



Brickton

MONTESSORI

ANNUAL REPORT

July 1, 2024- June 30, 2025

Brickton MONTESSORI

WELCOME LETTER

Dear Members of the Brickton Montessori School Community,

This past year has been one of extraordinary achievement and heartfelt gratitude. Thanks to the steadfast commitment and generosity of our community, we not only continue to excel in our approach to whole child development and recommit to our school's mission and vision, but have also embarked on one of our most ambitious endeavors — Envisioning Brickton's Future.

Already in the capital campaign, the collective efforts of parents, alumni, faculty, board of directors, and friends have raised \$463,678. These funds allowed us to purchase three acres of land and a two story office building, currently being retrofitted to house our new campus. Additionally, the commitment of the Illinois Facilities Fund to support our construction with a loan of \$6,000,000 has given us the ability to turn our vision into a reality for our students and community at large.

Beyond bricks and mortar, this campaign strengthens the bonds that unite our community. Each gift, both large and small, reflected a shared belief in the value of a Brickton Montessori School education and in the promise of future generations of graduates.

As we move forward, we do so with deep appreciation and a renewed sense of purpose. The generosity, dedication, and enthusiasm shown through this transition to future growth reminds us that our greatest strength lies in our community - people like you who believe in our mission and in the bright potential of our students.

From all of us at Brickton Montessori, thank you for walking beside us on this journey. The future is full of promise, and we can't wait to see what we will accomplish together next.

With deep gratitude,



Margaret Titley
2024-25 Board President



Erica Lane
Head of School

MISSION

Brickton Montessori creates an authentic learning experience that honors the whole child's identity, fosters belonging, ignites curiosity, and develops confident, adaptable individuals with academic mastery, real-world skills, and a strong sense of responsibility.

VISION

Brickton Montessori builds on a legacy of educational excellence to foster supportive, hands-on learning environments that prioritize personal growth, perspective-taking, and self-advocacy—cultivating compassionate, successful alumni who make meaningful contributions to the world.





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CURIOSITY IN ACTION

(IN ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL #1)

OPENING THE DOOR TO POSSIBILITY

At Brickton Montessori, possibility isn't just a concept—it's a practice. It lives in the questions our students ask, the steps our teachers take towards professional growth, and the partnerships that connect our classrooms to the wider world.

The 2024-25 school year marked a turning point in our story—a moment to pause and refine who we are and where we're headed. As we prepared for our permanent home and launched a refreshed logo and brand identity, we also revisited our mission and vision, reaffirming the “why” at the heart of our work.

Brickton exists to nurture “active learning for curious minds”—a purpose that feels more relevant than ever as we expand our reach and deepen our global perspective. The process of reflection and renewal strengthened our sense of community and clarified our shared goals: to prepare students not only for academic success, but for meaningful lives of empathy, stewardship, and wonder. As we look ahead, the possibilities continue to grow—and we're already on our way.

TRAINING AND SHARED KNOWLEDGE

Brickton teachers don't just inspire within our own walls—they bring their wisdom to the broader Montessori community. This year, several faculty members presented at the Association of Illinois Montessori Schools (AIMS) conference, sharing innovative practices and classroom insights with peers across the state. Their work reflects Brickton's spirit of collaboration, professional excellence, and the belief that knowledge grows when it's shared.

Professional growth is central to who we are as educators. Of Brickton's 34 employees, the majority took part in formal training or certification this year, with nearly one-quarter achieving mastery-level credentials in Montessori education and philosophy. Faculty members deepened their practice through coursework and workshops at the Seton Montessori Institute, the Midwest Montessori Teacher Training Center, and other specialized programs. These experiences infuse our classrooms with fresh ideas and a shared commitment to lifelong learning—for students and educators alike.

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Experiential learning is at the heart of the Montessori Method—and this year, our students embraced it fully. From environmental science explorations at Nature's Classroom to team-building and independence at Camp Edwards, Brickton students brought their learning to life. Across every level, shared experiences strengthened connections and deepened curiosity. Children's House and Elementary students enjoyed a collaborative field trip to Wagner Farm, where lessons in sustainability, agriculture, and community came vividly to life. Later in the year, both groups joined together again for a visit to the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

Our Elementary classrooms' partnership with Cradles to Crayons connected children with community service in tangible ways, and the Middle School's out-of-state trip to Thibodaux, Louisiana, offered a rich, immersive experience in cultural exchange. Whether exploring the natural world, engaging in service, or expanding cultural horizons, Brickton students took bold steps into the world—and brought meaningful insights back to their classrooms.





