hey want to change the rules again. I can only imagine the frustration teachers and administrators are feeling. They’ve been berated for failing our children and failing our nation. They’re told that students don’t know what they need to know. To attack the problem, state and federal governments have imposed standards: this is what all children must know; we’ll test them to ensure they know it, and we’ll judge schools based on the children’s test scores. Twelve years after passage of “No child left behind,” a NY Daily News headline declared: “48% of schools flunk ‘No Child’ standards.”

“Schools flunk:” that’s harsh; public shaming and humiliation are the order of the day. Teachers, principals and superintendents feel the pressure. There’s been one cheating scandal after another: not students with crib sheets, mind you, but
administrators and classroom teachers who help students answer test questions or change responses on test papers after they’re turned in—all in the name of demonstrating “adequate yearly progress (AYP).”

At the same time, this focus on factual knowledge is dismissed as “so 19th Century,” by those asking “What will students need to succeed in the real world of the 21st century?” Here’s a list from Pat Bassett, the leading thinker of the private school world:

1. character (self-discipline, empathy, integrity, resilience, and courage);
2. creativity and entrepreneurial spirit;
3. real-world problem-solving (filtering, analysis, and synthesis);
4. public speaking/communications;
5. teaming; and
6. leadership.

You’ll notice that this is a list of skills and personal characteristics, not an inventory of factual knowledge and conventional academics; and none of them could be evaluated by a multiple choice standardized test.

Now into the fray comes the call for a creativity index for schools. “At a time when U.S. political and business leaders are raising concerns about the need to better nurture creativity and innovative thinking among young people, several states are exploring the development of an index that would gauge the extent to which schools provide opportunities to foster those qualities.”

‘Creativity’ in this context includes creativity in the arts, but is much more than that. It directly relates to items in Bassett’s list above: creativity and entrepreneurial spirit, and real-world problem-solving. It reminds me of Peter Sims’ question in his Wall Street Journal article, “The Montessori Mafia.” “Is there something about the Montessori approach that nurtures creativity and inventiveness that we can all learn from?”

Now here’s the crux of the matter: the real reason that public school teachers and administrators will be driven wild by imposing a Creativity Index on top of the culture of high-stakes testing, THE TWO STANDARDS ARE DIAMETRICALLY OPPOSED TO EACH OTHER. How so?

In the test-driven, information-based, “this is what you need to know” culture of conventional schools, answers are either right or wrong, black or white. Being wrong is…well, wrong. In fact, if you are wrong on a standardized test, your teacher might even be tempted to change the answer for you.

Creativity begins from a willingness to be experimental and exploratory. That can be in the arts, the sciences, or in business. You may have learned “creative brain storming” at work, a process that begins with this statement: “generate as many ideas as possible, and don’t evaluate/criticize any of them. (We’ll get to that later.)” Many people find this difficult. Some people are reluctant to put any ideas on the table, even ones that are not so wild. Why? They don’t want to be embarrassed; they don’t want to be wrong. Facilitators will say, “There’s no right or wrong. At this stage, there are no bad ideas.” However, this runs counter to our school experience where every answer is either right or wrong—and you don’t want to be wrong.

Creativity begins from a willingness to be wrong, to make mistakes on the way to a creative solution – and to accept the truth that not all ideas are good ones, not all ideas lead to great inventions or to great works of art, and that’s OK. The only way to get to a great invention or a great work of art is to be courageous, and willing to be wrong. If you aren’t making enough mistakes, try harder.

And in conventional schools of 21st century America, that just isn’t acceptable.

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First published 02.06.2012

Primary students assist renowned Houston artist Patrick Renner with their class Gala project.
The Montessori journey is a wonderful enlightening experience that shows parents exactly what their children experience in the Montessori classroom. What a delight. I wish I could go back to school and re-learn some of the more complicated science and math concepts this way. I loved how in each class the material on the shelf was waiting for me to dig into. In Deidre’s Young Children’s Community class I soaked up her lesson on washing tables. I truly believe I learned something new. I loved working with Jeff on the matching fabrics work in Tamara Townsend’s Primary class. I loved learning the base 3 and requested Errol Pinto to challenge me with an addition problem! In Middle School I was paired with another parent and took pride in doing basic algebra with the cubes. This mini journey has already enriched my life and I am excited my son is getting to experience Montessori education everyday.
F.I.S.H. Meeting  
February 20 at 9:00 a.m.  
in the Common Room  
Refining the Senses at School and Home:  
The Montessori Approach  
Presenters: Deidre Brooks; Emily Hansen; Miriam Winton

Coffee with the Elementary Director  
Wednesday, February 11  
9:00 a.m. in the Common Room  
Join us as Elementary Director Jeff Schneider demonstrates the use of Montessori classroom materials in lessons on Geometry.

