimists, an a cappella group, led the Bates Jewish Student Union, and worked as both a Student Coordinator and tour guide for the Office of Admissions. Adam is joining Cravath, Swaine & Moore, LLP as a litigation paralegal.



Above: Adam Joseph with Mrs. Gallagher at his 6th grade graduation and in 2025

“Though I am now ten years removed from my time at Cobb, I still carry many of the lessons that were instilled in me at such a young age. I am so grateful to Cobb and its values. It gave me an educational foundation and love for learning that I know will last a lifetime.” - Adam Joseph

Pictured here, **Dominic Shackleton, Alum** of Middlebury College recently represented the British Alpine World Championship squad skiing in Saalbach, Austria.



Lizzy Strapp '15 graduated from **Dartmouth College**, earning a double major in English and Classics. While at Dartmouth, Lizzy was the captain of the women's soccer team and served as the sisterhood chair for her sorority, Kappa Delta Epsilon. Lizzy is off to Boston to assume a new role as an underwriting and claims associate with Berkley Environmental.

Tate Jacobs, Alum recently enjoyed an incredible Winterim adventure in Germany, touring the car factories and museums, visiting the iconic Nürburgring Racetrack, and Germany's most famous castles and cities. Tate capped off the trip with some amazing skiing in Zermatt, Switzerland alongside his dad and brother. This fall, Tate will enroll in the **College of Charleston**, where he's considering a major in Commercial Real Estate Finance.

Jamison Burnett '19 graduated from the Watkinson School. Jamison attended Cobb from Primary through 6th grade. This summer he's heading out west on an adventure with friends before starting college at the **University of Vermont** this fall.



Top Left: Lizzy Strapp
Top Right: Tate Jacobs
Above: Jamison Burnett at high school graduation.
Right: Jamison at his Cobb 6th grade graduation with Ms Maureen

Calling All Alumni! We want to hear from Cobb alums and former students! If you have news to share please email marcie.braden@cobbschool.com or message @CobbSchoolMontessori on Instagram.



Top Left: Philippa Hesse '23, Amelia Walsh '23, Naomi Ericson '23, Cara Thompson '23, Lena Shaffer Alum, and Jack Shaffer '21 attend The Miracle Tree Opera.

Top Middle: Millstream students Jasper Stray London '23, Adit Reddy '24, and Olive McArdle '24 introduced our Lower Elementary, Primary and YCC students to baby goats and answered questions about their care.

Top Right: Aiden Henderson '24 shows off his latest pencil drawing.

Left: Andrew Thompson Alum, Nikhil Krishnamurthy Alum, Jasper Stray-London '23, Cara Thompson '23, and Julian O'Brien '23 join the Country Fair Alumni Kickball Game

Alumni Spotlight

We salute you, Lt. Shaw

Gracyn Shaw '14 graduated Magna Cum Laude from **Bucknell University** where she was a Distinguished Military Graduate and the 2025 recipient of the prestigious George C. Marshall Award for leadership. Gracyn shared with us Cobb's role in where she is today.

"Looking back, my **Montessori education is one of the biggest reasons I am the person I am today.** Having the freedom and encouragement to pursue my interests beyond the "traditional" classroom sparked my love of reading, history, mythology, and my curiosity about geography and foreign affairs. Those passions shaped my academic path, leading me to major in International Relations and Classical Studies, with a minor in Russian. Today, I'm beginning my career in the Army as an active-duty Second Lieutenant and Cyber Warfare Officer, where I continue to build on those interests.

Beyond academics, Cobb instilled in me empathy, patience, and resilience from a very young age. These values have guided me through life's challenges, and I credit Cobb School with playing a major role in my personal and professional success.

Left: Gracyn in Ms Carol's class.

Below: Gracyn receives her first salute as an officer in the US Army.



I'm most proud of learning how to fail and keep going. At Cobb, I had plenty of moments where I didn't get it right the first time: geography maps, cursive, memorizing states and capitals, math facts, you name it. But I learned early on that failing isn't the end of the world. What matters is what you do next.

Now that I'm older, the "failures" are bigger; not getting a job I wanted, missing out on a leadership position, or doing poorly on a test, but the lesson is the same. **I get back up and try again. That resilience will help me no matter what life throws my way."**



“Life is like a flowing river...the rocks that block our way are challenges and we are the water. Throughout our lives we must move around the rocks or change our path.”

- ELLIANA ZATYRKA, 6TH YEAR GRADUATE SPEECH