



ANNUAL REPORT 2023 2024

WE ARE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER



EDUCATION FOR PEACE

East Bay Montessori

Kindergarten Bridge - 8th Grade
7075 Cutting Boulevard
El Cerrito, CA 94530
510.236.8802

EIN:
9768962-49





A LETTER FROM THE HEAD

Dear East Bay Montessori community,

We've lived our first year under the East Bay Montessori banner, and a banner year it was. Students and families rallied under the new name, sporting shirts and stickers and bags. Faculty were excited by the maturity and expanse the name gave—and yes, the letters 'MFS' do still occasionally tumble from our lips! The name change has been received well in the wider community; we saw this in internet traffic and in high admissions inquiries and event attendance.

Our numbers for the year tell a mixed story with an overall positive trend. We began the school year from a strong position, opening with four more students on our roster and lower attrition than in 22-23. We saw an increase in our overall applications though a slight decrease in percent enrolled. What we understand from other small private schools is that to stay more or less balanced in the realm of admissions and retention, all numbers considered, is to be doing well in today's climate. For that, we have our wonderful Admissions and Outreach Director, Rachel Kleinman, and our incredible faculty to thank.

It was also our first year without the Scenic Avenue campus in Berkeley, whose skilled faculty and tender students we missed. While the campus closure was the only responsible decision that the Board of Directors could make given impending necessary updates and the consequent financial ramifications, we know it deeply affected many members of our community.

Looking forward, it is our work to ensure that EBM is around for generations to come. In concert with our Board of Directors, we are making significant strategic efforts to optimize spending without reducing the quality of our programs, to improve our facilities, and to retain and even bolster our strong standing in the East Bay independent school landscape. With the support of you, our extended community, we gladly work toward that goal.

Alissa Stoltz, M.Ed

Head of School

Alum parent, 2013 and 2015

SEC I & II, Administrator Credentials from
American Montessori Society

2023 - 2024 By the Numbers

Opening day enrollment:
7.8% increase over 22-23

Attrition rate:
4.5% decrease over 22-23

Retention rate:
9% increase over 22-23

**Percent of graduates who
went to their #1 choice of
high school:**
100%

Statistics refer to El Cerrito Campus

A LETTER FROM THE TREASURER

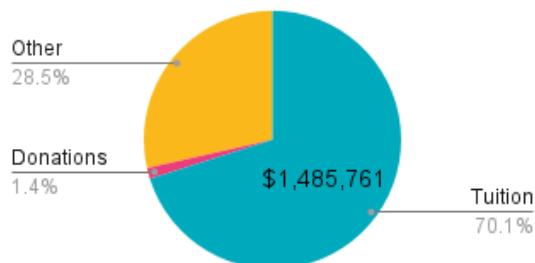
EBM registered a modest decrease in revenues during the fiscal year 2023-2024, due to the closure of the Berkeley Campus at the end of the previous year. This naturally led to lower costs as well, with the net result that the school registered a narrower net income loss as compared to the prior year. With the asset sale complete, the school's finances remain well positioned for future growth and reinvestment.

Tuition revenues were down sharply year on year, due to the reduction in enrollment associated with the closure of the Berkeley campus. Increases in tuition also slowed, and financial aid remained at an elevated level. Finally, the elimination of summer care reduced ancillary income. On the other hand, the school recorded a large one-time payment from the forgiveness of its EIDL loan.



