

Welcome Northwest Upper Elementary Parents!

This 2019-2020 school year promises exciting discoveries and experiential learning! We are so lucky to have a vibrant community with whom to experience the wonders of learning. We feel so grateful for the privilege and responsibility of being with your children each day and guiding them as they develop into the amazing human beings they are meant to be.

ONGOING COMMUNICATION

Although I have covered some of what this year has to offer below, this list is not exhaustive, so please feel free to contact me should you have any questions at jamie@traversechildrenshouse.org. I will do my best to respond to your inquiries within 24 hours. Should you need to contact your child or us during the school day, please call the **front desk (231) 929-9325** for assistance as we will be engaged with the children during these hours.

Clear and open communication among parents, children, and teachers is vital for the success of our community. I will do my best to correspond regularly with you about your children's progress and invite you to come in should any concerns arise. In an effort to develop independence and accountability, we may ask your child to communicate information directly to you either by phone or in person. To support this approach, I will follow up with an email or call to you to ensure that the necessary communication has taken place.

Classroom Highlights are another way for me to share special moments from our days in the classroom with you all at home. New Classroom Highlights will be emailed to you and posted on our Teacher Page every other Friday.

SAFETY & WELLBEING

Your children's safety is of utmost importance to us. Although upper elementary children are some of the oldest in the school and are granted many more freedoms than the younger children, our main concern is to always keep them safe, physically and emotionally. In this regard, please let us know either in person or in writing if someone other than you will be picking them up. Also, please make sure one of us (**Jamie or Rebecca**) acknowledges you if you need to pick them up during the school day so that we are aware they are leaving with you.

WORK

School is your children's work. We expect them to come on time and be well rested and prepared. Our **work cycle begins at 8:20**. Please take this start time into consideration when planning your days. Because their work is important, we ask that you make your best effort to schedule appointments before or after school. Finally, because so much of your children's work

is collaborative and group lessons are the norm, advance notice of vacations or other time away from school is greatly appreciated and allows us to plan accordingly.

With the possible exception of the 6th years' UN work, we do not anticipate sending homework home with your children. They have sufficient time to complete their responsibilities during the workday. However, we do expect them to continue learning and engaging in “**work at home.**” It is essential for their development to productively contribute to your family's daily activities, whether they walk the dog, care for a sibling, help prepare dinner, or wash the dishes. Last, but certainly not least, we ask that you set aside ample time for **reading every night**. I have also given you an appendix of “Montessori Homework Ideas for the Upper Elementary” by John Snyder.

PARENT VISITING

You are always welcome in our community!!! We will also participate in Parent Visiting Day. Your child will also invite you to listen to their presentations when they complete a study in our room.

SPANISH, ART, MUSIC, DELLA TERRA, KITCHEN CLASSROOM, READING

Our children have an opportunity to enrich their learning experiences through their work with **Señora Kathy Malone** for Spanish, **Alison Hoffman** for Art, **Amanda Igra** for Music, **DiAnn Service** for Della Terra, **Brenda Lijewski** for Kitchen Classroom, and **DiAnn Service** for Reading. Your children will have several opportunities to spend portions of their work cycles in Kitchen Classroom and Della Terra throughout the school year. Formal instruction in PE, Spanish, Music and Art will take place on a weekly basis.

THEATRE

We have the pleasure of sharing the exciting world of theatre with our students. During this time, the children will explore, among other things, the many social, emotional, and intellectual benefits of theatre. They will gain confidence in themselves and public speaking skills. This year theatre will take place from **Thursday, March 19** through **Thursday, March 26**, with school and family performances at 2:00 and 6:00, respectively, on the final day. Please plan to have your children in school during this time.

GOING OUT AND CLASS EXCURSIONS

One of the many aspects that make a Montessori education unique is the opportunity for your children to pursue their interests and deepen their understanding of a topic outside of the classroom. We plan to emphasize this important component of their learning and, therefore, welcome your participation as a driver or a resource (e.g., hosting a student visitor at work, sharing a hobby, presenting a specialty to the class, or giving an interview).

On **October 4th** we will provide an off-site activity for the 4th and 5th years to participate. We will also support their organization of a class camping trip in the spring. Further details regarding each of these activities and any other whole class outings that may arise will be provided well in advance and appear on **The Compass and school calendar** as soon as possible.

SIXTH YEAR BUSINESS AND MMUN

Our sixth group of delegates will be traveling to New York this March 3rd - 7th to participate in the Montessori Model United Nations. To fund a portion of this adventure, we will guide them in the establishment of a small business early on in the year.

Participating in the MMUN is an emotional and intellectual commitment, so we will have regular meetings to support your children in their exploration of real world issues and the development of solutions for the same. It is possible that we may need to have before school and/or after school meetings. We welcome *all parent support* whether your child is a 6th year student or not.

HUMAN GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

As your children enter their next stage of development, our goal is to prepare them as much as possible. Part of this preparation includes a safe and comfortable gathering to discuss how their bodies are changing as they approach puberty. In the spring, our students will meet with Carrie Ullery-Smith. The girls will accompany Karin and Jamie and the boys will accompany Steve and Tony to candidly acknowledge physical changes that will occur, discuss practical aspects of dealing with these changes, and address peer and societal pressures that relate to this phase of life.

IMPORTANT DATES

September 15th: Class Picnic

October 4th: Fourth and Fifth year outings

October 6th: Fall Harvest Festival

October 14th: School Picture Day

October 16th: Parent Visiting Day

October 28th - November 1st: Parent - Teacher Conferences

November 9th: Horizon Book Day and Shop Your Community Day

November 21st: Dad's Night

December 11th: Mom's Holiday Party

December 20th: Holiday Sing

February 8th: School Carnival

February 20th: Parent Visiting Day

March 3rd-7th: MMUN Trip

March TBD: Parent - Teacher Conferences

March 19th-26th: Theatre

April 24th: Gala

May 18th: Grounds Work Bee

May 22nd: Grandparents' Day

May 27th-29th: Camping Trip

June 2nd: Moving Up Ceremony

June 3rd: 8th Grade Graduation