



WESTPARK MONTESSORI SCHOOL OF IRVINE SEPTEMBER 2016

FIRST DAY OF THE FALL TERM!

Tuesday, September 6th is the first day of the new fall term. We welcome all new and returning students and look forward to a wonderful year with you and your child!

PRO-CARE

New Parents: If you have not yet been registered into the school system, please see the director immediately. Please **check your child in and out each** day using your thumb/fingerprint. Please be sure to press "finish" at the end to complete the process. If there is a message or note for your child, you will be notified through Pro Care as you check in/out each day. You may find written notes in the "Parent Box" located on the front desk, filed by your child's LAST NAME. If you have any questions or need any assistance, please let us know!

HELPING YOUR CHILD BEGIN SCHOOL

Each year I am asked by our families for tips they can use at home, information about their child's development, and the Montessori Method and philosophy of education. Since many of these questions can be of interest to many, I will print a few in the newsletters to come. September brings the most questions about drop off time and "separation" when parents separate from their children to leave them at school. Separation from parents can be difficult for some families. When children begin school it is a major milestone and with that milestone comes normal anxiety that is typical for children when there is a change of any kind.

When children begin school it is important for them to know that their parents are "ready for school" and feel comfortable with this new phase of their child's development. This means that children need to hear their parents say "I know you are anxious and that you will miss me but you will be fine. I am coming back and you can tell me who you played with today. I love you, I will see you soon. GOOD BYE!" It is very important that you then smile and walk calmly and happily away. Children get mixed messages when parents hesitate, cling to their children, or look worried. It is like saying, " I know you are scared- so am I!"

We PROMISE if your child is in true distress and not just expressing their anxiety we will call you! We all truly care about children and we want them to be happy. Sometimes, just like for grownups, getting comfortable is a process. We promise to assist them in getting used to us and their new school. As children become used to their new school routine, a process that can take up to 10 weeks, you will begin to hear more about their day. This process is called "normalization".

Another great way to help your child "normalize" is to meet their classmates and other school families. Please plan to attend our annual Spaghetti Dinner at 5:30 on **Thursday, September 15**. The spaghetti is fantastic and you will have a very enjoyable family night out!

Maria Montessori says:

"To be forced to adapt suddenly to an environment totally different from the one in which he has been living, to be obliged to assume on the spot functions never before exercised, and to do this in the unspeakably exhausted state in which he finds himself- this is the hardest and most dramatic test in the whole of a man's life."

The Absorbent Mind p.62, Chap 7

KEY FOBS

All parents are given two key fobs per family. Remember that it is EACH person's responsibility to have their key fob with them at all times in order to enter the school. For security reasons, it is not always possible to "buzz" you in, nor wait for another family to arrive and let you in the front door if you have forgotten your key fob. Please help us keep the building secure by carrying and using your key fob daily. Thank you.

FAMILY "SPAGHETTI" NIGHT 5:30-7:00 PM

Thursday, September 15 is the night of our very popular, annual FAMILY SPAGHETTI DINNER NIGHT. This is a great time to meet other Montessori parents and children! Westpark Montessori will provide the spaghetti, tossed salad, garlic bread, lemonade and eating utensils. Parents are asked to sign up to bring in a dessert for six people in a ***disposable*** container and sliced/ready-to-serve. You may also want to bring a picnic blanket for your family to sit on.

We are asking parents to register how many people in their family will be attending so that we can have PLENTY OF SPAGHETTI FOR EVERYONE! Sign-ups will be posted in the front office on Wednesday, September 7. We ask that parents picking up their children or arriving at school early for the spaghetti dinner, please be sure to supervise your child as the teachers are busy supervising children who have not yet been picked up.

A BIG "thank you" in advance to Chef Cyndi, Miss LaShone, Miss Barbara and Chef Oscar for all of the behind the scene preparation, hard work and delicious spaghetti!

MONTESSORI 101 (OCTOBER 6th)

Save the date for Montessori 101! We have found that it is about this time that parents would like to know more about what their children are doing and why. What is the thing with rolling rugs, carrying trays, and those pink blocks - when will they be reading and can they work with numbers?

Cheryll Ruzat, our Executive Director and the Program Director for the University Montessori Teacher Education Program at UCI will be doing a special parent presentation just for parents of the Montessori Schools of Irvine. Spaces are limited so please be sure to register with the school director to reserve your place.

