



Mandala School Newsletter

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Bonjour, mes amis!

Our free French classes began on Monday with a generous crowd of mixed ages. As we struggled to remember beginning phrases, we also laughed about it. As one person said, “It give us permission to be a kid again.”

There is an advanced conversation class at 5 P.M. for those who are relatively fluent. At 6:30 an intermediate class is available for those who have studied some French. Donations are welcome to help with expenses and the monthly cooking soirée.



Connection to History

Devin, Juan, Kate, and Nolan traveled with Ms. Leah and Dr. John to the annual ceremony marking President Millard Fillmore’s birthday. Mandala School has a close connection to him. Not only was he a lawyer in East Aurora and built his home here but he was a regular visitor to the Mandala building

when it was the home of Dr. Jabez Allen’s family. Millard Fillmore’s daughter, Mary Abigail (“Abbie”), was visiting her grandfather who lived next door when she contracted cholera and died in one day, supposedly in this house where she was cared for by Dr. Allen.



Play is Learning

Kyle has built a ramp and trying to get a car to fly off it and land on another ramp. “It probably would help if the nose could direct where it needs to go.” He kept experimenting trying to land the car.

Ama has made a castle to protect the queen and other animals. “They have to hide, too, from the monsters.” She used lots of blocks to made it really strong.

When children play, they are in charge. Their minds are working, creating, and responding. They are posing problems, solving them, and moving on to new problems. A big part of these activities is the near-constant chatter as they narrate their stories.

This type of learning builds confidence, joy, and intellect along with good friendships.



Student of the Week: Jackson

Jackson is a 10-year-old Mandalian who is eager to learn and loves to teach people. Recently, he made a water pollution model. He taught us the causes of water pollution and how hard it is to “clean” water after it has been polluted.

Jackson enjoys learning new languages. He is currently learning French and Spanish. Jackson says, “I like to learn languages because you get to learn the culture and there is always something fun and new!”. He went to France and wishes to go to Spain, and the rest of the world! While in France, Jackson went to the Eiffel Tower and learned that at night it sparkles! Paris is his favorite place.

This year Jackson has found a new love for writing stories. His favorite character from a story he wrote is Sophie from *Secrets of the Moon*. Jackson explains, “Sophie is a special character, you always want to know more about her. She reflects me but she is also the opposite of me at the same time. We have some things in common but somehow she is different. She is curious and smart!”. His favorite character from a story he did not write is Jonas from *The Giver*. He thinks Jonas is relatable and is always learning about the truth and the past.

Jackson loves spending time with other Mandalians. His favorite memory from this year was the Mandala sleepover. Right now he is most excited to learn about WWII and to continue his interactive Spanish practice. In 2020, Jackson hopes to be more productive, learn more, and find time to write more stories.

By Kate and Devin





Sachin is known for his careful hands in building intricate, symmetrical designs. The one shown here is his first standing build!



Elaina's Visit

I wanted to go to school with my cousin Charlotte. I live in California.

In California my school is really bigger and not like a house. In my school there are more teachers and it's wider. Sometimes I like to do art and pretty much homework.

I like the kids here at Mandala. They play really good.

It was winter break at my school so I went on a trip. I took two airplanes to get here. After this I'm going on a boat.

-Elaina

Kitchen Re-do

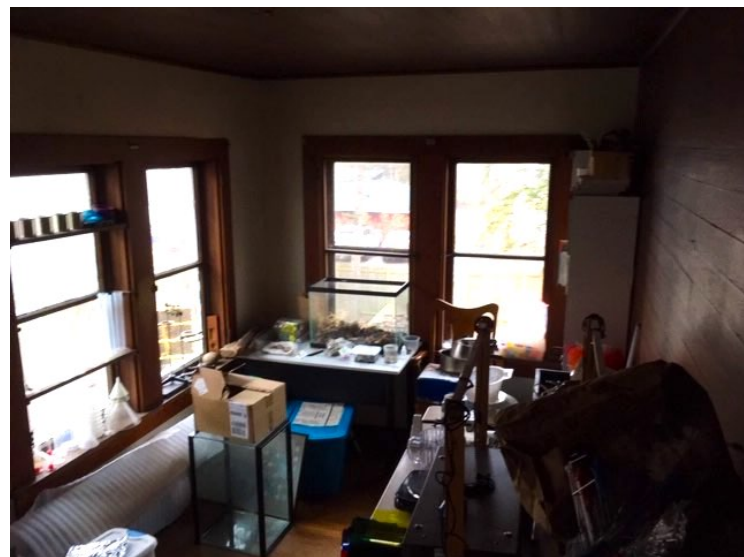
The older students are working on scale drawings and layout for changing the kitchen and back rooms. We are going to incorporate math, designing, and our artsy hands.

When someone walks in they will see that it's not just an old house. Kids will see that they can do things to make our school better and have more things to do.

We will have more space for baking and cooking. We will also have more space for eating. We will remodel the broom room for storage.

One thing we want is a bigger refrigerator.

by Kate & Jackson



Above is the existing kitchen and to the right is the science room, which will become part of the new kitchen. Top right: Juan works on blueprints after measuring the spaces.