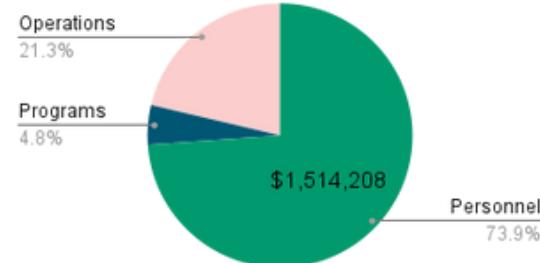
Revenues

Total	\$2,119,889
Tuition	\$1,485,761
Donations	\$29,159
Other	\$604,968



Expenses

Total	\$2,049,928
Personnel	\$1,514,208
Programs	\$99,097
Operations	\$436,622



Expenses fell as well. This was in large part due to lower employee head count, again associated with the campus closure. Reduced classrooms also led to lower direct materials spending. The elimination of summer care also reduced a cost center. As a result, the school was able to generate modestly positive cash flow overall. After non-cash depreciation charges, reported net income was slightly negative.

The sale of the Berkeley campus during the year has bolstered EBM's defensive financial position. We own our own real estate, maintain prudent leverage, and hold a cash balance. We are actively looking to reinvest in our existing assets – site and programs – with an eye to the long-term support of the board's number one priority: quality of program.

1

Changing Our Name

Building on our long-established legacy as Montessori Family School, our new name reflects both the age levels and the area we serve, and lifts the school up among its private K-8 peers. With the added visibility and our founder's blessing, we've already seen benefits in terms of inquiries and older student and alum enthusiasm about the name.



3

Refreshing Our Campus

With a fresh coat of paint in updated colors, new banners and flags, and a brand new logo from a local sign-maker, we updated the building at 7075 Cutting Blvd in time for the first day of school in August 2023.

BECOMING EAST BAY MONTESSORI

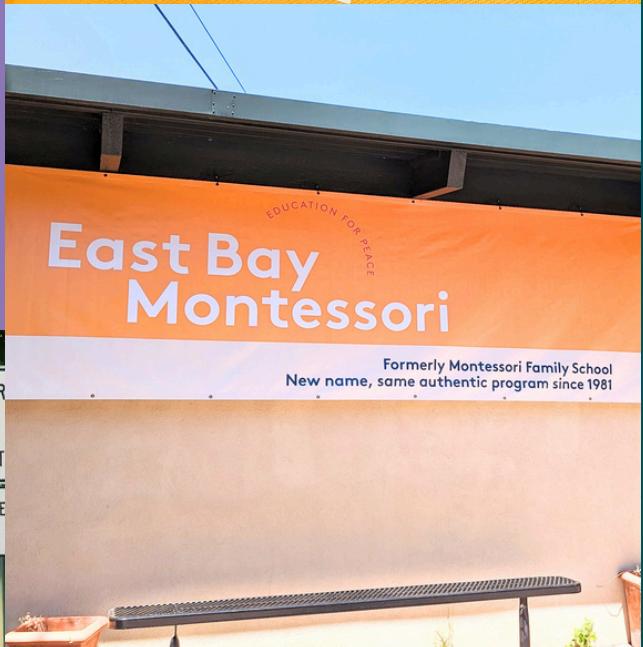
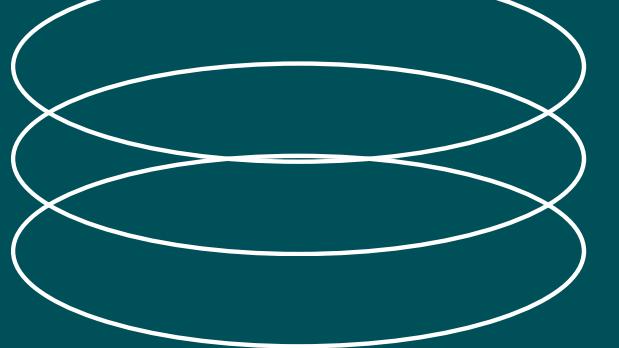
A YEAR OF TRANSITION

2

Changing Our Look

With the help of amazing parent Tracy Taylor, a designer by profession, we adopted a new logo and styleguide to update our existing look. We carried over the fox and, of course, Education for Peace, and incorporated bay blues, poppy oranges, and leafy greens.