The presentation will be held on October 6, 2016 at our Village Montessori (4552 Sandburg Way, Irvine, CA 92612) which is home to our primary program. Babysitting is available at registration time and a light snack will be available for parents as well as children. Please contact Cheryll at 949-854-6030 if you have any questions regarding this presentation.

OOPS REPORTS

If your child has an "oops" at school, there will be either a white or blue (wet clothes or potty accident) "Oops Report". Please READ, SIGN AND RETURN the Oops Report to the Front Desk. The STATE of California requires us to keep these on file.

CHILDREN'S FILES

The STATE requires that all children in attendance have a complete file. All children's files must be complete no later than Thursday, September 8. Any students with an INCOMPLETE file will not be admitted to school beginning on Friday, September 9, and will not be readmitted until that child's file is complete. A list of children with incomplete files and what papers are missing will be posted on the front office window. Please see your director with any questions.

ID EMERGENCY FORMS

Each fall we require ALL parents to complete a new ID Emergency Form (Tan) for each child. We ask this once a year from ALL parents, even those who just started. This ensures that we have the

most current emergency contact numbers and information on file. Forms were distributed in Friday folders in August. If you haven't already done so, please complete your new ID Emergency Form and return it to the front desk as soon as possible. Thank you.

BOOK CLUBS

Book club order forms are now available at the front desk. You may order from one or all clubs, however, please make out ONE CHECK ONLY to Scholastic for the total amount due. Last day to order is FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 16. Any further questions, please ask us at the front desk.

MONTESSORI IS A HANDS ON EXPERIENCE!

New parents often ask us about "paper work" and art "projects" for their children. It is important to remember that good early childhood education stresses concrete, hands on experimenting with various types of art media, construction, and cause and effect activities. There is not necessarily a "thing" at the end of the process! Children at this age are more involved with what they are doing than what they have left over and products are a creation of adult desire.

FALL A.M. ATRIUM SCHEDULE

We will return to our regular A.M. atrium schedule on Tuesday, September 6th.

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|-----------|---|
| 7:00-8:15 | Atrium |
| 8:15-8:25 | Atrium clean-up |
| 8:25 | Transition into classrooms |
| 8:30 | Classrooms open |
| 9:00 | Children Montessori Core Program begins |

BEDDING IN A PILLOWCASE

State licensing requires that children's bedding be kept separate from each other. This prevents germs from spreading through contact and helps keep children well. In order to keep your newly laundered bedding clean, please send it to school IN A PILLOWCASE labeled with your child's name. Your child's bedding will be placed back in their pillowcase on Friday. Bedding should include a fitted crib sheet and a blanket, and a "travel" size pillow if desired.

WE ARE A NUT FREE ZONE

Due to the possibility of severe or potentially fatal allergic reactions, all peanuts, nuts and nut products are not allowed at school. Please check labels for peanut oil and by products. A handout with snack ideas is available at the front desk. Afternoon snack is distributed from the school kitchen and consists of a combination of two of the four basic food groups. (Example: cheese and whole wheat crackers.) Also note: Due to availability, snacks may vary slightly from the monthly menu. Watch for announcements of changes on the front office menu board.

SNACKS

Our morning snack is a popular component of our parent involvement. As part of your child's "practical life" learning experiences at school, parents sign-up their child to be host(ess) for the day. Your child will bring foods that can be prepared for a special nutritious snack to be shared with their classmates. Food must arrive no later than **8:30 am** to allow preparation time. This is done twice each month during our Toddler-Two years and once each month for our older children. **When you sign up on the posted calendar, please write what items you are bringing for snack that day. (For example- yogurt and bananas) At least two food groups must be represented.**

This exercise supplements your child's practical life activities of various food preparation experiences such as peeling an egg or carrots, orange juicing, and making "tea party" sandwiches. When choosing snack items please send one protein and one healthy carbohydrate such as cheese

and whole wheat crackers or apples. These are foods that the children **prepare during class** and share with their classmates during snack and work times. Other examples of appropriate snacks include **WHOLE** fresh fruits and vegetables, crackers, cheeses, or healthy snacks or other simple whole foods that can be combined by your child with non-cook recipes to create a snack such as celery stuffed with cream cheese. Please **DO NOT** prepare foods at home.

