

Kennebec Montessori School: Annual Report 2021-2022



Kennebec Montessori School
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www.kennebecmontessori.org

Letter from the Board of Directors

Dear KMS Families and Friends,

The famous poet and playwright, Oscar Wilde, is credited with saying “expect the unexpected”. Mr. Wilde must have been able to see into the future and felt compelled to share this cautionary phrase for everyone educating students over the past few years! Mr. Wilde- we hear you loud and clear!

In 2019, Erika Verrier stepped out of the Board and into the Head of School role and provided support to the school during a challenging time- including the pandemic. We appreciate all that Erika shared with KMS during such an unprecedented time. In 2021, as Erika transitioned out of the Head of School position, the Board needed to figure out an interim leadership structure.

We were lucky to hire Joe Schmalzel, a jack of all trades with a resume that includes a wide variety of jobs including: college professor, Editor-in-Chief at a publishing company, a Major in the US Army, and a Hungarian Bakery Owner. Believe it or not, this diversity of experience made him a perfect fit for our school. The Executive Committee banded together to work with Joe in helping support the KMS Community. Through Covid spikes, staffing shortages, and lots of baking (or maybe that was just me), we managed to make it through the whole school year without having to close even one classroom. Have no fear- all was not grim, and there is actually a lot to celebrate!

- Abbie Giallombardo and Erin Scally co-chaired an amazing Fall Auction and we raised just over \$18,600, including contributions from business sponsorships, ticket sales, a raffle, a live auction, a silent auction, and an online auction.
- To bolster our Scholarship Fund, our school completed a Read-A-Thon in which students read 12,954 minutes and raised \$6300! An amazing feat!
- In February, Julie Shores organized donations for the Interfaith Food Pantry and families donated over 300 items!
- The Upper EI classroom channeled their inner journalists and started the KMZ, a monthly magazine.
- Our Annual Fund brought in just over \$11,300!
- The Bike Coalition of Maine came to visit the elementary students to teach them about bike safety.
- KMS graduated **THREE** 6th grade students!!
- The Diversity Committee wrote a Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Statement that was passed by the Board. This statement is part of our website to share with the larger community the intentional ways our school honors diversity.
- Our fabulous Summer Camp Program, coordinated by Julie Shores, offered 6 fun-filled weeks of programming, including: outdoor classroom, art, Japanese, theater (taught by a

former KMS student), music, bikes, and yoga, as well as our Wacky Wednesday fun. We had 42 children attend over the 6 weeks that camp was offered.

- The Board completed a successful Head of School search and hired Dr. Jeff Beedy to lead our school.
- Our teachers participated remotely in the annual Montessori Event, helping them to further solidify their expertise in all things Montessori, as well as gaining insights into the global Montessori community.

Oscar Wilde had it right to warn us to expect the unexpected; however, we also saw that despite the twists and turns of the past few years, there has been much we can count on. Our teachers show up ready to guide our students through a true Montessori experience. Our students arrive ready to learn and flourish together. KMS parents are dedicated to supporting our school and helping it thrive. And just for perspective, these factors have all been my experience since joining the school back in 2013. Through changes in leadership, a global pandemic, new Board Members, and staffing changes, the foundation of what makes KMS a special place remains the same. We start with a foundation of a philosophy that prioritizes peace education, embraces diversity, and encourages respect for all, paired with a dedicated staff to create an environment where our students can *grow and thrive*.

Sincerely,
 Emily Bessey
 KMS Board Chair

Board of directors Beginning July 2021	Board of Directors Beginning July 2022
Board chair: Joshua Kershner*/ Emily Bessey*	Board chair: Emily Bessey*
Vice-Chair: Margi Browne*	Vice-Chair: Tiffany Creegan Miller*
Secretary: Amarinda Keys	Secretary: Amarinda Keys
Treasurer: Angela King*	Treasurer: Angela King*
Samara Gunter*	Hilary Wieczorek*
Peter Cheesman*	Peter Cheesman*
Tiffany Creegan Miller*	Margi Browne*
Katie Clark	Rene Smiley
Dan Eccher	Dan Eccher
Mary-Lou Ogden	Rene Smiley

*KMS Parent Member

Facts & Figures

Staff

For the 2021-22 academic year, KMS employed 18 staff members, including 12 full-time teaching staff, 4 part-time staff and 2 administrative staff.

