

August 12, 2019

Dear Kindergarten Families,

Welcome to kindergarten! A fresh, new school year is just around the corner. We are extremely excited to meet your children and hear about their fun summer adventures. We have already started planning for a fantastic school year full of exploration, self-discovery and amazing learning. As a team, we believe communication is a powerful tool. Soon you will receive information that will help ensure a smooth transition for your child during their first few weeks of school.

Our very first kindergarten theme will focus on community. We will utilize the first six weeks of school to get to know each other, learn classroom routines and rules, as well as become familiar with the Columbus Academy community. By investing this well-planned time to ensure our students feel comfortable and successful, we find there is a notable positive impact on the remainder of the year. We look forward to building a strong community foundation right away.

A valuable part of each day is our morning meeting. Each morning we will start the day with a greeting, fun-filled activity and an opportunity to share. This time helps to build positive relationships, confidence and trust. A small optional snack will be provided in the morning. You are welcome to send fresh fruit for your children to have in addition to the optional snack provided by the school. If you choose to do so, please make sure the fruit is already peeled and/or sliced, if necessary.

If you are in need for before-care or after-care, CASE registration is online. You can contact Alyssa King in the Special Programs office for more information. CASE is available on conference days during your children's conference times, and younger siblings are welcome as well. It is required, however, that all children be completely toilet trained.

The academic learning blocks, which occur throughout the school day, consist of reader's workshop, writer's workshop and math. Each class will participate in a co-curricular class both in the morning and the afternoon. The kindergarten classes enjoy recess together and share family-style lunch in the dining hall. Following lunch, we have a brief rest time. A small blanket can be brought for the beginning of the year. The blankets must fit comfortably inside your children's backpacks, and the blankets should be no more than four feet in length. We ask that stuffed animals and other toys be left at home. Children are not required to sleep. Rest is a time for students to relax and recharge for the afternoon.

We will also be spending each Friday engaging in outdoor learning activities. We will call this day "Forest Friday." Please provide your children with a change of clothes that can get dirty in addition to the change of dress code clothing students keep at school. A pair of rain boots at the start of the school year will also be helpful for trail and creek exploration on these days.

First Days of School:

- On the first day of school, please walk your children inside to their classrooms. After the first day, we encourage the children to come to their classrooms independently.
- Starting on the second day, please drive your children to the lower school entrance for morning dropoff. This is a great way to encourage independence. A faculty member will be there to greet students beginning at 7:30 a.m.
- Morning recess is available for children who arrive between 7:30 and 7:55 a.m. This is an opportunity for the children to play with their friends on the teacher-supervised playground. We will begin greeting the children and celebrating their arrival to classrooms at 7:55 a.m.

Important Upcoming Dates:

- **Kindergartners begin school on Tuesday, August 20.** The school day is from 8:05 a.m. to 3:15 p.m.
- **Lower School Parent Night is Thursday, August 29, at 7:00 p.m.** This evening is designed to share with parents (no children, please) news about the school year.
- **Parent "Get to Know You" Conference Day is Friday, August 30.** This conference gives us the chance to get acquainted and learn about your children. This is a conference between teachers and parents only. There is NO school for children on this day. You will have an opportunity to sign up for a conference time online prior to the start of school. Information regarding the online scheduling for conferences will be sent to you within the next week.
- We hope you enjoy the remaining days of summer vacation, and we look forward to meeting you and your children at the **Meet-Your-Teachers Ice Cream Social on Monday, August 19.** You are welcome to visit the kindergarten classrooms from 4:00 until 4:30 p.m. that day. Ice cream will be served outside from 4:30 to 6:00 p.m.

Sincerely,

Mr. Kenny Hyttenhove and Mrs. Debbie Newman (KA)
Mrs. Molly Murphy and Ms. Terri Paulson (KB)
Mrs. Angi Blinn and Miss Megan Quinn (KC)