

June 2009

Dear Families,

I hope that all of you are having a fun-filled, relaxing summer. Even though June is on the “up hill side” of summer and there is still time for many more adventures before school begins in August, we are sending out MPA’s Summer Packet of Information (Welcome Letters, Class Supply Lists, Summer Peek at the Peaks, etc.) in June in the hope that you will have some answers before you have questions!

This, our **class “summer” packet**, includes information regarding:

- **answers to questions** which usually come up at the beginning of each year
- **volunteer opportunities** before school begins
- our **class picnic** the Sunday evening after the first week of school
- **school supply list**

The following information is a lot to absorb and is a review for those of you who are “returning families” There are a few changes and if you are like me, all of last year’s “papers” are long gone, recycled into their next useful lives; this will be a fresh set for future reference!

#### **Answers to Questions.....**

**Drop Off:** This information applies to those of you who will walk your child into the building for the first time and probably for several days thereafter. Please drop off your child at the classroom door and leave promptly. It is understandable that your child may feel some separation anxiety. It may take a little while for your child to realize that mom, or dad, **will not be gone forever**, and will soon return. Experience has shown that children recover much more quickly **after** mom, or dad, has left. While there may be a few tears, they usually dry up quickly as your child begins to explore our wonderful Montessori environment. Later in the morning after an hour or so, if you are still feeling a bit anxious about your child, give us a quick call. Call directly to our classroom and we will let you know how things are going.

**Sign-In Sheet:** Please remember to **sign your student in and out** on the attendance sheet which is located on the desk outside our classroom door. **Child Care Licensing regulations require** that we have **both the time that you check your student in or out, and your name or initials**. Kindergartners are exceptions to this procedure. I will sign in those Kindergartners who are dropped off in the “hug and drop” car line. If you are more than 10 minutes late, please stop by the office to pick up a “late” slip for your student to bring to class. Kindergartners will be signed out at your car during car pool time at the end of the day.

**Snacks:** Your student has the opportunity to have a light snack in the morning. Families are requested to send in snacks on a rotating basis, generally monthly. Look for the **Sharing and Snack Calendar** and **Snack Information Sheet** during the first week of school. If any returning families would like to provide snack during the first week, it would be greatly appreciated. Please let me know so we won’t have an abundance of food all on one day!

**Sharing Day:** Your child's day for sharing is the same day you are requested to send snack for the class. On this day your child will be able to share a special experience, or a "treasure," with the class, if wishing to do so. Sharing provides a wonderful opportunity for your child to gain confidence in addressing a group. I do ask for your cooperation with regard as to "what" will be shared. Items such as special rocks, leaves or items that have some educational significance are welcome. In general, most **toys are inappropriate. Please keep them at home.**

**Lunch Time: Please supply any utensils** (no knives, please) cup, etc. necessary for your child to enjoy her or his lunch. Your student can clean their eating "equipment" and bring it home for reuse. Lunches which the students are able to assemble and put away by themselves are recommended in order to foster independence. Foods which are packaged "**toothpaste tube**" style are not recommended. When in the enthusiastic hands of a hungry young student, this "food" has an amazing ability to drip, splat or fly through the air!

**Birthdays:** We enjoy celebrating birthdays! When your child has a birthday, please send in a photo and a list of milestones for each year of your child's life. Sharing this information with the class is part of our celebration. We will also honor those children who have birthdays during the summer by recognizing "half-birthdays."

It seems that every year I manage to have one or two incorrect birthdates and don't realize it until it is too late, the date has passed or the timing is inconvenient for planning. Hopefully, we'll get this straight the first week this year! Please do not hesitate to let me know if the information I have is incorrect.

**Class Information:** Information specific to our class will be sent home on Mondays. This gives me a chance to clarify any general MPA information given out in the "Friday Folders" which might pertain to our class. Also, hopefully, our class information will not get lost in the general school news.

**Special Circumstances:** Life is full of surprises, both good and bad. If your family encounters any kind of difficulty which may impact your child's behavior, **please let me know.** We don't want to be privy to your personal business, but we can keep a watchful eye on a child who is feeling sad or distressed.

**Medications: All medication must be taken to the office where it will be administered to your child.** Please do not place medication (including nutritional supplements) of any kind in your child's backpack or lunch box.

**Candy, Gum and Toys:** Please keep them at home.

**Hats and Footwear:** Some children live to keep their hats on and to take their shoes off! If your child is so inclined, please remind him or her that hats are taken off and footwear is kept on in the classroom. (These rules are written in the school handbook.)