EBM FACULTY AT LARGE: RETREAT TO WILLOW CAMP IN STINSON BEACH



A school is as strong as its faculty, and to encourage bonds and cohesion, East Bay Montessori's first trip was as a staff to Stinson Beach in August 2023.

Much in the style of a Middle School retreat, groups of faculty members were responsible for preparing meals for the entire crew. Individuals and small cohorts also took themselves on hikes and walks in the beautiful Mount Tamalpais watershed.

Beyond the delight of spending time together in a lovely place, the camaraderie built on trips such as these make the collective and demanding work of teaching more possible: When in need of collegial advice, the trust to ask for and implement a suggestion already exists. When a coworker is ill or struggling, we lean in to support them with even greater connection.

By living out a version of our elder students' experience, we worked to create a similarly rich and socially responsible environment. EBM plans to host a form of faculty retreat every two years.



QUALITY OF **PROGRAM:** **YEAR 2**

East Bay Montessori picked up where Montessori Family School left off: creating a comprehensive map of the arc of a student's learning at our school, from the youngest point in KB all the way through 8th grade.

Standing Out: A Coherent Approach to Education

- We know from speaking with other independent school educators that a coherent pedagogy from K through 8th is rare.
- Our faculty's shared approach to teaching is a huge reason that our students demonstrate a high level of trust in school faculty, resourcefulness, care for others, care for their environment, care for learning, agency, and autonomy.
- With the size and scope of this undertaking, we spent year two refining the layout of that progression, and detailing with great care the interlacing points of the classroom levels.

Honing the Shared Vision

In addition to the scaffolding of academics, teachers honed in on their vision of what an actualized Montessori learner would be:

- Independent and confident enough to search out what they want to know,
- Capable of taking the perspective of another, and
- Knowledgable that strong and purposeful work gives both meaning and enjoyment to learning.

A Labor of Love

The work of Quality of Program, which takes place after dismissal and at times on weekends, is a labor of devotion and great care on behalf of the faculty and the Head of School. We are tremendously fortunate to have a faculty whose knowledge and dedication make this work possible.



MODEL MONTESSORI UNITED NATIONS

IN OUR THIRD YEAR

It was an honor to send our nine accomplished delegates to New York in February to represent EBM at the Montessori Model United Nations conference. Whether working in their committees, hanging out after hours, or working on the very floor of the UN building, EBM students brought their strong work and integrity to the experience. Was it hard to sleep? No, because they had worked hard all day! Did the entire crowd eat gelato at 9 pm one night in the freezing cold? Yes—it is a tradition to do so already!





Refreshed KB space & volunteers



Autumn Dance



The Value of the Montessori Cycle

ENRICHMENT: **PARENTS' ASSOCIATION, PAINTING, PARTICIPATION!**

01.

OUR AMAZING PA

2023-2024 Leadership Team:

Veronica Castro, Jennifer Zeitler, Chloë Delafield, Sher Rosales, Emily Moran, Emily Vena

The East Bay Montessori Parents' Association has paved the way for our goal of increased parent engagement and participation since the days of the deep pandemic. In 2023-2024, the leadership team organized families picnics to bookend the school year, Second Saturday events such as game afternoons and movie nights, the Autumn Dance, teacher appreciation gifts and meals, playdates on holidays and professional development days. They spearheaded beautification projects and provided dinner after certain all-school events. Through their example, the EBM family community saw a tremendous model of participation that lead to a near doubling of the leadership/admin PA group in fall of 2024.

02.

REVAMPING KB'S WINDOW WALL

Last spring, two wonderful KB parents spearheaded a beautification project for the wall outside the KB classroom's windows. A crew of parents cleaned and painted the space, then hung and populated planters for the KB classroom to enjoy every day. We are very thankful!

03.

PARTICIPATION

In the 2023-2024 school year, EBM embarked on a reimagined quest to bring parents on campus for all manner of events: whether the PA's wonderful social gatherings, service projects, enrichment talks, observations, or classroom presentations. The result was a more engaged community and parents forming bonds with parents across classroom levels.



