



DECEMBER 2017 – WESTPARK MONTESSORI SCHOOL OF IRVINE

TO ALL OUR FAMILIES:

As the holiday season approaches, we want to thank each of you for the gift you have given us by allowing us to teach and care for your wonderful children. We know that your children are most precious to your hearts and we are honored that you would share your families and these early years of your children’s development, learning, and joy with us.

Sincerely,

*Cheryll and Richard Ruszat, Executive Directors
And the staff of the Montessori Schools of Irvine*

A Note From Miss Pennee

I just wanted to let everyone know that I am scheduled for a second hip replacement surgery in early December. As I am sad not to be at Westpark during the holiday season, I am looking forward to being able to start the new year with good health. Miss Lisa will be here as Director until I return in mid-January. I wish everyone a happy and healthy holiday season.

YOU ARE INVITED! - CHILDREN’S WINTER PROGRAM

Each year our school is filled with the joyful performances of our preschool and kindergarten children singing for their families in their classrooms. Please join us on **Tuesday, December 13 AT 5:00!**

Parents are invited to pick up their children from the atrium and ***proceed directly to their children’s classroom by going through the atrium double doors to their child’s playground classroom entry.***

Program:

Toddler Parent Sing-Along - 4:45-5:00

Ms. Dinah and Miss Ina’s classes – Performance at 5:00-5:15

Miss Jenn’s (Preschool) - Performance at 5:15- 5:30

Kindergarten – Performance at 5:30

(Please note: some classes perform at the same time).

Thank you for assisting us in keeping your child safe and happy on open house night

After your child’s performance, please join us in the atrium and enjoy some holiday cookies.



Candy canes will be given to the children as you leave for home.



VERY IMPORTANT – PLEASE READ!



School CLOSES at 5:00 PM on Wednesday, December 13!

For our HOLIDAY PROGRAM

REMINDER: LATE FEES OF \$1 per minute are charged for children picked up after 5:00

Parking for the Winter Program

Due to the large number of full families and multiple cars arriving in a short period of time, we are cautioning parents to plan on additional time to find parking. In addition to our school parking lot, parents can find parking in the Culverdale school parking lot, on the school side of San Leandro, or in the surrounding neighborhood.

CHILDREN'S PARTY

Friday, December 15 is the day of our annual children's classroom holiday party. Parents are invited to sign up on the PARTY snack list to bring treats on that day. The PARTY snack sign up will be posted on Thursday, December 7.



FAMILIES FORWARD

DIGNITY • EMPOWERMENT • HOPE

A "BIG" THANK FOR THE OCTOBER/NOVEMBER DONATIONS!

A big thank you to all of the families who donated candy to "Operation Gratitude" and canned goods to "Families Forward"! Your kindness and generosity is appreciated by both charities. Our donation bins were overflowing with candy and canned goods!



TOYS FOR TROOPS

Each year Montessori Schools of Irvine holds a toy drive for children in need. This year we will be collecting toys for "Toys for Troops". Toys for Troops will collect new, unwrapped toys for children of actively deployed units from Camp Pendleton and Marine Corps Air Station Miramar. Our toy collection begins now, **the last day to donate is: Thursday, December 7!**

Gift Ideas? Below is taken from the Toys for Tots website:

Q: Is there a list of toys available to guide me with my donation?

Toys for Troops does not publish a list of appropriate toys to donate. If such a list were created, most would follow it, resulting in a limited selection of items to distribute in each community. We would rather our donors consider what might be an appropriate gift for their own child/relative, purchase the item, and donate to Toys for Troops.



DECEMBER IS MULTI-CULTURAL!

December is a month of many holidays and festivities. December brings with it many festive celebrations from all over the world. Montessori Schools of Irvine invite our families to share their rich heritage and family traditions with their children's classmates. Please help us include all those who wish to participate by scheduling your presentation with your child's teacher. Thank you for your enriching gift of time and heritage during this special time of the year.

Reminder: All parents wishing to share must have their immunization record on file with the school director.

KlayKids Pottery Paint Day!

Projects made by your little ones will make wonderful holiday gifts... Don't miss out- sign up by completing the form at the front desk. The painting date will be Thursday, December 8th.

JACKETS, SWEATERS AND COATS

We do encourage your child to put on their coat when the weather is cooler, however, they do not always leave them on. Please help us by reinforcing this message at home.

