



MAPLETON MONTESSORI SCHOOL

43rd Year, No.1

August 2021

Short and Sweet Our first day of school is August 30. We're excited to see all of you!

If any information changes between now and the start of school we'll email updates as soon as possible.

WELCOME BACK!

We are in the home stretch of summer camps and things have gone very well. We've been spending a lot of time outside, playing, working, having our lunch and snacks, etc. The children are happy and healthy and so are we! As we move towards fall we're still taking our cues from CDC and BCPH (our Boulder County Health department) and right now Colorado is aligning with the CDC: "the CDC recommends mask-wearing for all unvaccinated individuals age two and older indoors." Not sure where BVSD will go with this but we'll remain masked indoors; a decision on outdoor masking will be made closer to the start of school. Our class sizes will remain smaller and we'll continue to offer 5 days/week from 8:30 - 3:30. In the fall, we're excited to be able to get the aftercare program back up and running for a limited number of students!

STAFF

Our north classroom Montessori guides (teachers) are Linda Kilanoski, AM, and Susan Leibfritz, PM and aftercare. They'll be assisted full-day by Jane Boggs-Guthrie whom many of you know from early morning check-in last year. We're thrilled she'll be joining us; she's a natural and a pleasure to work with. And, we're delighted to welcome Alison Harrington, who will be Susan L's aftercare assistant. Alison's excited to join us - the feeling is mutual!

In the south classroom Susan Hesselink continues as the lead Montessori guide with Hilary Tulloch and Parul Agarwal assisting - both of whom bring over 20 years of experience at MMS to the classroom. We are very lucky to have such a professional, gifted and talented team!

AFTERCARE

Aftercare will resume this fall! Susan Leibfritz, assisted by Alison Harrington, will run the program for a limited number of children who register as "regulars" meaning the tuition is figured for the year and added to your monthly tuition. To register for aftercare see pg. 3.

OPEN HOUSE for newbies 8/27, 9-11

We'll have an Open House for new students to meet our teachers, visit the classrooms, play on the playground and get pictures taken for their hooks. These visits help promote successful first-day transitions for students!

DROP-OFF BETWEEN 8:30-9:30

We'll probably still be conducting health checks at the gate. Please arrive before 9:30, our check-in cut-off. We'll ask about symptoms and take your child's temp. Children having any Covid symptoms should stay home unless they have an alternate diagnosis (allergies, for example) from a health care provider.

Major COVID Symptoms: loss of taste or smell, feeling feverish or having chills, a fever of 104° or greater, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, a new or unexplained persistent cough.

Minor COVID Symptoms: sore throat, runny nose or congestion, muscle or body aches, headache, fatigue, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea.

Parents will drop off at the gate, as we've been doing. If your child is new to MMS you might create and practice a goodbye-at-the-gate routine together. A well-rehearsed routine (3 kisses, a hug, a high-5, etc.) can really help if a child is reluctant. Once in the gate, children take responsibility for their affairs: water bottles go on the shelves outside their class doors; lunch boxes in cubbies, backpacks on hooks; then they wash hands and return to the playground. These routines help children to develop independence leading to more freedom within the environment. We saw such a growth in independence last year and are eager to continue that momentum!

NAPPERS

Please bring a fitted crib sheet, a modest blanket and a small pillow, all labeled. A small stuffed animal just for nap-time is ok! The nappers sleep from about 1:15 - 2:45.

SCHEDULE

During the day we'll have an indoor/outdoor flow with each class having a separate playground area and some lessons on their decks. AM & PM group snack, lunch and circle time will be outside, weather permitting. Nappers will go down after lunch. 3:00-3:30 is pick-up time for children not staying for aftercare. Aftercare will start at 3:30 with a pick-up window between 5:00-5:30. If you come before 5:00 and we're inside, please call the teacher line 303 449 4445 to let us know you're here and we'll send your child out. Of course, this is new for us so we may have to tweak our system as we see what works; let's be patient and kind to each other as we experiment!

THE FIRST DAYS

Here's a wonderful thing about mixed-age groups: the returning students can be great role models for the new and/or younger children; whether they're just doing their 'work' or they're actively helping, they generally feel pretty good about being a leader. If your child is new, review these phrases we use to describe our daily cycles:

Work time: children are encouraged to choose their own work, with or without a teacher. This year, more lessons will be outside and one-person lessons will be encouraged, especially when inside.

Circle time: we sit in a big circle (this year, on bright colored 10" vinyl circles so we can spread out appropriately) for songs, movement, sharing, a group lesson or a story.

Outside time: we believe in lots of unstructured outside time, now more than ever! Trikes, swings, sidewalk chalk, watering flower gardens, raw building materials, the slide, monkey bars and various lessons brought out to the decks and patios will keep us busy!

Snack time: mostly organic fruits, veggies & crackers. Allergies? Let us know. We have gluten-free crackers or you may supply some, labeled for your child.

WHAT TO BRING ON THE FIRST DAY

Inside shoes: NO BIG FLUFFY SLIPPERS! Think ballet slippers, deck shoes or no-skid socks - not required but handy for fire drills outside!