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OUR NEXT CHAPTER

(IN ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL #2)



This year, we announced plans for a major move: a new home for Brickton in Des Plaines. Set to open in Fall 2026, the space will offer expanded classrooms, green outdoor areas, and new opportunities for community connection. Head of School Erica Lane announced the purchase officially at our Back to School Block Party in September 2024. Thanks to many generous donors, we acquired three acres of land and an office building, with construction beginning in Summer 2025.

Our community continues to be the heart of this journey. Families, alumni, faculty, and friends are contributing their voices and talents to help shape what comes next—from planning volunteer days at the Des Plaines site to sharing stories of what Brickton means to them. As we build our future home, we are also strengthening the relationships that define who we are: a school where curiosity thrives, possibilities grow, and every step forward reflects the collective spirit of our community.



This monumental first step is essential in creating what Brickton has long envisioned for our families. We're thrilled to take the next steps to bring our dream to life! Erica's announcement marked a moment of shared excitement—and a clear signal that Brickton is growing with purpose. We look forward to shaping the next era of Montessori education, together.



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NURTURING COMMUNITY

(IN ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL #3)

STAYING CONNECTED: OUR ALUMNI NETWORK

This year, our alumni reminded us that while graduation may mark the end of a chapter, the connection to Brickton lasts a lifetime. We were thrilled to welcome a strong turnout for our Winter Skating Event, where former students and families reconnected on and off the ice. Brickton alumni continue to give back in meaningful ways—as current parents, engaged community members, and even members of our Board of Directors.

We also launched a renewed effort to strengthen our alumni network, publishing three issues of the Alumni Newsletter featuring spotlights, updates, and school news. And thanks to the creative vision of filmmaker Adrian Wright, we produced a heartfelt Alumni Video capturing the lasting impact of a Brickton education.

From early days in the Nido room to adult achievements around the world, our alumni are living proof of what's possible when curiosity is nurtured from the start.



PORTRAIT OF A GRADUATE

A zest for knowledge and lifelong curiosity inform Maria Montessori's designs for educating the whole child. Along with our mission statement, Brickton's vision for our graduates centers around three core areas:

- **Scholarship:** Scholarship refers to skills utilized in academics such as how one learns, thinks, creates, imagines, reasons, and organizes information paired with the ability to reflect on one's own learning.
- **Agency:** Agency refers to emotional intelligence skills that support the individual in building independence and accountability for their learning and behaviors.
- **Community:** Community refers to the qualities and skills necessary to be an engaged, integral, and valued member of any group ranging from home to school to the world at large.

Recent Brickton graduates have attended:

Amundsen High School
Beacon Academy
Chicago High School for the Arts
Chicago Waldorf School
CICS Northtown Academy
Cove School
DeVry Advantage Academy
Disney II Magnet High School
Fenwick High School

Jones College Prep
Lane Tech High School
Loyola Academy
Maine East High School
Maine South High School
Notre Dame High School
Northridge Preparatory School
Oak Park River Forest High School
Ogden International High School

Regina Dominican College Prep High School
Resurrection College Prep High School
Rickover Naval Academy
St. Ignatius College Preparatory School
St. Patrick's High School
Taft High School
Trinity High School
Wolcott School
Whitney M. Young High School



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BUILDING AWARENESS

(IN ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL #4)

FOUR DECADES OF POSSIBILITY

In 1986, a group of dedicated parents and Montessori educators opened Brickton in the basement of a local church with just four children and two staff members. By August that same year, the school moved into a local public elementary school, expanding to five classrooms and serving children ages two through twelve.

In 2026, Brickton Montessori will mark its 40th anniversary—a milestone born from humble beginnings. Over the last four decades, our community has grown—but our commitment to joyful, student-led learning has endured. As we approach this anniversary year, we're launching a refreshed visual identity that aligns with our new logo and highlights our legacy as a joyful alternative in Montessori education. This anniversary isn't just a celebration—it's a reaffirmation of our mission to cultivate independence and curiosity in every learner.



A NEW LOOK FOR BRICKTON

This spring, Brickton administrators began to workshop a bold new logo—one that reflects the energy, curiosity, and warmth of our community. We were honored to collaborate with designer Robyn Berto, an alumni parent and current grandparent, whose team at Konlon & Associates brought a deeply personal understanding of our values to the creative process.

