



MAPLETON MONTESSORI SCHOOL

46th Year, No.1

June 2024

Short and Sweet

The first day of school is **Monday, August 26**. Please make sure that all the required registration forms for your child have been completed and returned to the office by **August 10** so your child may start on August 26. Forms are available on our Parent Portal; the code is **1979**.

WELCOME TO YEAR 46 AT MMS!

Now that our summer camps are off and running it's time to turn our focus to the start of our 46th year at MMS! Please read this newsletter thoroughly as it's packed full of information that will help you and your child navigate our MMS routines like a pro, which in turn will help our program run smoothly! Along with the newsletter I'll email the fall calendar so you'll have all our important dates at hand.

OPEN HOUSE 8/23 from 9-11

Come to our Open House on Friday, just before school starts! Spending time at MMS (with a parent) before the big day can make all the difference to a young child! Meet our teachers and other new families, visit the classrooms and bathrooms, find your hook and cubby, play on the playground, do a lesson or two and get a picture taken for your hook. This visit can help you and your child have a successful transition on the first day!

SCHEDULE

Arrival time is 8:30-9:00 with outside playtime during that window. Every morning each class has a circle time, an outdoor playtime and a work period during which time snack is available. When the weather is nice we often have children working outside on their respective decks. After lunch, all the children play outside for a bit. The nappers come in first, followed later by the non-nappers who have another work period and circle time. This is when the older/kindergarten children often do advanced work. Aftercare starts at 3:30 so children who are not staying for aftercare are picked up between 3:15-3:30.

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.

STAFF

Our south classroom is directed by Angelarose who is both Montessori trained and Director Qualified. She has just completed her first year at MMS but she's been a long time in Montessori education both in the public and private sector. Her assistants Hilary Tulloch and Parul Agarwal have each been at MMS for twenty three years! They are both ECTs (Early Childhood Teachers) with tons of Montessori experience - at MMS!

Our north classroom is directed by Linda Kilanoski, a Montessori guide who has been at MMS for twelve years; first as a parent, then an assistant and finally a Montessori guide. Linda's assistant, Beatrix Zoe, is also a Montessori guide who, along with all her Montessori knowledge, brings a lovely calm energy to the classroom.

Aftercare: Susan Leibfritz, a Montessori guide who joined MMS in 1995, and Tovah France, a Special Ed. Para at Niwot HS, continue to lead our aftercare program. Thank you, teachers, for such love and dedication to your work!

CLASS SIZE IN QUESTION

As the positive and optimistic person that I am, I'd like to start by saying something positive about our licensing department . . . I got nothing. As many of you know, last year they told us we can't have a kitchen; this after 45 years of successfully operating a wonderful Montessori school. . . with a kitchen. This year we got nicked on group size. The rule states: in a mixed-age group of 2½-6 year olds, the ratio of staff to student is 1:10; we stick to this, we always have. In a Montessori classroom the gold standard is to have equal numbers of 3, 4 and 5 year olds as they all help and learn from each other. But now, if you have 3 year olds, and they make up more than 20% of your class, your group size can not be over 20 children. We're applying for a waiver and hoping we get it because we still have children on our wait list who are 3.

FORMS DUE BY AUGUST 10th

Forms are available on our parent portal, code 1979.

Returning students all need a current Health form on file; they expire after one year. A new Immunization Certificate is not needed; I'll add any new vaccinations to their existing form. Nothing else is needed.

New students need 5 forms: 1) Emergency Information
2) Questionnaire 3) Health form 4) Immunization Certificate on a CDPHE-approved form 5) Acknowledgements of Risk. Your doctor's health form is ok or [click here](#) to download ours. If you can't schedule now (because of insurance or your pediatrician's busy schedule) send us the most current Health exam you have. Let us know immediately if your child has any allergies/emergency medication; we'll give you forms to be completed by your pediatrician.

All forms must be returned by August 10 in order for your child to start school on Monday the 26th.

DROP-OFF & PICK-UP

Drop-off is 8:30 -9:00 at the gate. When you arrive you'll use the sign-in sheet to sign your child in. Along with time in/out and signatures, the sheet has a "NOTES" column where you can leave a note for us or the pick-up person (if you're not the pick-up for that day), and a "SS" column where you can indicate the time you applied sunscreen before school. If you didn't apply it, we'll always have Rocky Mountain Sunscreen SPF 30 at the gate for your use during drop-off. If you think your child might be reluctant at drop-off, create a goodbye-at-the-gate routine together, that you can practice at home before school starts. A well-rehearsed routine (3 kisses, a hug, a high-5, etc.) can really help if a child is hesitant. Even if they're not anxious, many children really enjoy their own "gate" routine! Our students take responsibility for their affairs, carrying their backpacks, water bottles and lunch boxes in to put them away. Taking charge of this has given them have a greater awareness of where their things are! After school, parents pick up between 3:15-3:30 and the same holds true; the children gather their affairs and bring them to the gate. These routines help children develop independence leading to more freedom within the environment. And, oddly enough, the Lost & Found is shrinking as the children take more and more responsibility for their things! The responsibility has shifted from the parent to the child. We've also seen that parents have found new ways of socializing with each other at drop-off and pick-up; the previous volley ball court to the south has become a great hang-out spot (as long as the children are monitored!)

