

November 18, 2017

Dear Friend of SMCNS,

“I wonder how she died?”

My son, Page, came across a dead sparrow on an evening walk around our house. He walked right up to the bird, studied it from all sides and bent down to get a closer look. Page used to have squeamish tendencies: running away from scary images on a television, crying at the sight of blood, but death is different ...now.

Six months earlier, Page was fortunate to be a student of Myrna's 2016-17 kindergarten class, where the life cycle was a central theme. Page and his classmates were used to seeing Myrna pull out new creatures from her freezer and talk about how their “life energy” was gone. This persistent exercise provided Page with curiosity about life, and the strength to understand death on a personal level.

This year's tragedy of Teacher Joan Southwell passing away affected many children and families. Joan shared her love of animals (bunnies, chickens, ducks, snakes, fish, silk worms) with her students. But now the children of SMCNS were forced to understand that her life energy was gone too.

Myrna's practical education on life and death prepared Page for understanding Teacher Joan's passing. He was surprised and sad, but not scared. My spouse and I were grateful. Myrna's foundational lesson helped Page, a very sensitive child, cope with real life tragedy.

SMCNS is undoubtedly a special place. It has nurtured children, parents and families for over seventy years, through loving teachers, such as Joan and Myrna. As you consider your end-of-year giving, please remember SMCNS and the foundational learning it has taught you or your family. Tuition only goes so far. Our humble school depends on your contributions to cover the gap that keeps our school affordable for economically diverse families that enrich our community.

Thank you for believing in our village and the importance of developmental play, which feeds some of life's greatest lessons. On behalf of current and future families, we appreciate your consideration of a year-end contribution to SMCNS.

Sincerely yours,

Rob Heintz, Alumni Chair
President

Prashanti Thompson, Board