



DECEMBER 2019 – 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*

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 **Wednesday, December 11 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 - 4:45-4:55

Ms. Brooke’s and Ms. Anh’s class – Performance at 5:00-5:15

Ms. Ina’s and Ms. Jennifer’s class- Performance at 5:15- 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

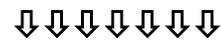
After your child’s performance, please join us in the atrium and enjoy some holiday cookies.



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 11!

For our HOLIDAY PROGRAM

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

Parking for the Winter Program

Due to the large number of 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 the school parking lot and school side of San Leandro, you can also park at Culverdale Elementary school or in the housing track.



HELP US KEEP YOUR CHILD SAFE!

Irvine has always been a place that is “safe” for us as families, so safe that we can sometimes take it for granted. We have been cautioned that these days we should become more vigilant about those approaching or entering our schools. Please remember that while fobs are required to open the doors to the school, they are only precautionary when the policy is observed by all of us!

PLEASE keep your fob with your car keys so that you have it handy. Even if a parent ahead of you swipes and enters – please **SWIPE YOUR FOB!** Our fobs also record those entering the facility. Most importantly – Please do not allow anyone to enter behind you! If they have a fob, they can use it. If you may have misplaced your fob, or have a family member for whom you need to purchase an additional fob, please speak to the school director. Thank you for your assistance in this matter.



FAMILIES FORWARD

DIGNITY • EMPOWERMENT • HOPE

A BIG THANK FOR THE NOVEMBER DONATIONS!

A big thank you to all the families who donated candy to “Operation Gratitude” and the Salvation Army. Also, a big that you for all of the canned goods to “Families Forward”! Your kindness and generosity is appreciated by both charities. Our donation bins were overflowing with candy and canned goods! Mr. TJ’s car was filled with candy from front to back!!



TOYS FOR TROOPS/WE GIVE WEDNESDAYS

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!** Please bring toys unwrapped and **for every toy you donate your child will receive a Christmas Troops sticker to write their name on and “hang” on our Donation tree.**

Wednesday, December 4th & Wednesday, December 11th our kindergarten children will be collecting all donations in our atrium.

The last day to donate is: Monday, December 16! Thank you in advance for your generosity.

Thank you for your generosity!

Below is taken from the Toys for Troops 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. *Please remember to include a variety of ages when considering gift donations, as older children often do not receive as many gifts.*

CHILDREN'S PARTY and PAJAMA

Thursday, December 19 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 5.

KlayKids

Pottery Paint Day!

Projects made by your little ones will make wonderful holiday gifts... Just a reminder: Sign ups went out in November. Check with your schools Director to see which pottery pieces are still available. The painting date will Be Friday, December 6th.



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.



BROWN PAPER BAG DAY- Wednesday, December 18

Friday, December 20 is our last day of session until Monday, January 6, 2020. Please send a **BROWN PAPER GROCERY BAG** to school on **WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 18** so that all holiday projects can be taken home.

EXTRA CLOTHES – FRIDAY, DECEMBER 20!

On Friday, December 20 all extra clothes will be sent home in your child's brown paper bag. 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 6, 2020 and be sure to put your **child's name** on all items!

DAY CARE DAY – FRIDAY, DECEMBER 20

Friday, December 20 is our last day of school for 2019! 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 2020!

WINTER RECESS! - Schools Closed

Please remember that Montessori Schools of Irvine will be **CLOSED** from **December 23, 2019-Friday, January 3, 2020**. We wish all of you and your families a fun-filled and relaxing recess. School resumes on **Monday, January 6, 2020**.

What will you do with the children during recess? Here are a few ideas:

1. Do a jigsaw puzzle! It is mesmerizing and the feeling of accomplishment is wonderful!
2. Go to a craft store and discover a new family hobby!
3. Take holiday treats to a retirement home, the Salvation Army or a shelter.
4. Play the Elf on the Shelf game or use any favorite stuffed toy of your choice for the fun of it all!
5. Make a tent in the family room or another room and read stories by flashlight.
6. Learn to play a classic board game, like Checkers, Candyland, or Chutes and Ladders.
7. Build a rocket kit and set it off at the park!
8. Make ornaments to decorate a tree if you have one.
9. Learn to make mozzarella cheese – did you know there are kits for this?!
10. Take the Amtrak to Los Angeles and see a play, or go to Olvera Street or China Town.
11. Pull out old magazines and choose funny pictures from ads – make up stories with your children about the people in the pictures (not the products!)
12. Help your children create a play from their favorite picture book starring your child.
13. Make costumes for the play.
14. Make scenery for the play.
15. Record the drama and post your creations.
16. Bake gingerbread or angel food cake (cake mix absolutely OK!) or make holiday cookies together.
17. Plant a tree – if it is evergreen decorate it with birdfeeders for the winter.
18. Make birdfeeders for the birds.
19. Go to the library or a bookstore and take home a book about Southern California backyard birds.
20. Purchase binoculars to watch the birds.
21. Take pictures of the birds you see and make a book with their species.
22. Take a nature walk and see what birds you can identify.
23. Take out paints, playdough or crayons and spend time creating with your children. Have them tell you about their creations.
24. Create a board game about something your family does, like going shopping.
25. Play cards – Old maid, Go Fish, or Uno!
26. Cuddle up and read together.
27. Check out family toys with your children – outgrown a few? Donate them to the Salvation Army for less fortunate children.
28. Go jogging.
29. Go bowling.
30. Ask your children what they would like to do!

