



MONTESSORI CHILDREN'S HOUSE OF PEORIA

September 2011 Newsletter

MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL

Dear Parent,

School is underway, and the children are getting used to their classrooms, their teachers and their classmates. It's always such a pleasure to see, as I'm sure you'll agree. For some of them, it's the very first time they've been away from home everyday, and we know that's as big an adventure for the parents as it is for the children!

They will soon become "normalized" – the normal state for children in which they begin to approach their studies with enthusiasm, work with little direction, treat others with respect, and can work quietly. Part of this process includes becoming familiar with the materials and the routines of the class. I hope that in the next few weeks all the school families can become more familiar with one another and with the routines of the children and the school, as well. It is remarkable how little time it takes for children to begin to establish their routines – at home, getting ready for school; and at school, in the classroom with their work. (They even learn the entry door code before adults do!)

I invite you to please become familiar with the Parent Handbook, so that parents, teachers and staff can all be united in our efforts to guide the children according to their natural development. I also invite you to become familiar with your fellow parents, so that we can indeed become a close-knit school family – a resource for encouragement, comfort and friendship. An excellent opportunity is our upcoming Family Potluck, the evening of the 21st! (More info is provided later in this newsletter.) I hope everyone can make it. In the meantime, enjoy the children as they begin to form new habits for the school year...

John

Upcoming Events:

- New Parents Coffee – Sept. 27, 8:45 am
- Family Potluck – Sept. 21, 5:30 pm
- Chinquapin Festival (2nd-3rd graders) – Sept. 23

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Please make sure you have turned in all the necessary forms and payments to the office. (There is a list of necessary forms in the new Parent Handbooks.) Remember that every new student needs to have a physical exam and proof of immunizations.

Also, September tuition payments are now overdue, so if we have only received your initial deposit we need another payment for September. (This applies to returning students, as well, of course.) *If you enrolled in automatic payments last year, we do need you to sign another form for this year!*

Student Information Update forms are outside the Office. If there has been a change in your family's situation, make sure you fill one out. And, please make sure the Office is aware of any dietary restrictions or allergies for your child.



Special “Studio” Classes

The schedule for special classes is on the attached calendar. But, here is a breakdown of the studio classes your child will have during the week...

Primary classes:

Music with Mr. Christian
Spanish with Mrs. Schudel
Tumbling with Mr. Williams

Elementary Classes:

Music with Mrs. Meredith Cox
Art with Mrs. Fearon
French with Mrs. Meredith Cox
Gymnastics with Mr. Williams

Note that Primary studio classes occur in the morning, and Elementary classes are in the afternoon.

Elementary Parents!

Please keep in mind that our beautiful new lockers ran a little over budget. We are asking all parents to please make a \$10 per child donation to the locker fund. Thank you.

New **Parent Handbooks** have been distributed, and more are available outside the Office if you didn't get a copy. Please be sure to get yours and become familiar with it.

We need greeters to meet the children at the end of the sidewalk as they come to school each day. If you are interested in filling this delightful position a day or two a week, let us know!

Hot Lunch will begin next month, on Friday, October 21st. We are continuing with the pizza lunch that has always been so popular! Hot Lunch is for children who already attend during lunchtime. The cost for this *optional* program is \$30, and this covers the entire year. (There is a separate fee for Elementary Hot Lunch, which happens more often. More on that later for Elementary parents.) Please turn in this payment to the Office before the date of the lunch. (A separate check or cash payment is appreciated.)

The usual menu for the pizza lunch is cheese pizza with carrots or other vegetable, ranch dressing for dipping, and a healthy dessert.

We always need help with this event, and it is a nice time to be with the children, as we eat all together as a school. Please try to find time some Friday this year to help with the serving and cleanup. Sign-ups will be posted nearer the date of the event.

“When a child is given a little leeway, he will at once shout, ‘I want to do it!’ But in our schools, which have an environment adapted to children’s needs, they say, ‘Help me to do it alone.’ And these words reveal their inner needs.”

-Maria Montessori

Montessori Family Potluck

We will once again be hosting our annual Family Potluck on Wednesday evening, September 21st at 5:30. Please join us here in the courtyard for a wonderful chance to get to know the other families. Bring two dishes to share, along with table service. The School will provide drinks. We hope to see you there!



Our Wonderful and Caring Faculty and Staff

We'd like to take this opportunity to apprise you of the faculty and staff situation in our classrooms and Office this year. As you know, our Primary class arrangement did change this year, but we are fortunate to keep many of our terrific teachers with us.

Our Blue Room morning teachers this year are Carolyn Truka and Mrs. Shannon. They have both been with us for many years and are a couple of our "Hall of Fame" teachers. In the afternoon, Mrs. Truka is joined by Renee Roos, who was formerly in the Yellow Room.

Our Red Room teacher is Theresa Buley. She also works with our Kindergarten Enrichment class, often with the help of switch-hitter Mrs. Roos.

Downstairs, in Lower EI, Dione Gresham and Lise Higgins continue to do great work with the kids. Mrs. Gresham is joined by Amy Schudel in the afternoon, who worked in the Red Room last year.

The Upper EI class will continue to be taught by John Meredith Cox, and he is joined this year by Earl Power Murphy, who was in the Yellow Room last year. In the afternoons, Lise Higgins will work with this class.

Lastly, in the Office this year you will find Mona El-Sawaf, who worked there last year, in the mornings. John will be in the Office every afternoon. If you need to speak with John, he is available any time in the afternoons. If there is a morning in which you urgently need to speak with him, see Mona so that she can immediately relay the message.

So, there is our lineup for this year! If you haven't gotten a chance to meet everyone, hopefully you'll get a chance to do so soon.

(Apologies for the use of so many baseball metaphors.)

New Parents!

Don't forget about the New Parents Coffee on Tuesday morning, Sept. 27 at 8:45 a.m. This is a nice time to learn more about our school and the Montessori philosophy in a casual, relaxed atmosphere. We will have coffee and pastries. I hope you'll be able to make it...

Mona El-Sawaf will soon be organizing a **Volunteer Committee** which will be a way in which we can utilize the help of all of our parents. Be on the lookout for signs about this soon...

Classroom Snacks

Attached to this newsletter is a new list of *accepted snacks* for donation to the classroom. We have had difficulty over the years getting nutritious snacks for the kids at their snack tables. Please check with your child's teacher as to when you can bring in snacks. It is an obligation that we expect all parents to fulfill. All children eat snacks, so it is only fair that all parents take turns donating them. We ask that you please only bring in snacks from the list. Also, if your child has severe allergies, you might consider bringing in a separate snack for him/her. Again, you should make an arrangement with your child's teacher.