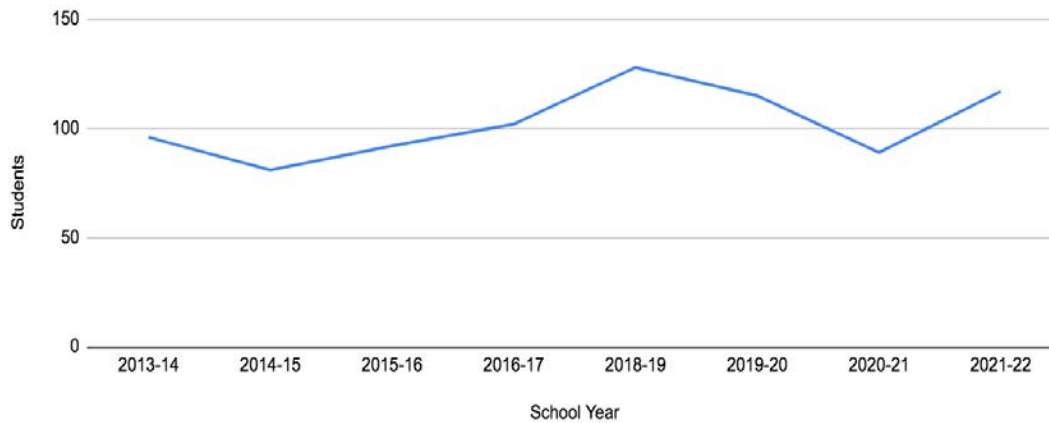
Staff	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Full-Time Teaching Staff	14	13	8	12
Part-Time Teaching/Support Staff	5	5	6	4
Administrative Staff	2.5	2.5	2	2
Total Staff	21.5	20.5	16	18

Enrollment

For the 2021-2022 school year, KMS had a total enrollment of 117 students.

	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Total Enrollment	125	115	89	117
Primary	71	72	50	64
Lower Elementary	36	30	26	38
Upper Elementary	18	13	13	15

Enrollment Over Time



Families Served

In times of full enrollment, KMS maintains a very stable number of individual families that it serves. Many families end up with more than one child in our program, with some families with up to three children coming from one family! During registration, those families that are intending to enroll a younger sibling into our program receive priority placement.

	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Total Enrollment	125	115	89	117
Number of families served	95	96	65	88
Students per family	1.32	1.2	1.37	1.37



Financials

Revenue

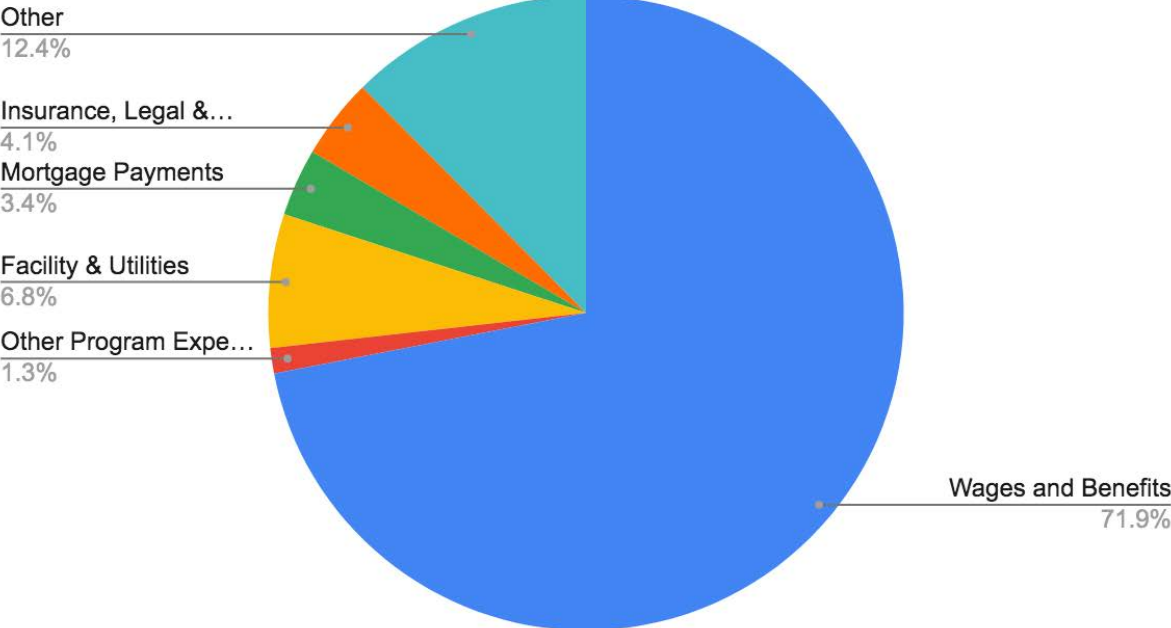
The KMS fiscal year ran from September 1, 2021 - August 31, 2022. Total revenue for 2021-2022 was \$ 1,201,926.

