

July 2010

Dear Families,

I hope that all of you are having a fun-filled, relaxing summer. Even though it's summer time and the "livin' is easy", little thoughts and new ideas manage to creep into minds regarding the new school! The summer Peek at the Peak which has lots of school news and important information regarding Registration for the 2010-11 school year, will be in your mail boxes shortly. Our Class Newsletters and Class Supply Lists are coming to you this year via our Montessori Peaks Academy website, [www.mpeaks.net](http://www.mpeaks.net) with the thoughts and hopes that it will be more convenient for you, more helpful for the environment and easier on MPA's postage budget.

This, our **class "summer" newsletter**, 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!

#### **The "Annual" Answers to Questions..... (a few changes may be noted!)**

**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 day or two" for your child to realize that you **will not be gone forever** and will soon return. Experience has shown that children recover much more quickly **after** you have 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 all 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 your 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, Terri (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. I'll have my home phone number on the class notes which are sent handed out in class. (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 their cabinet.
- \* wiping out the wooden cubby spaces.
- \* washing the "stacks" of student drawers.
- \* washing the plastic boxes for "spare" clothes.
- \* washing our student chairs.
- \* sewing new nap bags
- \* washing nap bags and work rugs

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

- \* Clean outside of windows once a month...we treasure our "view."
- \* Collate Picture Dictionary pages weekly, as needed.
- \* Sharing your family's culture and traditions.
- \* 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 in the morning.
- \* Substitute on "rare occasions" when Terri or I are absent.
- \* Weekly class laundry... goes home Friday to be returned Monday.
- \* Wipe down nap mats weekly.
- \*\*\* Lunch Volunteers... 11:00-12:00; helping very independent students with lunch items too difficult to open and reading stories to those students who have finished and cleaned up their lunches. (Either Terri or I will always be with you and the students.)
- \* Class Directory...collect and compile volunteered information (names, addresses, and 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 29<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 pm. Look for more details the first week of school!

I hope that this information provides you with a helpful review or some "answers before you have questions."

## 2010-2011 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 –pencils, markers, construction paper, 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 small box of colored pencils: basic colors
- 1 “4 pack” of Play-Doh
- 1 small box of watercolor paints: basic colors
- 1 box of “Mr. Magic” style cleaning sponges
- 1 glue stick
- If last name ends with letters a-f: 2 boxes of “child” size band aides
- If last name ends with letters g-r: 1 ream of white copy paper
- If last name ends with letters s-z: 1 package of permanent black “Sharpie” markers with regular points

### **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. (to fit in an 11” wide cubby.)

### **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**
- Any utensil needed** for your child to eat their lunch...

### **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  
MPA: 303-972-2627 (Tuesday-Thursday, 9:00-3:00)