Also, accreditation standards state that food that comes from home for sharing among the children must be **either whole fruits of commercially prepared packaged foods in factory-sealed containers**. The Centers for Disease Control recommends this practice because of the risks in maintaining food safety and potential allergic reactions to ingredients that may not be identified. Thank you for your cooperation in trying to maintain the highest national standards.

Pediatricians advice limiting a child's juice intake, thus please refrain from sending juice as a part of snack. Additional ideas are available at the front desk.



CHILDREN'S BIRTHDAYS

Children are welcome to share their birthdays with their friends at school. We celebrate with a special ceremony using the Montessori number rods, globe, and pictures of your child. Parents may also send a special treat on this day. Please check with your child's teacher in advance. This is a treat and is not used as the children's snack as children will be served their snack prior to eating the birthday treat. Toys and birthday favors cannot be distributed. Please note that we suggest that parents send a healthy treat rather than one that is full of sugar. Suggestions and additional information can be found on our birthday handout which is available at the front office.

If you are planning a home birthday party you are invited to use the school roster to address invitations to the children's homes or e-mails. The school **CANNOT** distribute birthday invitations as children who are not invited might be disappointed.

YOUR OPINION MATTERS

Each year we like to share the results of our parent questionnaires with our parents. The results are tallied and placed on a spread sheet so that our parents can have the full report of the results. This spreadsheet is posted in the front office for your convenience. There is an open parent advisory board meeting (check the October newsletter for the date) where Cheryll Ruzsat, Executive Director will share how the results are used in our implementation of on-going improvement of our program in all areas.

Please be sure to also complete a parent questionnaire during fall conferences as we review this information twice a year.

ADVISORY BOARD

Periodically, our Executive Director, Cheryll Ruzsat meets with parents for a session called "*COFFEE WITH THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR*". These coffees act as our open meeting for parents who wish to participate on our parent advisory board. There is an open forum where parents are able to discuss parenting issues, Montessori philosophy and techniques and share ideas with the Executive Director. Watch the newsletter throughout the year for scheduled meetings. Sign-ups are posted in the front office the week before the meeting so that seating and refreshments can be planned. Meetings are scheduled approximately every quarter and are held either in the mid-morning or mid-afternoon hours. Our first meeting focuses on our new parents with Montessori 101 (see information above). Our next coffee will be held in November. Watch the newsletter for meeting time.



HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

Thursday, September 15 is the beginning of Hispanic Heritage Month. Any parents wishing to share information with their child's classroom are welcome to sign up with your child's teacher. See this month's menu for special Hispanic lunches.

STAFF "JEANS DAY"

We may look a little more casual than usual on Fridays and Mondays this semester! Montessori Schools of Irvine has a "Jeans Day" every Friday for our staff members and every Monday (September-December) if they wear our Montessori School shirt. Please feel free to have your child join in our special dress day and wear their Montessori Schools of Irvine rainbow shirts with Jeans every Monday!

MONTESSORI TEACHER EDUCATION CLASSES HAVE BEGUN!

We would like all our parents to know that the University Montessori Teacher Education Program at UCI meets at University Montessori School of Irvine during the academic year. This is a UCI Division of Continuing Education program that trains teachers from all over Southern California to be Montessori teachers. Our carefully selected and gifted co-teachers are encouraged to participate in this program. As we are extremely selective in our hiring practices, we have found that teachers from the Montessori Schools of Irvine typically rank in the top of participating adult learners and demonstrate outstanding capabilities upon completion thus providing our children with an outstanding Montessori environment. The early childhood education program is nationally accredited by the American Montessori Society and the Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education.



RACE FOR THE CURE---SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2016

Montessori Schools of Irvine is proud to sponsor our own team, "Montessori in Motion", for the Susan G. Komen Orange County Race for the Cure at Fashion Island on Sunday, September 25, 2016. This is our 16th year as a team!!! All parents, families and friends are invited to join our staff and be part of this wonderful and moving experience. We will be led once again by our team captain, Miss Betsi, from our Village Montessori. We will have a small table, located in the "Team Area". Registration forms are available at the front desk and are due back no later than Monday, September 12, or registration can be completed on-line.