Post Oak Cub Scout Pack 34  
Pinewood Derby Race Winners:  
[First Name] – 1st place  
[Second Name] – 3rd place  
[Third Name] – 4th place.  
Over 80 cars were entered in the race!

The  
2014–2015 POST OAK FUND  
TOGETHER WE CAN  
CONGRATULATIONS TO THE CLASSES THAT HAVE REACHED 100% PARENT PARTICIPATION:  
DANIELLE DALSEY  
ORLY KLUK  
DEBBIE NICKERSON  
ERROL PINTO  
MIDDLE SCHOOL

This annual effort continues until we reach full participation. Parent participation is currently at 83%, and we have raised $244,000 of our $300,000 goal.

Pledges can be made by emailing christinacantu@postoakschool.org, or go to our website to donate with a credit card. Pledges are due by May 31.

Questions? Please call Christina Cantu at 281-822-8024

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO HAS PARTICIPATED!
DID YOU KNOW? THE AUCTION IS ONLINE!

In order to access the auction online, pre-register by visiting the auction portal through our homepage link.

AUCTION VIEWING BEGINS
Sunday, February 22

AUCTION BIDDING BEGINS
Sunday, March 1

Go Bearkats!

Let’s get this part of the story out of the way first: score—Yellowstone Academy 30, Post Oak 10.

That is a small part of the story; this was Post Oak’s first ever all girls athletic event! This was a basketball game played with enthusiasm and energy that was a blessing to be as part of. These groups of 6th and 7th grade girls were committed to have a team for themselves and they have done it. For me and Coach Trevino it was fun to see them put in the hard work and dedication it takes to start something new and to carry it out.

Last week held a second game for our girls and it was a close and exciting game with Briar Meadow, a local charter school. It came down to the last few seconds before Briar Meadow made the last shot to win the game 16-14. Our girls are continuing to get better and we are all looking forward to it.

Team members are:

~Coach Tucker
Students at the Post Oak High School recently wrapped up their J-Term, a three-week mini-semester in January during which students focus intensively on a single course which they elect from a program of courses they have designed in collaboration with the faculty. This year there were four diverse J-Term offerings.

In “Positive Psychology and Mindset”, students explored the most dynamic field in Psychology today, the study of what makes people happy and how happiness is created from one’s own attitude. Students read a number of ground-breaking books, had a series of live lectures from world-renowned researchers, including Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, and conducted and presented their own individual research projects.

Students in “Winter Orientation” travelled to Telluride, Colorado, where they received instruction in the disciplines of telemark, cross-country, and backcountry skiing, snowshoeing and ice skating, completed a three-day avalanche training course, and tracked and forecast local weather systems. Their experience culminated with a guided overnight backcountry excursion to the scenic and historic Alta Lakes Observatory.

In “Filmmaking”, students learned about the art of filmmaking by engaging in screenplay-writing, storyboarding, auditioning, and acting; learning how to use light, sound, and image effectively; editing, revising, and finally putting on their own film festival at the Rice Cinema. They created four delightfully diverse films, including a public service announcement on bullying, a psychological thriller, a slasher flick, and a romantic teen comedy.
Students who elected to attend the "Falmouth Field School" travelled to Falmouth, Jamaica, where they engaged in the documentation and restoration of historical architecture, archaeological excavation, and sociological research. Highlights included experiencing the living conditions in Falmouth, unearth ing an extremely rare intact Taino bowl, and creating a fascinating and entertaining documentary on the differing perspectives of tourists and natives.

Overall, it was a J-Term to remember, and students and faculty are already looking forward to A-Term at the end of March!

