



## Welcome to our returning families and to all new families!

I hope everyone had an enjoyable and restful summer break and you are ready to begin your new school year. By choosing to be a part of our Montessori family, you are truly giving your child the best possible opportunity to grow and learn in an ideal environment. Hats off to all of you for putting your children first!

My name is Kim Livingston. For those of you that do not know me, I worked as the Business Manager of our school from 2001 until 2006. Our hard working Board of Directors asked that I come back to MCS as the Head of School in the summer of 2007. We have had an amazing 4 years and I am looking forward to another year of learning and discovery for your children. I am here for the benefit of the children and the school as a whole. I have an open door policy and would be happy to address any of your questions or concerns.

Our program for children continues to expand and we have some exciting changes for our upcoming school year. We will be expanding our Pre-Primary and Primary programs next school year. The Gumbo Limbo class with Ms. Adele will be moving into the building we were renting to HS2. Montessori Children's School has not occupied that space since the Montessori Elementary Charter School was developed in 1998! This is a big move for us and it will free up a lot of space. Our aftercare program doubled in size last year, so they will be moving upstairs to accommodate our ever growing number of families in need of aftercare services. We will also be expanding our enrichment program for our Primary students. With the aftercare program moving upstairs, it has given us an opportunity to expand our Pre-Primary Program and use the former aftercare room for a half-day part-time classroom.

I am pleased to welcome back our dedicated staff and our new staff members. We congratulate Ms. Sally Zeman who has attained her American Montessori Society Teaching certification. She will be taking over for Ms. Stephanie this school year in the Banyan room. With our expansion we are pleased to welcome the following new staff members; Ms. Liz Campbell will be directing our new part-time Pre-Primary (previously referred to as "Toddler") classroom. Ms. Liz is a certified elementary teacher and was the teacher when we began our 2 year-old program in 2008. We are so pleased to welcome her back. Her assistant is Natalie Yaniz and she is wonderful with the children. Ms. Alesia also has a new assistant, Leny Carey. Leny has experience and training

working with young children. All three ladies will be a tremendous asset to our children and staff team. Please see the August newsletter with specifics on who is located in what classroom.

We presently have space available in our part-time Pre-Primary program. Those children participating in the two-day program will be at school on Tuesday and Friday and our three-day program takes place on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday. We have a waitlist for our Primary program. Therefore, if anyone is interested in having their child attend Montessori Children's School, they can submit an application and will be put on our waitlist.

**Meet the Teacher is Friday August 19<sup>th</sup> from 2 until 3:30pm.** You can come and visit with us any time during that time period. If you are interested in becoming your child's classroom mom or dad, please ask your teacher about it. The room parent helps to make phone calls, helps acquire classroom supplies and organizes projects for the teacher.

It has been a busy summer with lots of work being done to our facilities. If you are interested in helping maintain our grounds, please contact me. We do not have a maintenance person and need parents to help in this important part of the school environment.

Below is a daily schedule for MCS. Please note the lunchtime change.

### **Schedule**

- 8:00 – 8:30 Students arrival time
- 8:15 – 8:30 Primary drop off time with assistance from staff curbside
- 11:30 ½ day dismissal time both Primary and Pre-Primary
- 11:30 Lunch time for toddler class
- 11:45-12:15 Lunch time – Primary program
- 12:15-12:45 Recess
- 12:45 Pick-up Time for Early dismissal days
- 12:45 – 2:30 Nap/rest time for 2 & 3 year-olds/afternoon class for 4 & 5 year-olds
- 2:30 – 2:45 Pick up time – Full day program
- 2:30 – 5:30 Aftercare program

The Department of Children and Families, our licensing agency in Florida, requires that parents of all children attending pre-school must sign in and sign out their children EVERY day. This is not my rule folks, yet I am held responsible for ensuring it takes place. Each classroom will have its own book for signing in and out. If your child is in our Primary program and you utilize the drop-off and pick-up curbside, you will need to sign the book too and this may slow down the process. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this important procedure. Please find the school calendar attached. You will be receiving a take-home folder weekly, which will have pertinent information from class and correspondence regarding complete file records and account balances. If you have

an outstanding balance on your child's account, it must be dealt with on the first day of school. I will also be communicating by means of weekly newsletters sent to you via email. If you do not have email access, please come to the office to receive a copy. Pertinent information regarding all aspects of our school is included in the Newsletter and it is important that you read all correspondences. We are all looking forward to beginning this New Year.

