

August 2018

From the Primary teachers at Mountain Laurel Montessori School:

Welcome to the 2018 – 2019 school year! Please review this important information from the primary teachers, Mrs. Meg DeMato and Mrs. Carrie Irre. This information is intended to assist you with your child's continuation or transition to the primary classes. It is also very important to make sure that our electronic communications are being received by you. Please respond to this email to let us know that you have received it. (A simple "Got it." will work.)

**Beautification Day is Sunday, August 26th from 1-4pm.**

Come join other parents to help get our school in shape, inside and out, for the first days of school. The beautification day is a lovely way to get to know your children's teachers and more about the Montessori way of life, while providing assistance to the staff so they can divest their energies into school-year planning. It is also a wonderful way to meet the families of the children which your child will be forming friendships. The hours will be counted toward the twenty-hour service commitment and include jobs of all kinds, including some take-home projects. Hope to see you there!

**Orientations:**

**Parent Orientation is Wednesday, 8/29/18 at 5:30 PM in the primary classrooms at MLMS.**

This evening (for parents only) will assist you and your child in the transition to their new class. It is intended for parents of new students, but all primary parents are welcomed, and encouraged to come, in order to obtain information and meet our new families.

**New Child Orientation is Thursday, 8/30/18 or Friday, 8/31/18.**

This is a half-hour session intended to orient your child to the classroom and his or her teacher. This visit is for your child's orientation, and you will be given suggestions at Parent Orientation on how to make this time productive and happy for all concerned. On this day you should walk your child in to meet his or her teacher. You will receive a call from your child's teacher to set up this visitation soon.

**First Week: September 4th and 5th NEW STUDENTS ONLY**

**Hours 10:00AM - 12:00AM**

The first two days of school is for students new to the primary program, regardless of their age. The dates are September 4th – 5th, Tuesday and Wednesday.

Returning primary students begin school on the **6<sup>th</sup> of September** and will be expected to attend during the school hours for which he or she is enrolled. All primary students, returning and new, will begin their regular schedules on this day.

**Arrival & Dismissal**

Always have contact with a staff member when dropping off or picking up your child. See the Parent Handbook for arrival for Before-School Care and dismissal from After-School Care, as well as bus procedures.

When classes begin, all primary students are to be dropped off at the arrival and dismissal queue in the parking lot, unless they have siblings in Elementary class or are attending Before-School Care. A staff member will greet your child to escort them from the car to the school the first two days of school, September 4th and 5th, at 10:00 AM.

Arrival time beginning September 6 is at **8:15 AM**.

Staff will be available until **8:30 AM** to assist your child from the car to the school. Please be on time each day. A consistent routine will assist your child to make a smooth transition into school.

If you arrive after **8:30** please park in the lot, and take your child into the building. **Office personnel** will escort your child to class.

Dismissal from school for half-day students is as follows. We dismiss from the playground or courtyard on fair weather days at **12:00 PM**. For the noontime dismissal you should park in a designated parking place and walk to the playground gate to retrieve your child. If you typically have an infant in the car, or for some reason it is not feasible for you to come to the playground gate, we walk as a small group to the courtyard gate by 12:05 to meet later-arriving parents. On inclement weather days we typically dismiss from the front porch.

The 3:00 PM dismissal is from the front porch and parents may line up in the queue and step out of the car to get your child at the main gate. Please pull into a designated parking space if you have business inside or would like to speak with a teacher or another parent; we ask that you not leave your car unattended in the carpool line. Primary/Elementary students with siblings at MLMS will be dismissed from the courtyard gate unless special arrangements are made. Please park your car by 3:25 so that our car line is not obstructed, and walk to meet the adult in charge at the gate.

### **Routines and Needs**

Each child needs a pair of slippers (or indoor slip-on shoes) to be worn inside the classroom. Upon entering the building staff will assist your child with their morning routine. This includes children removing their shoes to put on their slippers, hanging up their jacket or sweater, and placing their backpacks and shoes into their cubbies. If your child stays for lunch, he/she will remove their lunchboxes from their backpacks to make the midday transition to lunch simpler. Please ensure that your child's lunchbox fits inside their backpack and their backpack is easy for them to carry.

Each child will also be asked to bring a full change of clothing to school in case of the need to change. If your child struggles with toileting independence, please send in extra changes of clothing as you see fit. Please bring all clothing in a labeled ziplock bag. All articles of clothing should be labeled with your child's name or initials: shirts, jackets, pants, shorts, socks, slippers, gloves, backpacks, shoes, hats, etc. There are many children storing their belongings in this space. Please keep your child's belongings safe by labeling them. It also assists staff for smooth transitions if all clothing items are labeled clearly.