Together, we explored how to visually capture what makes Brickton unique: the joy of discovery, the strength of our roots, and the optimism of what lies ahead. The design process included conversations about color, shape, and story—each element chosen with intention to honor our Montessori foundation while embracing a modern, forward-looking spirit.

The result? A visual identity that feels both fresh and familiar. The new logo serves as a bridge between our past and future, symbolizing growth, connection, and possibility. As we grow into our next chapter, our new look reflects the same Brickton heart—with even more possibility on the horizon.



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FINANCIAL STABILITY

(IN ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL #5)

Thanks to all who gave to our Capital Campaign, Annual Fund, Big Leap Benefit, and Feed the Frogs.
Brickton Montessori's goal is 100% community participation through gifts of all sizes.

2024-25 CAPITAL CAMPAIGN, ANNUAL FUND, BIG LEAP ANNUAL BENEFIT, AND BUSINESS CONTRIBUTORS

2024-25 CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

\$50,000 +

Phillip and Rebecca Leslie (PA/D)

\$25,000 - 49,999

Graziano Berto and Robyn Wall Berto (PA)
Andrew Holmboe and Tina Berto (P)

\$10,000 - 24,999

Mike and Christin Anzalotti (FA/PA)
Phil and Suzanne Ergastolo (PA)
Youssif & Ginger Kamber (PA)
Cheryl LaCost (PA/FC)
Warren Lapham & Jennifer Thomas (P/D)
Oriana & Larsen Oshana (P/A/D)

\$5,000 - 9,999

GR Team LLC
Bramley Holdings LLC
Rothkopf Family Charitable Foundation (FD)
Lynn Weddle and Bud Green (PA)

\$1,000 - 4,999

Mike Aguilar and Margaret Titley (D/P)
David Anthony and Mariann Lemke (PA)
Ruari and Casey Cahill (P)
Dave Duffy and LaDonna Taylor (PA)
Brian and Carla Hofland (PA/FC)
Petr Hustak and Yi-Chen Huang (P)
Debbie Kelley (FC/PA)
Jamie Kendall (FA/P)
Jeff and Delanie Kingsley (P)
Brian Leong (D/A)
Vineesh and Sharanya Pillai (P)
Katrina Pipasts (PA)
John Rams and Cherie Tymkiw (P)
Deena Reyes (PA)
Anand and Line Srinivasan (PA)
Richard and Aurea Thomas (PA)
Robert Titley and Sharon Riley (FD)

\$1 - 999

Brigid Albers (FD)
Dan Altbach (FD)
Rahul and Aarti Arora (P/FA)
Steve and Ann Berger (P)
Zoe Bouris (FA)
Jeff Braun and Sue Holt (PA)
Stephen and Natalia Brokaw (P)
Julie Daly (PA)
Sharon Damore (FD)
Dave and Cynthia Degand (PA)
Christian and Erika Ehrat (P)

\$1 - 999 (CONTINUED)

The Flanagan Family (P/FA)
Kevin and Laurie Gates (P/D)
Esteban and Joselyn Garibaldi (P)
Srdan Buncic and Marina Gasic (P)
Matt Heinrich and Tiffany Burkhardt (P)
Angelina Ivanova (P)
Kathleen Kasser (FC)
Keith Family (FD)
George and Kelsey Klupchak (P)
Jeff and Delanie Kingsley (P)
Jonathan and Suzelle Knisley (P)
Velina Kochtoudov (P)
Erica Lane (PA/FA)
Larissa Levitans (FD)
Amy Lyons (FD)
Kristy Matero (FD)
Matero-Titley Family (FD)
David and Tara Maye (P)
Peter and Susan Mazzeri (PA/FA)
Tim and Kelly McDermott (PA/FA)
Patrick and Kathleen McDonald (FD)
Pragya Mishra (FD)
D'Arcy Mies (FA)
Selga Muiznieks (A)
Sean and Megan O'Hehir (P/FA)
Lucyna Ostrowski (FD)
The O'Sullivan Family (P)
Jane Paha (FA)
Joanna Quargnali-Linsley (D/PA)
Sheila Riley and Ned Kraft (FD)
Ludwicka Rodriguez (P/FA)
Nami Sofia Ortiz-Rodriguez (FD)
Daniel Schmidt and Mary Riley (FD)
Sergey and Olga Shafran (P)
Rick and Liz Skrodzki (FA)
Jim and Grace Stephens (P)
John and Heather Wilcek (PA/FA)
Junirose Zaide (FD)