As we begin our new year, please honor the following procedures to make our school year a smooth process. Again, welcome to a new year at the Montessori Children's School!

Sincerely,

Kim Livingston  
Head of School

## **ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL**

Please help us maintain a positive relationship with our neighbors:

When parking, be careful not to block driveways or fire hydrants.

Please do not double park or park against the flow of traffic.

Keep the area around our campus free of trash.

For those riding bicycles, you may enter the front gate and park your child's bike behind the office at the bike rack.

We no longer have a crossing guard, so please be courteous of other drivers.

### **\*Arrival - Primary Students 8:00 – 8:30**

- **Please do not park in the drop off zone.**
- If you are "dropping" your child off, you may do so from **8:15 – 8:30**. Please pull up to the curb, we will help your child get out of the car.
- If you arrive before 8:10, please park and walk your child to the classroom.
- If you arrive after 8:30, please park and come into the office for a **Late Slip**. Escort your child to the classroom door and have your child give the slip to the teacher. Please do not try to communicate with the teacher, she will be busy.
- **We are not prepared to receive children before 8:00, so the gate will be locked until that time.**

### **\*Arrival – Pre-Primary Students 8:00 – 8:30**

- **Please do not park in the drop off zone.**
- Park your car legally on the street and walk your child to class.
- The Pre-Primary class will begin their day on the playground.
- It is necessary to sign your child in to the classroom every day and our Pre-Primary students will not be utilizing the drop off system.

## **\*Dismissal**

### **Primary and Pre-Primary - ½ day**

- Your child will be dismissed as the full day children are going to lunch.
- Primary children will be brought to the office area for pick up.
- Pre-Primary (toddler) children will be dismissed from the classroom, please wait by the front office.
- PLEASE remember to sign your children out!

### **Primary Full Day - 2:30 – 2:45**

- **Please do not park in the drop off zone.**
- Drive forward as far as possible. We will help your child into the car seat.
- Please do not try to engage in conversation at this time. If you need to speak with a teacher, park and see her after dismissal, or ask the teacher to call you.
- If you pick up your child early, please come to the office first and we will call the classroom. This is a safety precaution.
- Children who are in the aftercare program will be escorted to the aftercare room upon dismissal.
- All children MUST be signed out by the person picking up.

### **LUNCH 11:45 – Full Day Primary Students and 11:30 for our Toddler students**

- We do not provide lunch, so please pack your child a healthy lunch with a cold pack or in an insulated lunch box. (Candy and sodas are not permitted)
- In the interest of living gently on the Earth, we ask that you pack your child's lunch in reusable containers rather than plastic wrap or bags.
- We do warm up children's food, and send home all reusable containers. Please try to use glass containers, as we will not be putting plastic in the microwaves.
- Uneaten food will be sent home so you are aware of your child's eating habits.
- A healthy snack will be provided in the morning.

### **\*PIZZA FRIDAY**

- Every Friday we serve pizza and fresh fruit as a lunch for our full day students. If you would like your child to participate, the cost is \$3.00 per Friday. This will start the first Friday of school, August 26th.
- Monthly/yearly payments can be made. See "PIZZA FRIDAY SCHEDULE" in next week's newsletter and pay the monthly amount, or if you pay for the year in advance the cost is \$100.00.
- Cut fruit for Pizza Fridays as workpay needed IMMEDIATELY- Sign up in office.