WINTER RECESS! - Schools Closed

Please remember that Montessori Schools of Irvine will be **CLOSED** from **December 25, 2017-Friday, January 5, 2018**. We wish all of you and your family a fun-filled recess. School resumes on **Monday, January 8, 2018**.

What will you do on recess? Here are a few ideas:

1. Go to **Build a Bear – then donate it** to the Salvation Army who will give to a child “in need”. Salvation Army has a church at 10200 Pioneer Road Tustin, CA 92782 - 714.832.7100. They would LOVE to have a few bears!
2. Invite 2 other families over and bake different kinds of cookies! Then have a **cookie exchange**.
3. Use your iPad and record a children’s play **starring your child!**
4. Have a family pizza party – with **homemade pizza (or almost homemade)**. Make or buy pizza dough and top it with all your favorites. (Don’t forget the veggies!)
5. Go to a public library and show the children **how a real library works!** Get a free library card!
6. Go to an art museum! Museums expose children to new ideas and visions and help develop **higher critical and creative thinking skills!**
7. **Ride the train to Los Angeles** and shop in **Chinatown**. Eat dim sum at Express Pavilion or Ocean Seafood where you can pick what you want from steaming carts. Then shop for knick-knacks and souvenirs. Even have desert from one of the great bakeries!
8. **Ride the train to Los Angeles** and shop at **Olvera Street**. Olvera Street is home to dozens of craft shops, restaurants and businesses with roving troubadours. The exterior facades of the brick buildings enclosing Olvera Street and on the small vendor stands lining its center are colorful piñatas, hanging puppets, Mexican pottery, serapes, mounted bull horns, and oversized sombreros. Olvera Street attracts almost two million visitors per year who can find the customs and trades of the Mexican and Latino traditions of Los Angeles commemorated in a walkable outdoor shopping mall.
9. When was the last time you went **bowling?!** It is a hoot with the children! Use bumpers for the young ones at Irvine Lanes.
10. Buy some Prismacolor colored pencils from Michael’s and learn some special techniques at <https://www.art-is-fun.com/colored-pencil-instruction/> - Children can make their own **thank you notes** to send!
11. Get out some blankets, put on your jammies, pop some HOME MADE POPCORN and snuggle up in front of the TV to **watch the Polar Express** – maybe even **ride the Polar Express** – there is a great one in Arizona (Grand Canyon Railway Express - <https://www.thetrain.com/special-events/the-polar-express/>). The Ruszat’s and their younger son’s family did this - BEST family weekend EVER!
12. Brainstorm a few other things to do and share them with us when you return in January!



BROWN PAPER BAG DAY- Wednesday, December 20

Friday, December 22 is our last day of session until Monday, January 8, 2018. Please send a **BROWN PAPER GROCERY BAG** to school on **WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 20** so that all holiday projects can be taken home.

PAJAMA DAY AND DAYCARE DAY – FRIDAY, DECEMBER 22

Friday, December 22 is our last day of school for 2017! As our teachers use that day to prepare for the coming semester, our children’s activities will be focused on play and fun and will function as a “daycare only” day for all children. Snacks and lunch will be served as usual. Montessori lessons and daily routines will begin again upon our return in January 2018!

EXTRA CLOTHES – FRIDAY, DECEMBER 22!

On Friday, December 22 all extra clothes will be sent home. Please check your child's bag and make sure the clothes still fit your growing children and are appropriate for colder weather. Please send replacements back on Monday, January 8, 2018 and be sure to put your **child's name** on all items!

BITING

Some of our youngest children are growing up and moving from our toddler area into our preschool classrooms. These youngest children, while quite used to being at school are now in a room with many more children and a multitude of new activities to explore. As they make this important transition, they are also making new friends. During these times, as they problem solve when things do not work out as they think they would, for example when they are not sure how to ask another child to play with them, they may become stressed or resort to acts such as biting to get a child's attention. This toddler behavior sometime resurfaces during transition times but disappear as the adjustment to preschool settles in. Teachers work closely with the families to reinforce proper social engagement and using language for problem solving. Please be patient with our youngest friends if they have chosen to bite your child. We promise we are working through these times in the most appropriate ways.

Our policy for injurious behavior is to first redirect the behavior but when it is ongoing a child may be asked to suspend their attendance until they can cope in the classroom. Parents who wish to know who a child that is having difficulty is, we apologize, but due to privacy issues we are unable to share that information. Please trust us to know that we are acting on it.

