

## PRESS RELEASE

### **Two Montessori Schools in South Natick will merge and become The Riverbend School**

South Natick (April 6, 2010) - Eliot Montessori School and Natick Montessori School, both of South Natick, will merge and become **The Riverbend School** on July 1, 2010. Over the past five years, there have been frequent conversations between Eliot Montessori School (Kindergarten through 8th grade), and Natick Montessori School (Toddler through Preschool) exploring the possibility of a partnership. Late last year, the two schools announced their intention to merge into one educational institution and to build a new state-of-the-art campus together at 33-35 Eliot Street.

The naming process for the new school was a community effort. A list of potential names was generated by the parent and teacher communities at both schools, and the students at Eliot cast their votes alongside the adults of NMS and EMS. In an exciting election format, the clear favorite was The Riverbend School. The tagline following the name, *An Innovative Montessori Education, Preschool through Eighth Grade*, reflects the continued commitment to the same educational philosophies already present at both schools.

With the merger date set, plans are now underway to break ground in the spring of 2011. The new campus at 33-35 Eliot Street will be LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified and will include learning environments appropriate for each level of the school. The Morse Tavern, a historic landmark on the land will be an integral part of the new campus. Both schools are excited at the prospect of having parents, teachers and students play a part in designing their new educational facility.

Karen Riccardi, founder of the Natick Montessori School and former Eliot teacher and Trustee, has already assumed the role of Head of School for both schools. Starting next year, she will work alongside a Director of Toddler/Primary Education and a Director of Elementary/Middle School Education to ensure a comprehensive Montessori experience. When asked about the merger, the new name and the moving of both schools to 33-35 Eliot Street, Karen replied, "Our united vision is coming together and The Riverbend School will provide a premier education, marrying the Montessori philosophy with the facilities."

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