Q. What’s your favorite thing about POHS?
A. The freedom to explore what we’re interested in.

Q. What’s your favorite food?
A. Indian food

Q. What are your interests or hobbies?
A. Horseback riding, genealogy, paleontology, and photography.

Q. What’s been your favorite J-term or A-term project so far?
A. My favorite J-term was History and Preservation in Jamaica. My favorite A-term was the paleontology dig north of Dallas.

Q. What’s your favorite TV show?
A. Outlander

Q. What’s been your favorite J-term or A-term project so far?
A. Duke, College of William and Mary, and the University of Virginia

Q. Title of the last book you’ve read?
A. Love in the Time of Cholera

Q. Out of all of the POHS trips you’ve taken, what’s been your favorite?
A. I enjoyed the trip to the Shumla Archeological Research Center.

Q. Name someone who has had a strong impact in your life up until this point.
A. My dad
Setting Appropriate Boundaries

by Nikayla Thomas, Post Oak Parent

On January 15, parent educator, Deborah Fry, Ph.D. spoke to parents of primary-aged children about setting appropriate boundaries for their children and how consistently held boundaries help children develop respect for themselves, their caregivers and their environments.

Deborah’s first question to parents was to guess what interpersonal skills are most closely linked to adult success? From a list that included such skills as self-confidence, adaptability, and commitment, she surprised many of us, with the answer: “caring and compassion.” Studies show that skills associated with caring and compassion are most closely linked to an adult’s success in meeting the demands in their primary adult roles (as citizen, partner, parent, friend and in their vocation). Deborah discussed how a child learns and how boundaries and respect are closely linked.

First, Deborah reminded parents that it is developmentally appropriate for children to push boundaries. Children gain comfort and security knowing that boundaries are there. Parents can view this boundary-pushing behavior as communication from a child trying to get one of the following needs met:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical Needs</th>
<th>Emotional Needs</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sleep</td>
<td>Belonging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nutrition</td>
<td>Power</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hydration</td>
<td>Value</td>
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<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Identity</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Love</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Dr. Fry described the way a child’s brain works. A child who is afraid, because a caregiver is yelling or hostile, is unable to learn. Discipling children does not mean punishing them, but rather teaching them correct behavior. Successful teaching can only occur when the child feels safe. Deborah touched on many strategies for parents, such as:

- teaching respect through choices as opposed to bulldozing
- asking children problem solving questions
- using a calm down spot instead of a “time out” (we do better when we feel better)
- Using the language of conscious discipline (e.g. “You wanted the toy, so you hit your brother. Do not hit your brother, that hurts. When you want the toy, say, ‘it is my turn’. You try it.”)
- teach conflict resolution
- use natural and logical consequences and make agreements with your child about what the rules of the house are and what the consequences will be of breaking those rules.

Other communication tools Deborah discussed included:

- Asking for behaviors we want
- using transitions (“we must leave in five minutes, what is the last toy will you play with?”)
- Firm and kind tone of voice
- Ask for the behavior we expect ahead of time and rehearse for success
- Teach manners at home

Deborah Frye teaches the “Redirecting Children’s Behavior” class at Post Oak school and is also a parent coach. More information about Deborah can be found at http://www.deborah-fry.com

Don’t forget to join us for the F.I.S.H. meeting on Friday, February 20, where we will hear a presentation on Refining the Senses at School and at Home. All parents are welcome regardless of the age of your children!
MS/HS Yearbook Committee

by [Student Name] MS student

This is my first year in yearbook and I love it. Last year I used to watch people go for yearbook and I would say to myself wistfully, “I want to do that next year, I just wish I had time.” So, this year I made sure that I made time. I was right, it is as fun as I thought it would be. When we get to yearbook, we get our computers out, we log onto the online server, and start working. We laugh and have a good time, while working. We format pages, put photos on the pages, we put text on names and quotes, and we create a beautiful work of art.

The POST OAK high school in the Museum District

ADMISSION OPEN HOUSE
Tuesday, February 11 at 7:00 p.m.
1102 Autrey Street, Houston, TX 77006

CONGRATULATIONS TO POST OAK DADS’ CLUB POKER NIGHT WINNER MIKE SONABEND!