COLD AND FLU SEASON

It is that time of year again. We hope that your family will have a healthy winter! However, if your child does come down with a cold or flu, please remember that state licensing does not permit us to allow children to attend school if they show **ANY** signs of illness. CHILDREN MUST REMAIN HOME THE ENTIRE FOLLOWING SCHOOL DAY (WITHOUT EXCEPTION) AFTER BEING SENT HOME DUE TO SIGNS OF ILLNESS. The additional rest time helps them to fully recover, builds their resistance, and also helps prevent the spreading of illness to other children. All children who are healthy enough to be at school must be able to participate in both inside *and* outside activities and should thus be dressed accordingly.

School officials can administer **prescription medication** (such as ongoing antibiotics for bacterial infections) **only!** If your child requires continued medication during the day upon their return to school, parents will need to complete a medication form at the front desk. Please note that ALL information must be completed and the forms signed by the parent before we are allowed to dispense the medicine. Over-the-counter medication that masks signs of illness will require school personnel to send the child home due to the contagious nature of symptoms these medications attempt to cover.



WHAT NEXT!!! - PRESCHOOL IS ALMOST OVER - WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

KINDERGARTEN – PRIMARY GRADES OPTIONS NIGHT

Why the Next Step is Critical for Your Child's Ongoing Academic Success

Miss Cheryll, Executive Director of the Montessori Schools of Irvine will be hosting a special meeting to work with parents as they make this important lifetime decision for their children. The program will be held at our **VILLAGE** Montessori school which is centrally located for the four schools as well as the

home of our early elementary program. The meeting will be held on **Thursday, January 18, 2018** and will begin promptly at 6:00 and last until 7:00.

Parents will be introduced to California public school rankings, a review of common core and receive special information on the research proven Montessori kindergarten/elementary curriculum, methods, teacher/child ratios as well as the wealth of other information parents seek to choose the best match for their child's continuing education.

Our experience has demonstrated the extraordinary difference a Montessori kindergarten and the early elementary years make on a child's academic school success throughout their lifetime. Some insight into why and what research has shown will be presented on this night as well as a forum to ask whatever questions you may have about "what's next".

Due to the large group that usually attends and the amount of information being shared, this meeting **WILL NOT** be repeated. Please check the January Newsletter for sign-up information.

***** **EXTRA NEWS FOR TODDLERS AND TWO'S** *****

TODDLER SING-ALONG

Our annual Children's Winter Program will be held on Wednesday, December 13. The Toddlers and Two's will again have a combined "Sing-A-Long" in the Two's Room from 4:45-5:00 PM. Please join our staff and your children for this joyous event. Please remember to plan extra time for parking!

DATES TO REMEMBER

December 5	Polar Express Day
December 7	Last day to donate toys to "Toys for Tots"
December 7	Children's Party AM Snack Sign Ups
December 13	WINTER PROGRAM- ****SCHOOL CLOSSES AT 5:00!****
December 15	Children's Holiday Party
December 20	Bring in a BROWN PAPER BAG
December 22	Last Day of School! Day Care Day
December 25-January 8, 2018	Winter Recess *** SCHOOL CLOSED***
January 1, 2018	Happy New Year!
January 8, 2018	School Resumes
January 18, 2018	Kindergarten-Primary Options Night at Village Montessori



DECEMBER STAFF BIRTHDAYS

December 3	Miss Dona
December 7	Miss Jenn
December 15	Miss Cheryl



THANK YOU TO CHEF CYNDI, MISS LASHONE, CHEF OSCAR and MISS DONA

A "BIG" thank you to our chefs at Montessori Schools of Irvine! The Thanksgiving Feast with all of the trimmings was delicious! The staff and children appreciate all of the prep and work that goes into making this special meal a success!!



Chef's Table by Executive Chef Cyndi Paulson

**Wishing you a Joyful Holiday Season from your food service staff-
Executive Chef Cyndi, Miss LaShone (Village),
Miss Dona (Westpark), and Chef Oscar (Northwood)**

WHITE CHOCOLATE TING-A-LINGS

INGREDIENTS

- 3½ c. chow mein noodles
- 2½ c. salted cocktail peanuts (optional) or raisins
- 32 oz. white chocolate candy coating, vanilla chips or candiquik
- Holiday candy sprinkles

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Mix chow mein noodles and peanuts or raisins in a large bowl.
2. Melt white chocolate over low heat until smooth; add chow mein noodles and mix well.
3. Drop by spoonful onto wax paper; top with candy sprinkles.
4. Cool completely and store at room temperature.

