

August 6, 2020

Dear Families,

Welcome to the 2020-2021 school year at Dayton Montessori Society! I know it has probably been a challenging summer for each of you in many ways, but I hope you have found ways to enjoy the peace of being home with your families and are looking forward to the school year starting next month. The staff has been working this summer to start back up safely and we are excited to see you all soon, whether in person or virtually.

Thank you so much to those of you who have donated extra supplies to the school and who have dropped off pictures and chalked the driveway while we have been away. I am always so proud of and humbled by the wonderful community we have and the generosity and kindness you all have for each other. It gives me hope for this challenging year.

Student Paperwork

All student paperwork is due on August 28. If you have lost any forms, you can pick up copies at school during office hours (T & Th 12-3). The Dropbox is available for forms drop off anytime. Here is a list of which forms you do or do not need to turn in.

| | New Students to DMS | Returning 3-6 students | Returning Elementary students | Returning Virtual students |
|---|----------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Student Contact Information (3 pgs) | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Parent Handbook Acknowledgement & Tuition Payment Contract | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Release Authorization | Yes | Yes | Yes | No |
| Emergency Medical Authorization Form | Yes | Yes | Yes | No |
| Child Medical Statement & Immunization Record | Yes | Yes | No | No |
| Copy of Birth Certificate | Yes | No | No | No |

Other forms you may need to provide, if they pertain to your child's needs and records:

- Previous school records
- EdChoice forms and documentation
- Custody/Divorce/Restraint agreements
- Documentation of Immunization exemptions for medical reasons
- Physical Care Plans and/or Request for Administration of Medication at school
- Evaluation, assessments, or reports from medical specialists pertinent to your child's daily health or learning

Dayton Montessori Society Schools provides equal educational and employment opportunities for students and staff, regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, or sexual-orientation.

Parent Meetings and Parent Handbook

All families are invited to the first Parent Meeting on Thursday, September 3 at 7:00 on Zoom. There are meetings scheduled every other month that are listed on the calendar.

All parents/guardians should read the 2020-21 Parent Handbook on our website www.DaytonMontessori.org. You will receive a physical copy of the handbook in September. Detailed guidelines, procedures, and class rosters are outlined in the Handbook, which should be kept handy for quick reference. Students who are **new to our school** will be contacted to schedule an orientation with your child's teacher.

Some sections of the Handbook have been altered substantially to follow the requirements and guidelines for pandemic school attendance. Please note as you read the differences marked ** especially in the following sections: Lunches, Attendance, Arrival and Dismissal, Clothing, Lunches and Snacks, Field Trips, Birthday Celebrations, Health and Safety.

What to Bring to School

Please write your child's name or initials on everything you send to school with a permanent marker. Students should bring the following items to school on the first day:

| Class | Items to bring | |
|----------------------------|--|---|
| Primary 3-6 year old class | Rain or snow boots Bib-style snow pants Lunchbox (full-day only) | 2 full changes of clothes in a large ziplock bag 1 spare mask |
| Lower Elementary | Rain or snow boots Bib-style snow pants Lunchbox | 1 full change of clothes in a large ziplock bag Spill-proof water bottle 1 spare mask |
| Upper Elementary | Rain or snow boots Snow pants Lunchbox | 1 full change of clothes in a large ziplock bag Spill-proof water bottle 1 spare mask |

What not to bring: Backpacks, school supplies, toys, phones, medications, sharing, and all other items not on the above list and as noted in the Handbook. We will only be sharing stories this year, not any items brought from home.

Medication

Please make every effort to administer medications at home when needed. If students are not contagious, cleared to attend school, and absolutely must take medication during school hours, an adult must hand the medication to a staff member and fill out the Administration of Medication form available in the office and on the website. Prescription medication must be in the original container with the RX label attached. You can ask your pharmacy for an extra, labeled bottle for school use. Over-the-counter medication requires a doctor's signature on the form. Over-the-counter items such as lip balms, lotions, and bug spray are also required to be labeled with your child's name and to be passed directly from adult to adult to avoid hazardous situations. **Students may never handle or transport medications.**

What to Wear

We encourage allowing children to make their own decisions about the aesthetics of their clothing and receive parental guidance about weather appropriate dressing. Students should wear comfortable clothing appropriate for each day's activities. Clothing should be:

- Only clothes your child can put on and take off independently
- Comfortable for sitting on the floor and climbing on the playground
- Appropriate for the weather, layered
- Okay to get dirty
- Easy to run and jump in (shoes securely attached to feet)
- Only positive messages or images
- Not distracting (especially jewelry, hair accessories, or clothes that are like toys)

Please check the weather each morning to wear an appropriate outer layer to school. **Always assume we will go outside.** If there is rain in the forecast, children should wear a raincoat with a hood or hat. Students may not bring an umbrella to school. Please make sure your child wears a winter coat when the weather is cold. Even if it is supposed to warm up before lunchtime, make sure your child has an appropriate outer layer for morning outdoor activities. We spend significantly more time outside than parents typically do, and students must be prepared for the worst weather of the day. If your child is arguing about wearing a coat to school, please feel free to hand it to the staff member at the door and we will make sure it is available for your child.

Face coverings are required for all students, staff, and visitors at all times in the building. Student masks must:

- be parent provided.
- cover both the nose and mouth securely.
- be easy for the child to take off and put back on independently.
- be worn at all times.

Students may also wear other PPE such as eye protection if parents choose and it is not a distraction or hazard.

Lunch

Students should always be involved in packing their lunches and should be working toward packing independently with guidance from parents. If your child has specific dietary requirements or restrictions, please address this with their teachers before the first day of school (and note it on their forms). Please remember the following when packing lunch:

- For the current school year, we will be eating out of lunch containers rather than on plates.
- Parents should pack all utensils, napkins, etc. needed. Disposables will be available upon request.
- Pack a baggie in your child's lunch box for storing his/her mask while eating.
- The school may not refrigerate, heat, or prepare student lunches.
- Lunches should be healthy and well-balanced, containing at least a protein, grains, and a vegetable and/or fruit. Pack small portion sizes of snack foods such as chips.
- Foods should be packed in as many reusable containers as possible. Students should be able to independently open all containers. You can test and practice this during the summer by packing

picnic lunches in the same containers your child will use. We hope not to have to help with opening, cutting, or touching student food if at all possible.

- No desserts or sugary snacks are allowed. Check that the first items on the ingredients lists are not sugars or high fructose corn syrups (such as Nutella or jellos).
- Note that we often instruct students to bring home uneaten food in order for parents to see what they didn't eat and make adjustments based on amounts and preference.

Snack

We serve a morning snack in all classrooms from foods provided by the classroom families (this is a state requirement since we have a food service exemption and may not “prepare” student foods). Each family will be asked to send in snack items on a rotating schedule which we will have prepared at the Parent Meeting. When it is your family’s turn, a note will be sent home with a list of what is needed and a due date. For the current year, we will be serving prepackaged snacks, either the kind that are purchased in single-serving packages, or that adults package so that students will not need to share serving utensils.

Attendance

If your child will be tardy or absent, please send a note or **call and leave a message by 8:45** that you are running late or won’t be in, the reason for the absence, and whether the student will be absent or working remotely. We are legally obligated to account for your child’s attendance and must call parents when we have not yet heard from you, which takes time away from our teaching duties. When arriving after 8:45AM, you will need to park, ring the doorbell, and wait for a teacher to come to the door. We are all busy starting the day with our classes at that point, so please be patient if it takes a few minutes.

Contacting Your Child’s Teacher

The best and fastest way to contact us this year is through email or phone messages. If you need to speak with your child’s teacher, call and leave a message requesting a call back or a scheduled appointment. You may also contact Ms. Mary or Ms. Beverley by email, but we do not check emails regularly throughout the school day, so emergency messages should be left via phone.

Written notes on paper may not be read until later in the day. You may send a written note if necessary with your child in their lunchbox or hand it to a teacher at arrival or dismissal. So we can better understand and respond to your child, please keep us apprised of anything that may affect your child’s mood or behaviors.

Covid-19 Procedures

Please see the attached document regarding our new procedures we will be implementing during the Covid-19 pandemic.

If you have any questions or concerns, please don’t hesitate to call. We are all looking forward to seeing you soon.

Peace,

Ms. Mary van Loveren
Dayton Montessori Society