If registering online; register under the Team Name: MONTESSORI IN MOTION. Also, please let your school director know that you have registered online so that our team captain, Miss Betsi will know which school to distribute your race materials. Miss Betsi will deliver "Race for the Cure" t-shirts and bibs to each school. Thank you for your donations and for joining us! See you there!

SCHOOL PICTURE DAY

Save Tuesday, October 4 for School Picture Day. Images 4 Kids will be taking our photos again this year. Images 4 kids will be taking both individual and class photos of all infants – primary children. More information and PREPAID picture packets will follow in your child's Friday Folders.



PUMPKIN PATCH FIELD TRIP- Thursday, October 20th!

Again this fall we will be traveling to Tanaka Farms Pumpkin Patch and vegetable gardens, located in Irvine. The Tanaka Farms Pumpkin Patch allows children to pick their own pumpkins right off of the vines. The trip also includes a wagon ride to the petting zoo and a corn maze! Look for more information in the October Newsletter. Permission slips will be available in October. Registration is done on a first come/first serve basis and the trip will close once the buses are full. Children under 4 years old must be accompanied by a parent as a chaperone. **All children attending must wear their Montessori rainbow shirt!**

PARKING

Thank you for your patience as we monitor the parking lot in the mornings. Culverdale Elementary often makes parking difficult in the mornings as the public school resumes. We do our best to help the elementary school parents understand that Westpark's parking lot is for all of you. Just give us a little wave to help us know that you belong in our lot.

*******KINDERGARTEN EXTRAS*******

JUST FOR YOU!

This section will periodically hold special announcements that are important in addition to the rest of the newsletter. Watch for special "big kid" activities sponsored by the school as well as special visitors and events for our kindergarten and primary children.

KINDERGARTEN ORIENTATION

There will be a special Kindergarten orientation on Thursday, September 15 at 5:00 pm in Ms. Jennifer's class. Parents are encouraged to attend this important meeting to hear about learning goals and changes in school routines for these children. Please plan on joining us for Spaghetti Dinner immediately following kindergarten orientation.

HOMEWORK POLICY

As a new school year begins, we wish to clarify our school policy that **NO HOMEWORK IS ISSUED FOR PRESCHOOL OR KINDERGARTEN CHILDREN!** Homework begins at the first grade level. Homework is just that – HOME work. The objective is two-fold. It unites children and parents so that parents can encourage and reinforce the idea of studying while keeping parents apprised of their children's work habits and learning curve. It teaches the children to plan ahead, budget their time, take pride in and be independently responsible for their own learning. We ask that parents encourage their children but **REFRAIN** from doing the assignments **FOR** the child. Assignments are given with respect to children's abilities and they should be able to complete them diligently and independently. It is also the **STUDENT'S** responsibility to return assignments to school on the day that they are due. A reminder or two might be necessary but it is a learning experience for the student to be responsible!

Homework assignments are sent home on Mondays. Spelling tests and homework are scheduled for Thursdays with longer assignments such as book reports or projects due the following Monday. This allows parents and children ample time for completion as well as the choice of whether or not to use the weekend.

EXTRA NEWS FOR TODDLERS AND TWOS!

DAILY COMMUNICATION FORM PROCEDURES

Parents have made several suggestions about communications in the toddler area on our NAEYC parent questionnaire. A summary of comments is basically, more information and use less paper – go green!

Montessori Schools of Irvine charts your child's development on a developmental profile which teachers will share with you at least twice each year which will give you more information about your child's overall development.

In addition to this information that we are sharing, daily communication is streamlined to "go green" and try to conserve paper. Thus, instead of individual sheets of paper going to each parent, we post general communications on a chart similar to diapering. This chart is kept on a clipboard on the toddler communication counter at the beginning and end of each day. Please complete the parent side on the left when you arrive and we will complete the right side during the day. Any special information will be exchanged through notes – "take notes" will be completed by parents and handed to the teacher. Other notes indicating special events or needs your child has will continue to be placed in their box but a star ★ on the daily will indicate that the note is there.

SEPTEMBER TEACHING THEME

Zoo animals are The Toddler's and Two's teaching theme this month!

FAMILY "SPAGHETTI" NIGHT

We would like to invite all parents and children in the Toddler area to join in the Family Spaghetti Night. See above for more details and information.