ARPA Grant \$10,300/month from October 2021-September 2022. The ARPA grant strengthened our school and its ability to support our staff. ARPA funds were used as a supplemental bonus to those staff working with childcare, and also provided a contract signing bonus for the initial signing of the 22-23 employment agreement as well as for completion of the year.

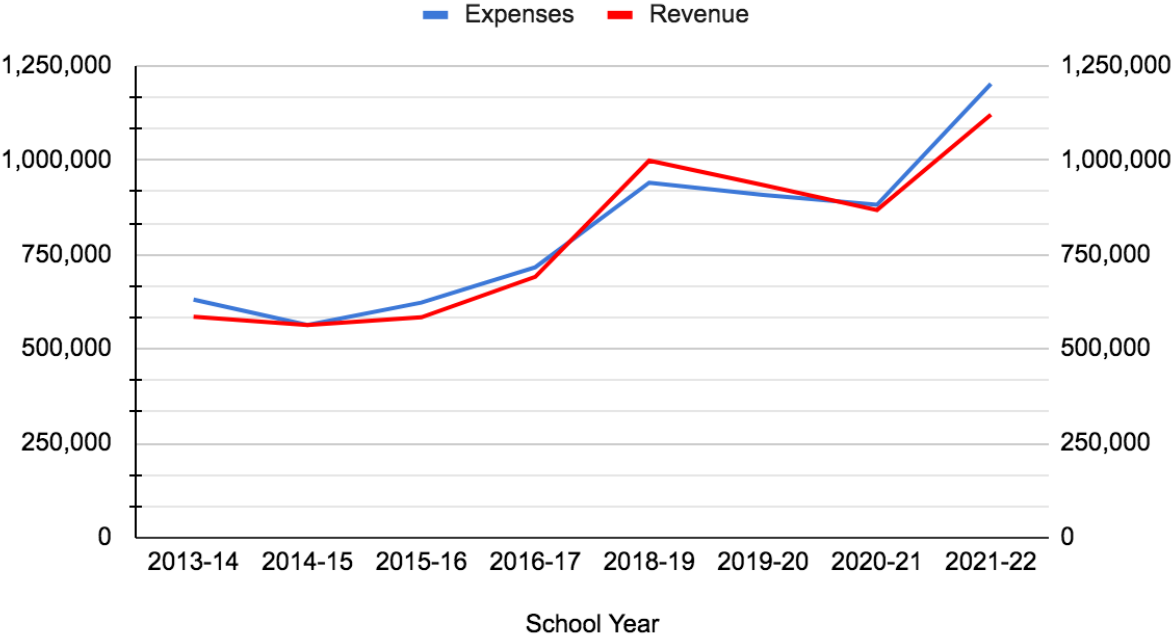
Expenses

KMS Budget	2021-22	
Revenue	BUDGET	ACTUAL
Tuition and Program Revenue	\$904,673	\$990,360
Fundraising, Donations & Grants, other	\$60,000	\$211,566
Total	\$964,673	\$1,201,926
Expenses	BUDGET	ACTUAL
Wages and Benefits	\$786,013	\$805,987
Other Program Expenses	\$20,150	\$14,497
Facility & Utilities	\$74,225	\$76,236
Mortgage Payments	\$71,232	\$38,558
Insurance, Legal & Financial Services	\$42,700	\$46,025
Other	\$106,728	\$139,094
Total	\$1,101,048	\$1,120,397
Deficit/Surplus	-\$136,375	\$81,529