We invite you to join us for our upcoming INFORMATION GATHERING SESSION THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26 6:30 P.M.

We will be sharing details about the next AMI Primary Training Course which starts June 29, 2015.

4600 BISSONNET ST. BELLAIRE, TX 77401 281.822.8028 INFO@HMIUSA.ORG
SCENES
from
The Post Oak School

1. Lower Elementary classmates gather to share their compliments to the group.
2. Checking on assignments is a snap with the Nexus tablets in Middle School.
3. Polishing silver can be a source of satisfaction and contentment for younger Primary children.
4. YCC children patiently await access to the tricycles on the playground.
5. Upper Elementary students locate left and right ventricles as they diagram the heart.
6. Lower Elementary students engage in a math lesson with Mrs. Taj Mahmood.
7. An older Primary student helps a transitioning YCC student with her buttons.
8. Justice Brett Busby demonstrates the beauty of the violin to his son’s Primary class.
9. Lower Elementary students have a blast while practicing Spanish with a color card game.
10. Primary students excitedly gather materials to match their number in the memory game of numbers.
### CALENDAR

**FEBRUARY 8-14**

- **Wed 2/11**
  - Coffee w/ the Elementary Director
  - High School Admission Open House
  - 9:00 a.m.

- **Thu 2/12**
  - Primary Parent/Child Night
    - Group 1: 5:00-6:00 p.m.
    - Group 2: 6:15-7:15 p.m.

- **Fri 2/13**
  - Teacher In-service
  - Classes not in session: only students with expanded year contracts attend
  - Re-registration deadline for returning students

- **Fri-Mon 2/13-16**
  - AMI-USA Refresher Course in Atlanta

**FEBRUARY 15-21**

- **Mon 2/16**
  - President’s Day
  - SCHOOL CLOSED

- **Thu 2/19**
  - Upper Elementary & Middle School Science Fair
  - 7:00-8:00 p.m.
  - Chinese Lunar New Year: Year of the Sheep

- **Fri 2/20**
  - F.I.S.H. (Families Integrating Montessori & Home) Meeting
  - 9:00 a.m.

### NOTICE BOARD

#### Primary Parent/Child Night

**Thursday, February 12**

- **Group 1**: 5:00–6:00 p.m.
- **Group 2**: 6:15–7:15 p.m.

#### Bearkats Basketball

**Last Game!**

**February 10 @ 4:15 vs. St. Stephens @ Tellepsen YMCA**

#### Conference Registration

The online parent/teacher conference scheduling is now open. Conference days are March 27 (YCC is in session this date), April 10, and April 17. To sign up for a conference go to [www.postoakschool.org](http://www.postoakschool.org) ▶ For Parents ▶ Schedule/View a Parent-Teacher Conference and have your login information ready. If you are having problems, please contact technology director Mirna Andrade-Salgado, at technology@postoakschool.org or 281-822-8063.

### ABOUT THE POST

*The Post* appears every other Friday of the regular school year.

You can receive a printed copy from your oldest child, or a PDF version online.

Submit letters, articles, or photos in electronic form by 5:00 p.m. on the Tuesday before publication to Communications Coordinator Elisa Schmidt (elisaschmidt@postoakschool.org). If publication is on a Thursday due to school closure on Friday, then the deadline is 5:00 p.m. on the preceding Monday.

THE POST OAK SCHOOL was founded in 1963 and accredited by both the Association Montessori Internationale (AMI) and the Independent Schools Association of the Southwest (ISAS).

4600 Bissonnet, Bellaire, Texas 77401 • Telephone: 713-661-6688 • Fax: 713-661-4959 • [www.postoakschool.org](http://www.postoakschool.org)
STARSTRUCK
A NIGHT AT THE OSCARS

SILENT AUCTION PREVIEW

Featuring:
LOCAL FLAVOR

STUDENT Experience
SPORTS Packages

and much more!
UNDERBELLY
Learn the story of Houston Food with a certificate for a Chef’s Tasting at Underbelly for six.

UCHI
Relish innovative preparations of sushi & fusion plates at Uchi with a gift certificate for $200.

PAPPAS BROS.
Receive an exclusive behind-the-scenes tour and dinner for two at Pappas Bros. Steakhouse.

