



Montessori Schools of Irvine
February 2017



PRESIDENTS' DAY

Montessori Schools of Irvine will be **CLOSED Monday, February 20** in observance of President's Day!

PRE-REGISTRATION FOR THE 2017-18 SCHOOL TERM!

All of us at Montessori Schools of Irvine thank you for the privilege of sharing the precious moments of your child's early childhood years with us.

While it is hard to believe, it is already time to plan for your child's coming year with pre-registration for continuing enrollment. Pre-registration allows us to guarantee for your child's placement in the coming year. Pre-registration forms for students have been distributed in Friday folders and forms are available in the front office if you need an additional copy.



PRE-REGISTRATION FOR PRESCHOOL REQUIRED FOR CONTINUED ENROLLMENT

Continuing **preschool begins February 13 and continues to February 24.** We ask **ALL** families to complete a registration form so that we can plan accordingly. Pre-registration for continued enrollment **CLOSES** on February 24, after which time any child not registered will be removed from the July class lists and registration will be open to those on our waiting list. Transfer requests from our other schools will be dated and timed and accepted for openings that become available after our first week of in-school registration. Please feel free to contact your school director with any questions you may have regarding your child's continuing enrollment or you can feel free to call Cheryl Ruszat, Executive Director of the Montessori Schools of Irvine at (949) 854-6030.

PRE-REGISTRATION FOR KINDERGARTEN AND 1ST THROUGH 3RD GRADE!

Enrollment for Kindergarten and the Primary grades is on a first come, first served basis. Registration begins on **February 13**. Registration closes on **February 24**. We ask ALL families to please return a registration form, even if you are not continuing for the coming year, so that we can plan appropriately. You can register by returning the registration form and the enrollment fee. Please note that all fees are **NON-REFUNDABLE** even if you should withdraw your child for any reason. *Children must continue attendance through the summer session in order to remain enrolled in September.*

PRIMARY GRADES AT VILLAGE MONTESSORI

Last year, due to the demonstrated strength of our Montessori curriculum and program for first through third grade, we had to modify our program to adjust to the increasing enrollment. We have thus added amenities supporting a progressive learning environment for all of our schools in the kindergarten rooms but also expanded the classroom amenities for **first -third grade at our Village Montessori School**, across from the University Park library and park.

KINDERGARTEN ELIGIBILITY

The State of California and thus the State public school system has now completed their transition of deadline for the age of kindergarten enrollment. To attend kindergarten for the 2016-2017 school year, children must be 5 years old **BY SEPTEMBER 1, 2017**. At the time of this newsletter, the transitional kindergarten (which is half day **preschool**) that was offered by the district has not been funded and we have not been notified if it will be available for the coming year. Please contact your school district for information. Montessori Schools of Irvine adhere to the State entry level age.

Please note: Children who are eligible to enroll in kindergarten are required by the state to have a birth certificate on file. Children who attend our kindergarten are also evaluated for their developmental strengths by Chancy & Bruce Educational Services. This evaluation is required as a part of the registration process. This is not an entrance exam or IQ test! It is simply a standardized documentation of your child's development and learning style strengths as they progress into the next phase of their education. Evaluations of this type are also a criterion for our ongoing NAEYC Accreditation.

"TRANSITIONAL KINDERGARTEN"

When the State of California changed the entry date for first grade (and thus voluntary kindergarten) from December 2 to September 1, they created a "transitional kindergarten" for children who missed the deadline but were born before December 2 to help parents cope with the change. This was also the State's attempt to provide a universal preschool option for some parents. Transitional kindergarten is NOT early entry into kindergarten. The law states: "A child who completes one year in a transitional kindergarten program, **shall continue in a kindergarten program for one additional year.**" Transitional kindergarten is, in fact, PRE kindergarten or PREschool!!

Public transitional kindergarten programs are only 3 hours a day with ratios of up to 33-1 and a curriculum focusing on skills your children have already acquired from their experiences in Montessori! Montessori early childhood classes are designed for children ages 3-6 – a three-year span which includes transitional kindergarten and curriculum geared to individualized learning at a broader scope. The Montessori curriculum provides a much more comprehensive preparation for later learning which is why children who stay longer in a Montessori environment of teaching demonstrate stronger learning skills in later grades. **Research supports the fact that children who transition from the early childhood program into kindergarten at the appropriate age excel throughout their education and in life. (Science 29 September 2006, Vol. 313, no.5795, pp. 1893-1894)**

PRIORITY PLACEMENT

Enrollment at each school is on a priority basis to those children already attending that school. Parents wishing to transfer to another one of our school locations need to register only at their **current** school at the beginning of that school's registration date. Children must be registered to continue at their current school in order to be eligible to transfer to another location. Please **mark on your registration form** that you are **requesting a transfer**. Directors will transfer enrollment on an availability and first come, first served basis with transfer spaces open after the first week of in-school registration.