2025 BIG LEAP SPONSORS

Carlucci Rosemont and Brian Leong

2025 BUSINESS SUPPORTERS

A+ Steakhouse
Almanac Supply Co.
Ballroom Dance Chicago
Benihana
Beer on the Wall
Bookworms Garden
Chicago Architecture Tour
Chicago Shakespeare Theater

2025 BUSINESS SUPPORTERS (CONTINUED)

Chipotle	Movement Gyms
City BBQ	Murray Bros. Caddyshack
Community Tavern	Music Box Theater
Cooper's Hawk	Navy Pier
Crust Brewery	Nonna Silvia's
Darden Group	Nonno Pino's
Dick's Sporting Goods	Oak Lawn Children's Museum
Eden Esthetics	Oberweis
Edie Boutique	Off the Wall
Egg Harbor	Orange Theory
Emagine Entertainment LG	Panera
Fadeaway Medical Esthetics	Pappas
Firewater	Pasta D'Arte
Fiya	Pennyville
Fogo De Chao	Pier 290
Gorjana	Pizzaboy
Gordon Food Service	Portillo's
Harbor Shores Lake Geneva	PRP Wines
Harp & Fiddle	Raging Waves
Harry Caray's	Rare Dirndl
iHay, Caramba!	Renata's Organic Skincare
HomeGoods	Revolution Brewing
Illinois State Athletics	Sanders Portrait
Joe Donut	Sky High Sports
KPM Studio	Spaderma
Lake Geneva Axe Throwing	Starbucks
Lake Geneva Safari	Sugar Factory
Laschet	Superdawg
Let's Roam	Target
Levels Nail Bar	TeaLula
Lou Malnati's	The Chopping Block
Luv Wines	Trader Joe's
Mad Head Spa	Triple Scoop'd Ice Cream
Mars Resort	Ulta
McDonald's	Wines for Humanity
Michael's	Wondercide
	Zanies Comedy Club

FEED THE FROGS DAY

Brickton's annual Feed the Frogs Day combined laughter, creativity, and giving for a cause. With funds raised through student-run games and activities, our community came together to support classroom projects and celebrate the spirit of giving that defines Brickton.

**A=Alumni, D=Board of Directors, FA= Faculty/Staff,
FC = Former Colleague, FD=Friend, GP=Grandparent,
P=Current Parent, PA=Alumni Parent**



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BY THE NUMBERS

36

Book Buddy pairings formed between Kindergarten, Elementary, and Middle School students.



30 +

staff members participated in Montessori or continuing education training this year.



\$2150

raised across eight community Meal of the Month events in 2024-25.



15

themed spirit days celebrated, including the Block Party and Trunk Or Treating.



\$260

collected in support of Brickton through our annual Feed the Frogs celebration.



1000 +

pounds of food, clothing, and supplies donated through community service projects.



14

talent showcases, including In-School Celebrations, Fine Arts Night, Dance Studio, and Cross Country held in 2024-25.



2500

miles journeyed by Middle School internships, service learning, and overnight travel experiences.



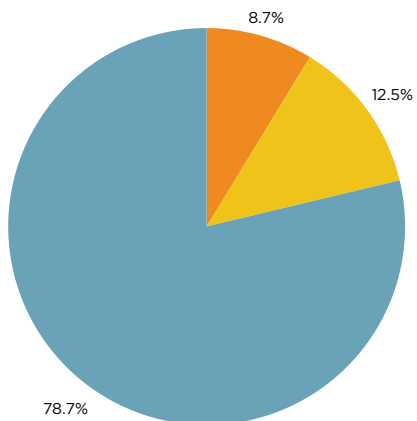
75

community volunteers who contributed time and talent to events and classroom projects.



OPERATING INCOME

Tuition and Fees	\$1,937,664 (78.7%)
Charitable Contributions	\$423,048 (12.5%)
Summer Programming	\$293,770 (8.7%)
Total	\$2,654,482



OPERATING EXPENSES

Salaries and Benefits	\$1,626,627 (76.1%)
Facility/Maintenance	\$503,156 (16.2%)
Student Activities	\$76,385 (2.5%)
Other *	\$162,281 (5.2%)
Total	\$2,368,449