CANOPY
Treat yourself and three of your friends with this $200 gift certificate for Canopy.

IBIZA
Gather three of your friends for a fabulous dinner for four at Ibiza with a menu that is reflective of Houston’s rich culinary scene & cosmopolitan spirit.

SONOMA WINE BAR
Have an evening to remember as resident Sommelier, Angie Chang, guides you and seven guests through a stunning lineup of fine wine and cheese pairings.

HAY MERCHANT
Enjoy dinner and a broad spectrum of craft beers with this $300 gift certificate from The Hay Merchant.

ROCKETS
Calling all Clutch fans! Auction items will include signed jerseys, a signed basketball, and game tickets!

GOLF CLUB OF HOUSTON
Round of golf for 4 on tournament course at Golf Club of Houston.

SOCcer SESSIONS
Learn soccer from a pro! Former Dynamo Soccer Player, Mike Chabala, is ready to host three private soccer training sessions for you and up to three of your friends. (for children or adults)

SEAHAWKS PRESEASON ACTION
This fantastic football package is filled with special pregame access, lower bowl seats at a 2015 Seahawks preseason game, and dinner for two at a premier Seattle restaurant.

GOLF’S ULTIMATE FITTING EXPERIENCE
This custom fitting process utilizes motion capture technology to build a club designed to match your individual swing characteristics, allowing you to hit the ball longer and straighter with better control. This two hour session includes a complete club recommendation and a chance to try out the same clubs on a grass driving range. You will also receive a CD with all your captured swings.
IT’S UP TO YOU, NEW YORK!

Stay for a week in a Central Park West apartment and explore the bustling Big Apple like a true New Yorker.

- One bedroom apartment located on W63rd street of Central Park West
- Just steps away from Central Park and Lincoln Center
- Within walking distance to Fifth Avenue shops and Theater District.
- Includes dinner at the critically acclaimed Italian restaurant, Antica Pesa, and two tickets to The Metropolitan Museum of Art.


STUDENT EXPERIENCE

DAY IN THE LIFE OF AN ARCHITECT

Accompany Reagan Miller, of Miller Dahlstrand DeJean on a tour of homes that are finished and under construction. Student will learn about the basics of residential construction and learn tricks for measuring and documenting spaces. Receive your very own sketchbook and copy of 101 Things I Learned in Architecture School. (Available for Middle School and High School students only)
## Mark your calendar!

### IMPORTANT DATES

**BID ON THESE SILENT AUCTION ITEMS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 13</td>
<td>American Girl Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 1</td>
<td>Pizza &amp; Games Party with High School teacher Dr. James Quillin</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 4</td>
<td>Children’s Bollywood Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 10</td>
<td>An Evening with Apollo Chamber Players at the Wortham</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 17</td>
<td>Compagnie Käfig in Correria Agwa at the Wortham</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 18</td>
<td>80’s Party at the home of KeJenny &amp; Andre Marshall</td>
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<td>April 21</td>
<td>Tortillas and Talking with Spanish teacher Mrs. Bridges</td>
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<td>April 24</td>
<td>Pajama Movie Night at Post Oak</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 24</td>
<td>Dinner and a Movie Night with Mrs. Nickerson and Ms. DeLeon</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 24 - 26</td>
<td>Family Camp Weekend at Camp Lonehollow</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 26</td>
<td>Kerry Inman Reception</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 1</td>
<td>Spanish Cooking Class with Ms. DeLeon and Mrs. Samano</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 2</td>
<td>Vegan Dinner at the home of Kelly &amp; Garth Davis</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 3</td>
<td>Four Course Dining Experience for High School Students with Jamie Lee and Janet Ott</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 7</td>
<td>Wine &amp; Light Bites - Mom’s Night Out</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 8</td>
<td>Pajama Movie Night at Post Oak</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 9</td>
<td>Miriam and Monica’s Tea Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 5 - 7</td>
<td>Weekend In Galveston I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 5 - 7</td>
<td>Weekend In Galveston II</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ONLINE AUCTION VIEWING OPENS** **FEBRUARY 22 AT NOON**

**ONLINE AUCTION BIDDING OPENS** **MARCH 1 AT NOON**

**THROUGH THE LINK ON THE POST OAK HOMEPAGE.**