### **SNACK AND BIRTHDAYS**

There has been much discussion regarding special snacks in the classroom both for "Star of the Week" and birthdays. A healthy school is provided during class but during special occasions parents may bring in a snack for celebration once they discuss it with their child's teacher. Please inquire as to what type of snack would be appropriate. We do not serve the children sugar frosting and cakes and cookies. Please honor our approach to nurturing not only the mind but the body as well and refrain from bringing in snacks and food that is full of sugar and empty calories. It puts our staff members in an awkward position and does not compliment our curriculum.

## **STUDENT RECORDS**

- As a preschool, we are required to have on file certain records of your child. The Florida Department of Health is strictly reinforcing these guidelines. Please see the records letter in your Take home folder to see what you need to bring to the office and when the required health and immunization records expire. If we do not have these on file your child can not attend school! Check your expiration dates and if you have an "N" in front of something, please submit ASAP.
- MCS needs your child's current Health Examination/Physical and Florida Certificate of Immunization records. If you have not already done so, please drop them off at the MCS business office.
- If you have any changes to your contact information notify the office right away please. It is essential that we have this information for the teachers and student file.

## **FINANCES**

- If you have a note in your child's Take-Home folder next week regarding tuition or security deposit, please submit the amount due the following day of school.
- All past due fees, including security deposits, the august tuition installment, summer camp fees, annual pizza payments, etc., must be paid prior to August 31<sup>st</sup>. If necessary, please see our business manager in the front office.
- All tuition is due by the 1<sup>st</sup> of every month. It is considered late after the 5<sup>th</sup> of the month and may be subject to late fee of \$25.00.

## **COMMUNICATION**

- Communication is very important to the successful development of your child. By working together, parents and staff can ensure the most ideal approach for your child. If there is anything going on in your child's home life that may affect his behavior, health or energy level at school; please discuss this with your child's Directress. We wish to ensure the best experience as possible at school and sharing important information is vital. Please review the communication section of the Parent/Students Handbook.
- Your child's take home folders will go home on Thursdays, unless your child attends two days a week in our Toddler program. In this case, you will get your take-home folders on Friday.
- Newsletters from the office will be sent by email on Tuesdays. If school is closed on Monday due to a holiday, you will receive the news on Wednesday.
- You will receive a newsletter the first week of school as an email AND in your take-home folder to ensure everyone is getting his or her emailed news. If you do not receive the newsletter via email, please contact the office at once so we can ensure your proper email address. All newsletters for the year will be sent by email to reduce our use of paper.
- Please be sure to send your child's take-home folder back to school, the very next day after receiving it. They are expensive and we do not have extras. There is a cover sheet inside, please sign and date it to let us know you received the information.
- Please do NOT send money or checks in with the folders, all payments must be made to the front office.

## **AFTER SCHOOL CARE PROGRAM**

- Our afterschool care program is full on most days. If you have signed-up when submitting your reenrollment forms, you will be included in the program.

- Be sure to come in to the office and pay for your child's aftercare if you have not already done so.
- Drop – In: Due to high numbers of participation; please do not assume we have space for drop in. Please call the office as soon as you can to check availability.
- Please include an afternoon snack for your child if they participate in the aftercare program.

### **FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL**

- Be sure to bring a change of clothes for your child.
- Full Day Students - Send your child with a healthy, nutrition lunch. Choose quality over quantity. Due to the excitement of school, many children will not eat the amount they normally eat at home so please do not send them any extra to begin with.
- If your child is participating in the afterschool care program, add an additional snack to their lunch box please.
- Children need to wear appropriate shoes; not sandals. Sneakers or moccasins are preferred.
- If your child is napping, please send a blanket and perhaps a pillow, it will be sent back to you on Friday for laundering.

### **MEET THE TEACHER**

- Bring your child in to meet his/her teacher on Friday, August 19<sup>th</sup> from 2:00 – 3:30 in the afternoon.

We look forward to a great school year with your children. I would advise everyone to take advantage of workpay opportunities as they arise. Please do not forget, all families are required to do BOTH workpay hours and fundraising hours. See you Friday for Meet the Teacher!