### **Snack**

Snack will be served each day in your child's classroom. Parents of all children in the primary classes will provide food for snack for one week of the school year. We will inform you at the beginning of the school year of the date for your child's snack week and you will receive a reminder just before your week begins. Please do your best to arrive promptly at **8:15** on snack delivery days. This will give your child plenty of time to prepare the snack for their friends. Your child might want to help plan the menu and shop for the groceries. Please send in unopened packages of food that can be prepared at school by your child with assistance from classmates and the classroom assistant. Virginia regulations do not allow us to serve food prepared at home. Please send in foods containing **no peanut butter or nuts of any kind** due to potential nut allergies in young children. We encourage families to provide wholesome, natural foods, free of artificial flavorings and colors, with low to no sugar.

Each snack contains two food groups such as fruit and crackers, crackers and cheese, bagels and cream cheese, etc. We do not serve large portions (half a banana, ¼ of a large apple, 1 large graham cracker square, 4 small crackers with 2 pieces of cheese in between, etc.). Popular snack selections have been any kind of fruit, vegetables with dip, yogurt, pretzels, rice cakes, hard-boiled eggs, etc. All fruits and vegetables should be provided whole for preparation at school and all other foods must be pre-packaged from the store. Please provide disposable spoons for foods to be eaten with a spoon (such as yogurt or applesauce). **Be sure staff members are aware of any allergies your child may have.** Snack procedures will be explained in depth at Parent Orientation.

### **Lunch (full day students only)**

All children who stay past noon bring a lunch from home in an insulated lunch box. The lunch box/bag should not display images of superhero/cartoon characters. Your child's lunch box should fit inside your child's backpack and should be marked with your child's name in permanent ink on the outside of the lunch box. Please place a small, clean, cloth napkin, tea towel, or mat in your child's lunch box every day to be used as a placemat. Daycare licensing regulations require the date to be displayed on your child's lunchbox each day to ensure fresh foods. (Masking tape or small labels with the day's date work just fine and ensure MLMS stays in accordance with daycare licensing regulations.)

Please include a protein and fresh produce in your child's lunchbox every day. Sweets should be limited. Keep in mind that we require the children to eat most of their "nutritious foods" before they eat dessert. Small quantities are best. Please include a water bottle each day, labeled with your child's name for your child to drink from during lunch and outdoor play.

After lunch and playtime, Kindergarten and non-nappers will return to Mrs. Irre's classroom. Napping children will return to Mrs. DeMato's classroom.

### **Nap**

Children younger than 4 years of age are required to attend the afternoon nap session if attending school until 3:00 PM or later. Children over four years have the option to join their classmates for afternoon activities in lieu of napping. We require a Nap Waiver to be signed by parents if a child is between the age of 4 and 5 and attending the afternoon class session. Nap mats, sheets and blankets will be provided for your child by the school. If your child struggles with toileting independence, you may wish to send in extra clothing for the nap room as well as the classroom.

## **Clothing**

Primary-aged students are expected to dress in comfortable, clean, neat clothing in good repair. All children wear simple, comfortable, rubber-soled slippers in the classroom. We ask that slippers, clothing, outerwear, backpacks, and lunchboxes be simple and generic, without representations of commercial/fantasy characters. Footwear with no laces is preferred. Please keep in mind that this is an active and involved environment, and although we have the children wear aprons when engaged in art and cooking activities, sometimes accidents are unavoidable. Pay close attention to fasteners for your child's ease in toileting and changing when necessary. Your child will be working toward independence. Outdoor shoes should be sturdy and safe for playground activities and walking outdoors. On rainy days rubber boots and rain jackets with hoods should be worn. We discourage jewelry and accessories of any kind that will be distracting to your child or his/her classmates, including girl's hair accessories. All clothing should be modest, no spaghetti straps are to be worn, and girls are encouraged to wear stretch shorts under dresses or skirts.

We look forward to a happy and successful school year and encourage you to stay involved with the school. During the first week of school, parents of new students can expect a phone call to receive news of your child's transition from the teacher's perspective. If you have a question, concern, or simply want to share something with us, we encourage you to call. You may contact us at 540-636-4257. Good communication between home and school is a cornerstone to your child's success. Please see the list below for ways to stay involved in your child's school experience.

You will receive a school handbook, directory, and class list within the first weeks of school.

Sincerely,

Meg DeMato  
Carrie Irre  
Primary Classroom Teachers  
Mountain Laurel Montessori School

PLEASE print this information letter and keep it with your handbook and other important MLMS documents. If you have time prior to the beginning of school and would like to assist us in readying things, please do not hesitate to contact us; the jobs are plentiful!

## **IMPORTANT DATES**

Beautification Day  
**Sunday August 26th 1:00 to 4:00 PM**

**August 29, 2018**

Parent Orientation at 5:30 PM

**August 30, 2018**

New primary students will each have a half-hour session for orientation with their teacher. Your child's teacher will schedule this with you personally.

**September 4, 2018**

New primary students welcomed to school (hours **10:00 AM to 12:00 PM, Tuesday and Wednesday**)

**September 6, 2018**

First day of school for returning primary students – regular hours  
New students will also attend their regular hours.