PHOTO BY LINDA SANDSMARK

Learning Clock Montessori preschool owner Feyrouze Chunara, (kneeling far left) joins her students, teachers and parent Ben Monroe (far right) in a classroom.

By Linda Sandsmark

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Learning Clock Montessori Preschool on Doolittle Drive aims to create good citizens who are ready for life in the global world.

“The world is very competitive,” says the school’s new owner, Feyrouze Chunara. “They have to compete with children from Third-World countries, from China and India. These children are very competitive. I want to take children as far as they can go.”

Chunara has always been passionate about education. She has a M.S. in biochemistry and was teaching at a university in Pakistan before moving to the United States.

She and her husband have one son who is now 7 years old. He attends Head-Royce college preparatory school in Oakland, and Chunara says she wants to bring that same high-caliber education to children in San Leandro.

“Once I had my son, my passion changed to preschool,” she says.

“I began taking early childhood classes, and thought, ‘What better way to serve the community than to focus on children from birth through age five?’ One can have a significant impact to make sure we have good citizens, global citizens. If you do a good job at an early age, they’ll have their basics.”

Chunara took over an existing preschool site in November 2011, and has worked hard remodeling the interior and incorporating Montessori teaching methods to the preschool. She decided upon her teaching framework after comparing education here to that of children in Pakistan, and finding children there are more attentive and have better focus.

Parent Ben Monroe says he is pleased with the education his 3 1/2-year-old daughter Katie is receiving.

“She loves it here. She’s happy and well cared for. She just read her first word — she walked up to the car and spelled ‘Tundra’,” says Monroe.

Preschoolers at the school learn their letters, numbers, colors and shapes at an early age. The children love to do their work but are not forced, Chunara says. The school also schedules fun activities and free time. Youngsters have outdoor playtime in a spacious fenced-in yard, plus monthly themed celebrations. Chunara says that parents can rest assured that children at Learning Clock will be safe, happy and learning.

Learning Clock Montessori is located at 13305 Doolittle Drive, near Marina Boulevard. Hours are 6:45 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. weekdays. Unlike many child care centers, the school only closes 11 days all year for holidays. Children at the school range in age from infants through age six. The charge for 2- to 6-year-olds is $770 per month, including diaper changing and potty training. Call 357-1588 for more information.