DATES TO REMEMBER

| | | |
|-----------|----|--|
| September | 6 | First day of the Fall Term |
| September | 15 | Family Spaghetti Night |
| September | 16 | Book Club order DUE |
| September | 25 | Race for the Cure |
| October | 4 | School Picture Day |
| October | 6 | Montessori 101 – Overview and Orientation- at Village Montessori |
| October | 20 | Pumpkin Patch Field Trip |



STAFF BIRTHDAYS

| | |
|--------------|------------------------------|
| September 10 | Miss Monika |
| September 17 | Mr. Tomas (Facilities Mngr.) |
| September 22 | Miss Angelica |
| October 1 | Miss Ingrid |



STAFF ANNIVERSARIES

Richard and Cheryl **THANK** our wonderful and loyal staff members! Your dedication and contributions to the children and families you work with are appreciated more than words can express!

| | | |
|--------------|------------|----------|
| September 1 | Miss Genna | 6 years |
| September 9 | Miss Dinah | 14 years |
| September 17 | Miss Mayra | 4 years |

Chef Cyndi's Kitchen - Hispanic Heritage Month



Chef Cyndi's "Famous" Bean & Cheese Burritos

Flour Tortillas
Vegetarian Refried Beans
Grated Cheddar Cheese

- Place a scoop of refried beans on a flour tortilla
 - Add grated cheese
- Tuck on both ends of flour tortilla and roll
 - Place on a lined cookie sheet
- Bake at 350° until lightly golden (5-10 min.)
 - Serve with your salad or rice



SCHOOL CALENDAR AND ACTIVITY GUIDE 2016 – 2017

FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL FOR THE NEW SCHOOL TERM- SEPTEMBER 6, 2016

HOLIDAY AND VACATION DATES WHEN THE SCHOOLS ARE CLOSED

| | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| VETERANS' DAY | NOVEMBER 11 (Friday) |
| THANKSGIVING | NOVEMBER 24 - 25 |
| WINTER RECESS | DECEMBER 19 - JANUARY 2 |
| MARTIN LUTHER KING | JANUARY 16 |
| PRESIDENTS' DAY | FEBRUARY 20 |
| CESAR CHAVEZ DAY | MARCH 31 (Friday) |
| MEMORIAL DAY | MAY 29 |
| SUMMER RECESS | JULY 3 - 7 |
| TEACHER INSERVICE DAY | SEPTEMBER 1 (Friday) |
| LABOR DAY | SEPTEMBER 4 |

WINTER HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSES (2016) (*CHILD CARE ENDS AT 5:00)

| | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Village – December 12, 2016 | University - December 13, 2016 |
| Westpark - December 14, 2016 | Northwood - December 15, 2016 |

GRADUATION & YEAR END PERFORMANCE (2017) (*CHILD CARE ENDS AT 5:00)

| | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| Village - June 19, 2017 | University - June 20, 2017 |
| Westpark - June 21, 2017 | Northwood - June 22, 2017 |

PRESCHOOL THROUGH THIRD GRADE PARENT CONFERENCES (ALL SCHOOLS)

| | | |
|----------------------------|------------------|--------------|
| All Day conferences: | November 2, 2016 | May 17, 2017 |
| Early Morning conferences: | November 4, 2016 | May 19, 2017 |

THE SUMMER MONTHS

Montessori Schools of Irvine provide a year-round program. During July and August a special learning theme is selected around which additional field trips, visitors, and projects revolve to provide extra summer fun. Brochures and information about special trips and the summer theme are released each June. Please consult the school office for more details.

TEACHER PREPARATION WEEK (ALL SCHOOLS) August 28 – 31, 2017

High caliber teachers continue to develop their skills by learning new techniques, refreshing seasoned ones and taking the time to plan and organize. Montessori Schools of Irvine provide a teacher preparation/in-service week before sessions to ensure your child a teaching staff of the highest caliber. June 26-30, 2017 and August 28–31, 2017 our childcare staff will provide child care only. Montessori classes will NOT be in session.

(NOTE: All schools will be CLOSED on Friday, Sept. 1, 2017 due to full staff in-service.)

FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL FOR THE NEXT SCHOOL TERM - **SEPTEMBER 5, 2017**



AMERICAN MONTESSORI SOCIETY
education that transforms lives