2021-2022 Expenses by Category



Revenue and Expenses Over Time



In spite of restrictions due to COVID-19, and its reduction of our student population, KMS put a very strong showing towards meeting their goals in fundraising. Fundraising results reached \$ **35,237**.

Fundraising, Donations, and Grants	
Auction & Fundraising	\$35,237
Donations	\$17,742
ARPA Grant	\$113,300
Maine Community Foundation Rose Fund	\$20,000
Total	\$186,279

The many fundraising approaches included:

Annual Auction

This year, raffle items were displayed in a special trailer out in the parking lot for the week preceding the auction. The auction was kicked off with a launch party, during which items were raffled off virtually. Participants could bid on beverage baskets and choose party packages for two from Front and Main restaurant. Although we were not together in person, we enjoyed the chance to try out a new way of enjoying the auction process. We rely on this event to help finance our special programs and reduce the tuition costs to the community. The Annual Auction raised **\$18,606**.

Annual Fund

KMS conducted a mail campaign for its Annual Fund. Over four hundred letters were mailed out requesting support for our programs here at the school. The Annual Fund raised **\$11,370**.

Additionally, KMS also participated in **For Small Hands, Thanksgiving Centerpieces from the Robin's Nest, CLYNK** recycling, and our annual **Dutch Mills Bulb Sale**. These and other events contributed **\$5,259** to our successful year.



Read-a-Thon celebrating 12,950 minutes of reading!

Volunteers

Our school depends in the most critical manner on the goodwill and effort of the adults who help run the show. The Board of Directors is an intensely demanding steering group working without remuneration, manned by volunteers who may or may not have direct connection with the school. An average day will find them arriving at classrooms, to read aloud the children's favorite stories, to help the teachers, or to assist in substituting if one of our staff is unable to come to work. Their hours at the school are not clocked in but are valued by us as one of our greatest strengths.

Parents of students are expected to perform community time as part of the requirement for enrollment. What may at first sounds like a duty quickly turns into an opportunity to meet and talk with like-minded parents, all seeking the same thing: the Montessori atmosphere. Whether it is fall clean-up, spring gardening, annual auction set-up, or volunteering in the classroom, this involvement is what makes our community strong and provides such a wonderful atmosphere for the children. This year KMS volunteers dedicated hundreds of hours of their time to our school. For this we are thankful!



Spring clean-up day participants



Graduating Sixth Graders Plant Orchard Trees

The 2021-22 school year was the culmination of 9 years at KMS for three students. As a graduation celebration, the students were joined by their parents and teachers to plant a pear tree in the school orchard. Pears are symbols of grace, prosperity, longevity, inner peace, comfort, and affection, among other things and across many cultures. We chose different pear trees (a Luscious, a Seckel, and a red Bartlett) one for each of the three unique 6th years and we look forward to watching them grow!



Graduates out planting their trees

Summer Camps

Julie Shores led the Summer Camp team for the re-introduction of our camp program. KMS offered six weeks of programs filled with a wide range of activities for the participants. The goals of the summer program were three-fold: to provide a safe and exciting environment for the children; to offer employment opportunities for teachers during the summer months; to increase our revenue. We were successful on all three counts.

The program was manned by existing teacher staff as well as a visiting college student Hanna Lavenson, who used to be a student here at our Montessori school. Art moments were taught by Jenn, and Maureen taught her favorite subject: Music! Forty children filled the 134 slots that we had available during those six weeks, with some attending all six camps.

With a total revenue of \$29,268, the program finished with a **\$9,353** balance to its credit.



Cynthia receives flowers after the concert