TUITION RATES FOR THE COMING YEAR

The staff and administration at Montessori Schools of Irvine are very aware of the challenges of today's economy. Like you, we also look at managing the budget to be able to provide the services we have promised you within the financial challenges presented to us. As we look at our projections for the coming year, we share with you that our focus is to continue to provide the high quality of education that you expect. Like you, in spite of the economic times, we continue to have increased expenses. Our contracts with staff guarantee an annual increase in salary, as well as additional costs to maintain high quality employee benefits. Our vendors that supply materials have also informed us of increases, especially in food cost increases for our lunch program. While we will need to cover these increases to maintain the high educational standards of the school, we will do everything we can to be mindful of the economic situation before us. The tuition rates for the **current 2016-2017 school year** which ends August 31, 2017 are: \$1,385 for full day preschool and \$1,425 for Kindergarten-Primary. We anticipate that the increase for the 2017-2018 school year will be no more than approximately 5% per month. We will make every effort to keep our quality and services better and tuitions costs comparable or below that of other surrounding programs. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact Richard Ruszat at (949) 854-6030.

PARENT WORKSHOP - Chancy & Bruce developmental assessment RESULTS

The parent workshop for the Educational Resources developmental assessment results for children entering Kindergarten this fall will be held on February 2 at 6:30 p.m. Your child's individual results will be available to you at the beginning of the meeting so you can refer to them as the developmental areas are explained. A representative from Chancy & Bruce Developmental Service will not only be explaining kindergarten developmental documentation and how children learn, she will also be available to answer questions regarding your child's evaluation results. If your child participated in the assessment, please try to attend this important workshop! While a representative will not be at our school other than at the meeting to explain the results or questions, you can pick up any remaining screening results at the front desk the following morning.

Baby-sitting is available for all children 2 1/2 years and older (toilet taught). The cost is \$5 per child. Please register yourselves and your child, as this will help us to provide adequate staff and seating. Signups are now posted in the front office. Please pay the staff member who is baby-sitting at the door upon your arrival.

Bonnie Bruce, the founder of Chancy & Bruce Developmental Service, holds a M.Ed. in Early Childhood Special Education and has taught in both private and public schools. She directs an Institute for Child Development. Since the early 1980's Mrs. Bruce has been in private practice working with over 200 Early Childhood Centers in Southern California. She lectures throughout Southern California on the subject of development and the correlation for school success.



THE PEACE ROSE

Montessori Education assists children in the process of learning to problem solve effectively. The Montessori Peace Rose is a curriculum which encourages children to learn to share, listen, and understand another person's point of view and work cooperatively with others to solve problems.

Constructing knowledge by making mistakes is a part of the natural process of learning to solve problems. Disagreements between children are an inevitable type of "mistake" that children make that they can learn and grow from.

There is a Montessori Peace Rose in every classroom and the children are taught how to handle and care for the rose. When a conflict arises, one child takes the peace rose and while holding the rose, expresses what their problem was with a situation with another child. When they are finished expressing their point of view, they pass the rose to the other child who has their chance. They continue to pass the rose back and forth making their individual "I" statements ("I" felt sad when you wouldn't do that job with me!) and listening with respect until a solution is solved or they simply are over the difficulty. When done, the children both put their hands on the peace rose and say, "We declare peace!"

This very simple method of practicing problem solving reinforces treating each other respectfully and with care as well as the idea that freedom comes with some boundaries that keep everyone safe. It also removes the teacher from the center of a conflict and instead puts the dispute and resolution back between the children involved and promotes the development of skills that will last them a life time.