Hat: w brim to protect face, ears, neck - not baseball cap

T-shirt: stays at MMS; protects neck & shoulders outside

Water bottle: MMS Polar bottles \$10 or bring your own

Seasonal change of clothes: all labeled in a gallon ziplock with your child's name on the front.

Masks: children suck and chew on them. Please have several (3-4) extras in your child's backpack daily.

SUNSCREEN

Apply sunscreen BEFORE drop-off; we'll help them apply it after lunch. We use Rocky Mountain SPF 30, but if you prefer your own, it must be labeled and given to a staff member; children may not have sunscreen in their possession. A short-sleeved tee is good to wear outside because it's difficult for kids to reach their necks and shoulders with sunscreen. The shirt can stay at school and go over a sundress or come off inside, etc.

FORMS in Parent Portal (code 1979)

Returning students all need current Health forms on file; they expire after one year. A new Immunization Certificate is not needed; if your child has any new vaccinations, send me the vaccination names and their dates and we'll add them to the form we have on file.

New students need 4 forms: current Health form, Questionnaire, Emergency Info, Immunization Certificate (on CDPHE-approved form). Your doctor's health form is ok or click here to download ours. If you can't get in to your pediatrician now, send us the most current you have. We especially need to know of any allergies. There are different forms for those so let us know immediately if your child has any allergies and allergy medication.

All forms must be complete by Friday, August 27 in order for your child to start school on Monday the 30th.

PEANUT-FREE SCHOOL, is our goal

Exposure to even a small amount of peanut can cause a life-threatening reaction. Please check labels and do NOT send your child to school with any food that contains peanuts or peanut butter. SunButter and other nut butters are great alternatives.

LUNCH

We encourage simple, healthy lunches that don't require refrigeration or heating. Limit individual/non-recyclable packaging, including squeezie foods, go-gurts, etc.. Pack only things your child can open, eat and pack away all by himself so teachers can distance, especially from unmasked children at lunchtime. Please try to:

1. Avoid individual packaging such as juice boxes and individual servings which cannot be resealed.
2. Stay close to the source for the least processed foods.
3. Pack cloth napkins and utensils; we don't supply them.
4. **Pizza Thursday!** Order Thursday when you sign in. \$2/slice will be added to your next tuition.
5. No candy/gum. If the lunchbox contains only good food it won't matter what she eats first and we won't have to micro-manage the dining experience!

CLOTHING, MASKS, TOYS

Clothing: should be user-friendly (your child being the user). Your child should be able to dress & undress, go to the potty & wipe, wash hands and get shoes on and off. Before you buy clothes or shoes have your child test them. Especially in this time of Covid, we want children to be as independent as possible so we can do our best to maintain social distancing.

Masks: This week, the Boulder County Board of Health approved mandating masks for all students and staff members in all schools or at child care facilities, regardless of their vaccination status. This applies to private and public schools. Being the mask experts we now are, we've learned two things: 1. masks need to be on a lanyard so children don't set them down (and lose them or spread germs) and 2. children tend to suck and/or chew on their masks so they should all have at least 1 extra mask daily; some children will need 3 or 4 extras/day. You know your child - please plan accordingly!

Toys: Covid Consideration: we're trying to minimize germ transfer so children should not bring anything extra to school - no toys, stuffed animals, books, etc.

SIGN-IN/OUT

We'll sign children in/out at the gate. Children are released only to your emergency contacts; please keep that info current. If you need to send someone we haven't met, call the **TEACHER line: 303-449-4445** to alert us of the change, and have that person bring a photo ID. Please DON'T leave messages on the office line - the teachers may not get them if I'm not in the office.

MEDICINE AT SCHOOL

Meds should be given at home, except emergency meds like inhalers or Epi Pens - they require special forms so let us know ASAP. Any med to be administered at school (prescribed or OTC) must have written permission from you and the doctor; and be given to a teacher in the original container with a prescriptive label EXACTLY matching the doctor's orders. NO Keep Out of Reach of Children items (sunscreen, chapstick, lozenge, special lotion or homemade remedy, etc.) are allowed in a child's possession; not in lunch boxes, backpacks, pockets, etc. Give them to us and sign a permission card so we can help your child with them at school.

LOST/FOUND, LABELING

Please label everything using names, not initials. We'll have your child get all his belongings to the gate at the end of each day.

BAREFOOT PLAYGROUND

Children may wear shoes or go barefoot on the playground. When you buy shoes, keep the young child's motto in mind: "Help me do it by myself" and make sure your child can actually get the shoes on and off by himself; practice before you send your child to school with new shoes. We've experienced shoes that are difficult even for adults! Covid Consideration: it's even more important now for children to be able to put their clothes and shoes on by themselves. As much as possible we'd like teachers to be able to keep a social distance especially if a child is not wearing a mask.

AFTERCARE REQUEST for

_____ Name of Child (Children)

With the start of school we're pleased to offer aftercare for a limited number of children. Aftercare will run from 3:30-5:30 daily. (At this point it is a 5-day commitment.) Susan Leibfritz and our new assistant Alison Harrington will run the program. The tuition, \$2280 annually, will be divided by 10 and 1/10th will be added to each of your 10 tuition installments. Registration is on a first-come, first-served basis.

To register, return this form with \$228. I'll send you an email to confirm your spot(s).