THE YEAR IN PICTURES





**Anne
Marie
Richard
Chair**



My journey with East Bay Montessori began when my 12-year-old child needed a supportive, nurturing environment to thrive both socially and academically. The Middle School program here had a profound impact on his confidence and growth, benefiting not just him but our entire family. I am continually inspired by the dedicated teachers and staff who make this school the special place it is. Serving on the Board of Directors is my way of giving back to a community that has given us so much.

**Gabriel
Marshank
Treasurer**



It is an honor to serve on the board of EBM. I have been involved with the school since it opened over 40 years ago, and I see the same importance to my children today as I did when I was a student. The teachers, administrators, students, and parents at EBM are more than just participants – they are a community, and it is a privilege to serve them.

THE 2024- 2025 EBM BOARD OF DIRECTORS

LEADERSHIP IN ACTION

**Alexandra
Accornero
Secretary**

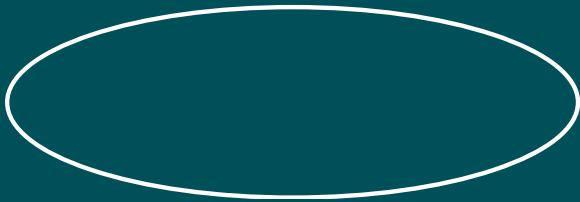


I joined the EBM board to be involved in my children's school, contribute my time and skills, learn, and grow. As well, I believe collective community engagement is one of the best ways to create a great school for our children, and I am grateful for this opportunity to engage in this way.

**Erik
Housh
Member
at Large**



I am grateful to be joining the EBM Board at this exciting time. I have spent much of my adult years working with youth of all age groups and find it incredibly rewarding. I have been super impressed with the team at EBM and look forward to a productive and successful year!



Asha Weber Member at Large



East Bay Montessori has profoundly impacted my family through its dedication to creating learning environments that nurture both children and the adults who support them. I joined the Board of Directors because its mission aligns with my personal values of fostering education that empowers children and families, working toward healthy, loving communities built through collaboration — and I want to ensure that access to this educational community is sustained, as it is truly a gift.

The Board of Directors carries the big-picture guiding light for East Bay Montessori. The foundation of that work is strategic planning, oversight of and collaboration with the Head of School, and financial management.

After the previous winter's tough decision to close our Berkeley Campus and the approval of the school's name change, the Board's focus has fallen more squarely on longevity and tangible improvements to our facilities. This work can be seen in the new playground structure installed in the summer of 2024 and the sale of the Scenic Avenue property.

Alissa Stoltz Head of School + Ex-Officio Member



I came to East Bay Montessori in 2009 to open the Middle School. In the intervening 15 years, there has been a lot of evolution of this wonderful little school and the greater community. Through it all, I remain to be proud of all we do! Maria Montessori's mission of Peace Education continues even with the challenges experienced around the world. We are a school for change, adapting as we go to the increasingly complex world. We live at a moment when the only thing we can comfortably say about the future is that it will be different from today. We know that a Montessori education is an ideal preparation for what the future will bring. Alongside the teachers and the Board, I am inspired to do my part for the families we serve.

Dylan McCrystal Site Director + Ex-Officio Member



Coming to work at East Bay Montessori in 2015 was the beginning of one of the most personally fulfilling and rewarding periods of my life. Working in a school that so treasures and respects the abilities of children is transformative, and I've been grateful to work in multiple classrooms over the years, and now, as well, in the office as Site Director. I'm proud to support our teachers and our students, and serving on the Board is one more way to thank the school for all the good it's done for my family and so many others.