SCHOLASTIC BOOK FAIR – DECEMBER 9-13TH

During this week, we will have our Scholastic Book Fair in our atrium between 3513-5:45 pm. We get a Scholastic Dollars to buy new books for our school with each purchase. Thank you for helping fill our classroom libraries. (Hint: Books make great holiday gifts!)

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 16, 2020** and will begin promptly at 6:00 and last until 7:00.

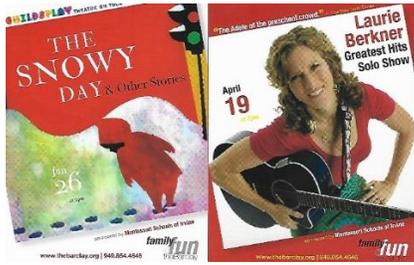
Parents will be introduced to California public school rankings, a review of common core and receive special information on the research proven Montessori kindergarten/elementary curriculum, methods, teacher/child ratios as well as the wealth of other information parents seek to choose the best match 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 attend and the amount of information being shared, this meeting **WILL NOT** be repeated. Please check the January Newsletter for sign-up information.

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



SAVE THE DATES – 10% DISCOUNT FOR MONTESSORI SCHOOLS OF IRVINE

Montessori Schools of Irvine are sponsoring two fantastic Children’s Theater Events at the Barclay theater! This is a wonderful way to introduce your child to the magic of theater arts in a lovely just the right sized theater that is warm and welcoming to one and all. Please join us for these fantastic events. Information cards were distributed in Friday folders 😊

Watch for information at the front desk later this month.

Sunday, January 26 at 2:00 pm - The Snowy Day and Other Stories

Sunday, April 19 at 2:00 pm – Laurie Berkner Greatest Hits Solo Show

@ The Barclay! Sponsored by the Montessori Schools of Irvine

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

TODDLER SING-ALONG

Our annual Children’s Winter Program will be held on Wednesday, December 11. The Toddlers and Two’s will again have a combined “Sing-A-Long” in the Two’s Room from 4:45-4:55 PM. Please join our staff and your children for this joyous event. Please remember to plan extra time for parking! And please remember **the school closes early this day and all children must be picked up by 5:00 PM.**

DATES TO REMEMBER

- December 9-13 Scholastic Book Fair
- December 11 **WINTER PROGRAM- *****SCHOOL CLOSSES AT 5:00!*******
- December 13 Pajama and Polar Express Day
- December 16 Last day to donate toys to “Toys for Troops”
- December 19 Bring in a **BROWN PAPER BAG**
- December 19 Children’s Holiday Party
- December 20 Last Day of School! Day Care Day

December 23-January 3, 2020 **Winter Recess *** SCHOOL CLOSED*****

- January 1, 2020 Happy New Year!
- January 6, 2020 School Resumes
- January 16, 2020 Kindergarten-Primary Options Night at Village Montessori



DECEMBER STAFF BIRTHDAY

- December 3 Miss Dona
- December 15 Miss Cheryl

December 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!



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

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 the prep and work that goes into making this special meal a success!!

And Thank You for all of the delicious meals and snacks throughout the school year!

Chef's Table by Executive Chef Cyndi Paulson

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

Christmas Sugar Cookie Pie



Ingredients

- 1** pouch (1 lb. 1.5 oz) Betty Crocker™ sugar cookie mix
- 1/2** cup butter, softened
- 1** egg
- 1/4** cup red, green and white candy sprinkles
- Frosting
- 1 1/2** cups powdered sugar
- 3** tablespoons of butter, softened
- 1/2** teaspoon vanilla
- 3** to 4 teaspoons milk
- Assorted holiday candies

Steps

- 1** Heat oven to 325°F. Spray bottom only of 9-inch pie plate with cooking spray.
- 2** In large bowl, mix cookie mix, 1/2 cup softened butter and egg with spoon until soft dough forms. Stir in candy sprinkles. Press dough in bottom of pie plate.
- 3** Bake 33 to 38 minutes or until center is set and edges are golden brown. If needed, cover edges of cookie with foil to keep from overbrowning. Cool completely, about 1 1/2 hours.
- 4** For frosting: In medium bowl, beat powdered sugar, 3 tablespoons softened butter, vanilla and 3 teaspoons of the milk with electric mixer on low speed until smooth and creamy. If needed add additional milk to make easier to spread.
- 5** Spread frosting over cookie pie. Decorate top of frosted cookie as desired with assorted holiday candies. To serve, cut into wedges.