

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **San Tan Charter School’s Montessori Program Offers ‘Peace Spaces’ and a ‘Peace Room’ Where Students Can Go to Focus and Practice Mindful Breathing**

*These Calm and Safe Spaces, Which are Part of the School’s Emphasis on Peace Education, are Helping Students of All Ages to Feel More Grounded and Ready to Learn*

**GILBERT, Arizona**—The teachers and staff at San Tan Charter School know that in order for their students to learn, they have to first feel safe and secure.

To help ensure that students have calm and quiet places to go throughout the day to center themselves, breathe deeply and feel settled, San Tan Charter School has “Peace Spaces” in each of their Montessori classrooms as well as a “Peace Room” in the Montessori Village Building.

As Mary Navarro, the Montessori Upper Elementary Teacher noted, she and other staff members all know how it feels when their “mental plates” are too full and they start to feel overwhelmed.

“Our window of tolerance becomes smaller and smaller; we want to be calm and peaceful but we often do not know how in the moment,” Navarro said, adding that for young learners, it can be even more challenging to settle themselves down when feeling stressed.



“The inspiration for the Peace Spaces and the Peace Room comes from the idea that in order to academically learn, students need to feel safe and connected first. The most impactful way to achieve this is to be in the learning part of the brain with mindful breathing.”

In the Peace Room, both students and teachers can practice mindfulness, read stories and participate in yoga together.

The Peace Spaces and Peace Room are part of the school's emphasis on both Peace Education and the Montessori Philosophy, which Navarro said centers on helping children discover who they are in the world, and how they can make the world a better, more peaceful place.

"Peace starts from within and is learned through modeling and practice," Navarro said.

"The teaching of peace is constant and forever evolving. It is a lifelong journey and the earlier the journey is started, the more skills one is likely to acquire."

To help expand the Peace Room in the Montessori Village, San Tan Charter School applied for and was chosen as the recipient of the American Montessori Society Peace Grant called the Ursula Thrush Peace Seed Grant.

The Peace Room has also been enhanced by a Donors Choose project created by Megan Hubbard, San Tan Charter School's Montessori Makerspace and Outdoor Environment teacher. The Peace Room is now in a larger space they are calling a Peace Atrium, so that more students, staff and parents can take advantage of the calm room.

"Ultimately, we see the Peace Room as an expanded Peace Space, that will help unite our entire community, and even facilitate peaceful intentions beyond our four walls as we learn about peace as a world-uniting concept," it notes on the application.

Navarro said she has definitely noticed positive changes in her fourth through sixth graders who spend time in her classroom Peace Space and the Peace Atrium; this is especially apparent in students who find it hard to keep their bodies still in class.

"Focusing on breathing through guided meditation and body movement can get them into a calm place, that helps them settle into the classroom," she said, adding that her students often comment on how much they enjoy the Peace Space and Peace Atrium.

"One of my students recently told me "it's very calming and it's such a fun place to do yoga and meditation."

**\*\*\*ADDITIONAL PHOTOS AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST\*\*\***For more information about San Tan Charter School's Peace Spaces and Peace Room, please contact Kris Sippel at 480-222-0811.

### **About San Tan Charter School:**

San Tan Charter School is a Kinder-12th grade public non-profit tuition free charter school with two campuses in the East Valley within minutes of each other. The Power campus is a Junior High/High School serving students in grades 7-12 and the Recker campus is an elementary school serving students K-6 including a private Montessori preschool infant, toddler, and

PreK. The school uses a Love and Logic® approach to classroom management that is focused on building relationships and communicating with respect. The school focuses on “Education with a Purpose,” which means the teachers encourage their students’ love of learning, which enables them to face challenges and develop critical thinking skills. San Tan Charter School also offers a championship athletics experience, individualized learning plans, and college and career ready programs. The school is focused on maximizing each student’s intellectual development with Gifted & Montessori classrooms, Honors/AP classes, Concurrent/Dual Enrollment classes and robust elective choices including career and technical education (CTE). For more information, please visit <https://santancharterschool.com/>