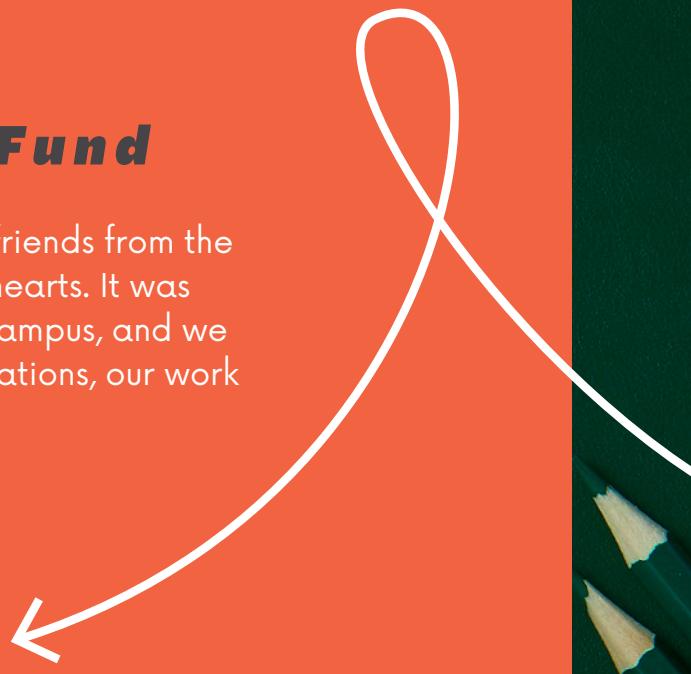
THANK YOU.

The 2023-2024 Annual Fund

To all our families, alums, staff, board members, and friends from the 2023-2024 year: Thank you, from the bottom of our hearts. It was our first fundraising effort in a long time as just one campus, and we felt our community's strong support. Without your donations, our work would not be possible.

Together, we raised

\$29,160



The Wechsler/Gurganus Family - EBM founder

The Accornero Family
The Anthony-Flynn Family
The Axthelm/Howard Family
The Barrow/Church Family
The Bouffard Family
The Boyer Family
The Delafield Family
The Dement Family
The Dhuey Clarke Family
Charitable Fund
The Eyman/Kleinman Family
The Flanagan Family
The Gonzalez-Flores Family
The Green Family
The Hamel Family
The Hartmann Family
The Hazen Family
The Kaye/Bock Family
The Kearns/Pachepsky Family
The Keough-Carr Family
The Kimbrew Family
The Kirbus Family
The Kleinman/Westendorf Family
The Manhoff Family
The Marshank Family
The Martinez Aldaco Family
The Martin-Gunn Family
The Maw/Rogin Family

The McClain Family
The McCrystal Family
The Michero Family
The Moore/Moah Family
The Moran/Pease Family
The Network for Good
The Nguyen/Kim Family
The Osman/Ahmed Family
The Pang/Bell Family
The Pathak/Gautam Family
The Petrofsky Family
The Posner Pyatt Family
The Ramirez Perez Family
The Renwick/Sakata Family
The Richard/Royal Family
The Rosales Family
The Shababo Family
The Smith/Snowden Family
The Snyder/Speth Family
The Sol Kuntzsch Family
The Stoltz/Bertucco Family
The Taylor Family
The Ung/Dun Family
The Van Breugel Family
The Vena Family
The Wallace Family
The Weber Family
The Wheeler Family
The Zeitler Family



WAYS TO GIVE



Donate via PayPal

payments@eastbaymontessori.org



Matching gifts



Volunteer your expertise



Serve in the Parents Association



Serve on the Board of Directors



THANK YOU.



East Bay Montessori is the same great Montessori Family School with a shiny new name. We thank you sincerely for another great year.



To every parent and caregiver,
To our shining alums,
To our generous Parents' Association leaders,
To all our thoughtful volunteers,
To the community businesses who supported us,
To our inimitable teachers,
To our tireless administrative team,
To our steadfast Board of Directors,



Thank you for making this extraordinary education possible for our extraordinary students. We couldn't do it without you!





"The greatest gifts we can give our children are the roots of responsibility and the wings of independence."

- Maria Montessori