**Classroom Visits:** You are very welcome to make arrangements with me to observe our Montessori environment. I would appreciate your visiting after the Fall Conferences so the students will have time to settle into their new school year.

**Communication:** While the students are in class, my assistant and I need to give them our full attention and are not available for discussions. If you have any questions, or concerns, please leave a short message (find the pad outside our window) or call me at school and leave a message. I will call you as soon as possible. Also, do not hesitate to call me at home in the evenings, or on the weekends. My home phone number is (303) 792-0503. (The “message voice” is my son’s, you do not have a wrong number!)

**How Can I Help?** We would greatly appreciate your help!

**Volunteer Opportunities Before School Begins:** It is always exciting to prepare our Montessori environment for the coming year, cleaning and repairing existing pieces of work and adding new materials. The larger items in the environment also need to be cleaned and polished for that very special first day! If you would like to work on any of these projects and get a start on your volunteer hours, let me know. I am at school, or near by, most days!!! Give me a call; I can work within your schedule, even in the evenings.

- \* wiping off the “nap mats” and cleaning their cabinet.
- \* cleaning our wonderful large windows, inside and out.
- \* wiping out the wooden cubby spaces.
- \* cleaning the “stacks” of student drawers.
- \* washing the plastic boxes for “spare” clothes.
- \* cleaning our student chairs.

### **Volunteer Opportunities During the School Year**

- \* Clean outside of windows once a month...we treasure our “view.”
- \* Collate Picture Dictionary pages weekly, as needed.
- \* Cooking...if you like to cook, perhaps you would like to share your specialty with the children. Ethnic specialties can be woven into cultural presentations.
- \* Cultures...the students enjoy learning about different cultures.
- \* Field Trips (for Kindergartners)...drivers are always needed to make these events possible.
- \* Library Books...select and return an armful of “curriculum matching” books every two or three weeks.
- \* Skills to Share...share your profession, skill or interest with the students.
- \* Story Time...read to small groups of students for an hour.
- \* Substitute on “rare occasions” when my assistant or I am absent.
- \* Weekly class laundry... goes home Friday to be returned Monday.
- \* Wipe down nap mats weekly.
- \* Lunch Helpers...11:00-12:00; helping very independent students with lunch items too difficult to open and reading stories to those students who have cleaned up their lunches. (Either my assistant or I will always be with you and the students.)
- \* Class Directory...collect and compile volunteered information (names, addresses, telephone numbers.)

**Class Picnic:** Every year we have a class picnic the **Sunday after school begins**. It is a great time to meet families new to our class and renew acquaintances from past years. So... mark your calendars for Sunday, August 30<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 pm. Look for more details the first week of school!

## 2009-2010 Supply List for Dianne Lester's Class

In the spirit of ecology and economy, we will continue our abbreviated supply list. We have ample quantities of the usual items –glue sticks, markers, colored and regular pencils, etc. to start the school year. These I would like to use before stocking more. That said; please provide the following supplies for our class. They will be used communally so **please do not label them.**

- 1 large box of tissues: Puffs brand with no color or additives is best!
- 1 box of crayons: basic colors, **thick** in size
- 1 package of colored “construction” paper

- If last name ends with letters a-f: 1 box of “zip lock” gallon size bags
- If last name ends with letters g-r: 1 ream of white copy paper
- If last name ends with letters s-z: 1 box of “child” size band aides

The following articles are for your student's personal use. Please be sure that all items are clearly marked with your child's name so that they don't become lost or mixed with another child's articles. (Small pairs of jeans look remarkably alike!)

- 1 complete change of clothing in a zip lock bag
- 1 pair of slippers: no big, fluffy creatures, please!
- 1 small photo of your child for their cubby drawer
- 1 backpack: size appropriate for your child. (The cubbies are only 11 inches wide!)

### Supplies Needed for Students Eating Lunch at School

- 1 **standard sized** lunch box: storage space is limited...
- 1 **cloth napkin**: used as a place mat, will be washed weekly with class laundry
- 1 **napkin ring**

### Supplies Needed for “Nappers and Resters”

1 fitted crib-sized sheet: We have nap bags which have a small pillow and flannel blanket. The bag will also hold your fitted crib sheet. These bags will be sent home with your child on Fridays to be laundered and returned on Monday.

There is still a great part of the summer left – ENJOY! I look forward to hearing from you or meeting/seeing you when school begins. And please, call if you have any questions!

Sincerely,  
Dianne Lester

Home phone: 303-792-0503 (Don't hesitate to call anytime!)  
MPA: 303-972-2627 (Tuesday-Thursday, 9:00-3:00)