On Valentine's Day, each classroom will be doing a special peace rose presentation to their class. **Please remember to ask your child about their peace rose.** *It works at home with families just as well as with classroom communities!*



VALENTINE EXCHANGE FOR PRESCHOOL AND KINDERGARTEN-PRIMARY

The preschool-primary children will all participate in a valentine exchange on **Tuesday, February 14**. Please bring in your child's valentines no later than Tuesday, February 7 and **FOLLOW THE "HELPFUL HINTS" BELOW:**

PRESCHOOL: Bring in approximately **32** valentines. Help your child **SIGN THE BACK OF THE VALENTINE ONLY** (at home!). **PLEASE DO NOT** address the envelopes to the children in the class. On Valentine's Day each child will pass out their own valentines to their classmates without having to recognize each name.

KINDERGARTEN-PRIMARY: Bring in **29** valentines. Each child will **sign** and **address** their own valentines **in class** as a class project and distribute them on Valentine's Day.

A special AM Snack Sign Up for Valentine's Day will be posted on Friday, February 3.



PANCAKE DAY AND PJ'S

Tuesday, February 28 is "Pancake Day". This is an easy morning - everyone comes dressed in their pajamas or can wear their clothes backwards. Pancakes will be served for lunch, with bagels and cream cheese for PM snack. Sorry, **no slippers** on this day as the children will be playing outside!



DENTAL HEALTH MONTH

FEBRUARY is National Dental Health Month. Remember to brush and floss!



AFRICAN AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

February is African American Heritage Month. The children will explore the richness of the African culture during this time with a study of African folktale and the many contributions to society made by African Americans. We welcome any parent wishing to share information with their child's class to schedule a time with the head teacher.

PARKING AND SAFETY

PLEASE!!!! Keep your children and others safe in our parking lot by slowing down, being aware and PARKING IN THE CORRECT PARKING PLACES. Please DO NOT LEAVE ANY CHILDREN ALONE IN THE CAR! Please also turn your car off when you walk your child into the school.

ILLNESS POLICY

The State Regulations require that every child arriving at school should be healthy and feeling good. Children showing any signs of illness are asked to remain home until signs and symptoms are gone. If your child develops any signs of illness during the school day, you will be contacted immediately. Children being sent home with signs of illness must remain home FOR THE FOLLOWING DAY OF SCHOOL AND until all signs of illness are gone. For more detailed information, please see our school Brochure. Some illnesses will require a longer "stay-home" time. While we try to send home a written illness reminder, we sometimes "miss" you, however, the policy remains. Please notify the school *immediately* of any illnesses your child has been diagnosed with or possibly exposed to.

A NOTE FROM "FAMILIES FORWARD" Thanksgiving

Over 900 families received baskets filled with ingredients needed to prepare traditional Thanksgiving meal! Over 80 corporations, schools, and faith groups hosted Thanksgiving food drives and countless individuals donated food and gift cards. On the weekend prior to Thanksgiving, meals were distributed by hundreds of volunteers to local families in need. Thank you!



DATES TO REMEMBER:

- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| FEBRUARY | African American Heritage Month and Dental Health Month |
| February 2 | Chancy & Bruce Results Meeting |
| February 7 | Bring in Valentine's (K/Primary children will complete in class) |
| February 13 | Registration for the 2017-18 school year begins |
| February 14 | Valentine Exchange and Party |
| February 20 | SCHOOL CLOSED – PRESIDENTS' DAY |
| February 24 | LAST DAY to register for the coming school year before dropped from enrollment for July |
| February 28 | Pajamas and Pancakes Day |
| MARCH | |
| Friday, March 31 | SCHOOL CLOSED- CESAR CHAVEZ DAY |



FEBRUARY STAFF BIRTHDAYS

Miss Lisa February 16th

Miss Tania February 22nd

Chef's Corner by Chef Cyndi *SWEETHEART FINGER SANDWICHES*



INGREDIENTS

- 2 slices white or whole wheat bread (makes one sandwich)
- 1 tbsp (15 mL) cream cheese
- 1 tbsp (15 mL) **Smucker's** Pure Raspberry Jam or any type of jam or jelly
- Optional: Fill with any kind of sandwich filling; cheese, chicken salad, tuna, etc.
- You will need: Heart shaped cookie cutters, one large, one small

DIRECTIONS

Remove crusts from bread and cut out a 3.5" (9cm) heart with a heart shaped cookie cutter from each slice. Spread one heart with cream cheese and top with jam. Punch a smaller heart (2"/5cm) into second slice of bread and place on top of jam to form a sandwich. Press down slightly