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 lessons from among the many activities available in each area of the classroom. They work alone or in small groups, with or without a Montessori guide or assistant.

Circle time: Circle time is our community time. We come together and sit in a big circle on the floor for songs, movement, sharing, a group lesson or a story.

Outside time: We believe in lots of unstructured outside time. Trikes, swings, the sandbox, tending gardens, raw building materials, the slide, monkey bars, and various lessons brought out to the decks keep us busy!

Snack time: The morning, afternoon and aftercare snacks consist of mostly organic fruits, veggies & crackers. We have gluten-free crackers (or you may supply some, labeled for your child). Please let us know if your child has any allergies or food sensitivities.

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 clothes should be labeled and put in a gallon ziplock bag, also labeled.

SIGN-IN/OUT

You'll sign your children in/out at the gate. Children are released only to you or 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 let us know, and have that person bring a photo ID. Please DON'T leave messages on 303 449 4499 (the office line); teachers won't get the message if I'm not here.

LOST/FOUND, LABELING

Please use names, not initials, to label everything, all clothing, water bottles, lunch box & containers, etc. We'll help your child get all belongings to the gate for pick-up but it's very helpful if we can identify the owners of miscellaneous items that might have gotten separated from their owners. Thanks for help in that department!

CLOTHING, MASKS, TOYS

Clothing: Clothing should be user-friendly (your child being the user). Practice at home; work through trouble spots with them. It's a great accomplishment when children can dress themselves. Your child should be able to dress & undress, go to the potty & wipe, wash hands and get shoes, coats, boots, mittens, etc., on and off. Before you buy clothes or shoes have your child test them. Think: how can I foster my child's independence?

Toys: Toys, blankies, princess/super-hero garb, etc. stay home. If your child wants to bring something to school, she may bring an item relating to her class's current unit of study and share it at circle time; this promotes public speaking and a deeper exploration of our units of study!

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. It is your responsibility to keep meds up-to-date at school. NO 'Keep Out of Reach of Children' items (sunscreen, lotion, 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.

SUNSCREEN

Apply sunscreen BEFORE drop-off; we'll reapply before lunch. We use Rocky Mtn SPF 30 and because we apply sunscreen to all the children we ask that you only bring your own if your child is allergic to Rocky Mtn Sunscreen. If you must bring your own, label it, give to a teacher and fill out a permission card. Children may not have sunscreen or ANY other products in their possession. Also, a short-sleeved tee is good to wear outside because when children rub in sunscreen they often can't reach shoulders and necks! The tee can stay at school and go over a sundress, for ex.

BAREFOOT PLAYGROUND

From May through October, weather permitting, shoes are optional 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 seen shoes that even staff members can't wrangle onto a child!

OUR GOAL: PEANUT-FREE SCHOOL

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

Children love eating with friends at school. In fact, a new lunch box is only slightly behind the yellow summer camp school bus on their top-10 list! We encourage simple, healthy lunches that don't require refrigeration or heating. Environmentally speaking, we discourage individual or non-recyclable packaging, squeezie foods, go-gurts, etc. Please try to:

1. Avoid individual packaging such as juice boxes which leak on the way home (and replace water, oh no!!) squeezie tubes of food and individual servings which, once opened, cannot be resealed. A child may eat 2 bites of a single-serve yogurt, for ex., then toss the rest.
2. Stay close to the source for the least processed foods; some blueberries or strawberries beat a fruit roll-up often processed with artificial color and flavor!
3. Pack 2 cloth napkins (one's a placemat and one's a napkin) and utensils; we don't supply them.
4. Pizza Thursday! Order when you sign in on Thursday. \$2/slice will be added to your next tuition.
5. Candy and gum are not allowed at school; fruit for dessert offers fiber and nutrients. If children help to make their lunches they're more likely to eat them. Think colorful - eat the rainbow! A lunchbox filled with good food also fosters the child's independence because we won't have to micro-manage the dining experience!



On the "no, no" list.



Healthy food, reusable containers

TUITION

Tuition is due by the 5th (or the next work day if we're closed on the 5th). A \$10 fee is added to late tuition. Tuition slips are emailed on the 1st. If you don't have your tuition slip, call me or estimate it. Going on vacation? Send it before you go. Installment #2 is due by Sept. 5th. Thank you for keeping your account current.