

Dear New and Returning Parents and Guardians!

I hope you are all enjoying the summer months. I am excited to inform you that your child will be a student in my upper elementary classroom for 2009-2010 at MPA. Also, I am happy to let you know that Cindy Snell will be returning as my assistant. She and I have enjoyed working together and this will be our third year at MPA as a teaching team. Mrs. Cindy, as we call her, is busy this summer with the Boy Scout Troop and her wonderful, active family. Her two sons are both MPA graduates. Don't tell anyone, but we have a lot of fun in the classroom and find ourselves laughing a lot ☺

This is my 14th year of teaching. I have spent the last eight as an elementary Montessori teacher, and the first 6 as a college professor and English Language teacher in Austria. I was honored to be a Fulbright Scholar after I graduated college from Pitzer College in Claremont, California in 1985. I spent six years living in Vienna, Austria. I married an Austrian, Wilfried Streicher, in 1986 and we moved back to my native Colorado in 1991.

After returning to the USA, I spent 10 years managing my father's medical practice in Denver. I have a Master's Degree in Healthcare Administration from DU. However, my first love was teaching and I did not hesitate to return to that career when the opportunity presented itself. I am a certified Montessori elementary educator for ages 6-12. I had the privilege of receiving my post-graduate training at the Montessori Education Center of the Rockies in Boulder. I am thrilled to have landed at the best school in the world. I love MPA! I have three children Heidi (12), Nikolaus (15), and Sydney (17). They keep me on my toes and in the car ☺! My father, my children, and I all attended Montessori schools.

Once again, the students will be working hard at math, reading, writing, grammar, science, and social studies. They will have individual, small group, and large group lessons in all curriculum areas.

I love to integrate all of the subjects through unit studies. We will be focusing on Europe, Ancient Rome, and European explorers and scientists. We will also be presenting a classroom Musical with a US history theme in the spring. Each year, the children write and self-publish their own books. We will also have a simulation activity at the end of the year and you will be invited to attend. Last year, we turned the classroom into a Mountain Man Rendezvous for our Colorado History Project. The children love these projects! All of this will be carried out using the Montessori philosophy and method of teaching.

One of the most common questions I get asked each year is about my homework policy. You can expect your child to have approximately 40-60 minutes of nightly homework. In addition to reading nightly, your child can expect nightly math homework, and weekly spelling and language packets. Children will also be expected to work on Study Island with weekly assignments. Children will have long-term and short-term research projects, as well.

Your child will be expected to complete daily classroom assignments independently, accurately, and efficiently. Children not completing their work will be required to complete it at home in addition to their nightly/weekly homework assignments. Children missing school will be required to complete classroom work at home. In addition to the CSAP test, your children will be formally assessed in math, language, and spelling weekly with periodic tests in writing, science, and social studies. Children will be completing four formal book report projects this year. These assessments are graded.

It is important to arrive in the classroom on time. Our time is precious and I like to use each moment we have; therefore, I begin instruction at 8am. Your child will receive a tardy if he or she arrives in the classroom at 8:11 am or later. We use an atomic clock to keep time (it is as accurate as a cell phone). Excessive tardy arrivals are disruptive to the entire classroom and especially to your child's learning. Children arriving in the classroom after 8:00 a.m. are responsible for making up any missed work. We may use recess time to allow children to make up assignments.

During the school year, I will send a weekly newsletter via e-mail and **Red Folder** (your child's homework folder). Please send me an e-mail to the address at the bottom of the page if you would like to be included on this broadcast list. I also send occasional reminders and updates to keep you informed of all events and activities.

We will have an opportunity to discuss these policies and plans for the school year at Back-to-School night in August in much further detail. In the meantime, enjoy the rest of the summer! I am excited to see the children back at school on Monday August 24, 2009 at 8:00 a.m. SHARP!

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