

# Primary Northeast 2022-23

Welcome to a new year! The fall is always a time of change as children move up from the young children's community to primary, reach important milestones or finally become kindergarteners. This year is no exception, especially as we welcome several new families to our community. I ask that we keep communication open, honest and frequent as we navigate this transition together.

This year, your child will reach new levels of independence, develop their ability to concentrate, refine their senses and coordinate their movements. Please know I feel honored to observe and support your child's developmental milestones.

This document includes important logistical details about our class. Many of you will notice that most of the guidelines in this letter have not changed from previous years.

## **Observation**

Observation is by appointment only and after the first 6 weeks of school. You'll be invited to observe by the two-way window or from the observation chair inside our classroom. If you choose to observe inside the classroom, we ask that you be a "fly on the wall" to get the most accurate picture of your child's day. Please consult me if you're not sure which type of observation makes the most sense for your child. I am always happy to discuss any questions from your observation after school.

## **Snack**

Children at TCH enjoy a school provided snack. Our school is very committed to healthy living and will provide fresh fruits and veggies, lean proteins, and whole grains as snack options, using local, organic ingredients whenever possible. As always, much of the preparation will be done by the children in the classroom. Outside of normal, everyday snack, we will do specific tastings and culinary experiments.

## **Volunteering**

Our classroom community works to affirm everyone's unique identity. We look forward to celebrating our similarities and differences by hearing from you, the experts! Please let our room parents, Ashley Halladay-Schmandt ([a4hallad@gmail.com](mailto:a4hallad@gmail.com)) and Sabrina Wheaton ([sabrinawheaton@gmail.com](mailto:sabrinawheaton@gmail.com)) know if you have traditions, hobbies or interests to share.

We ask that each family sign up to bring flowers for our flower arranging work twice a year. There are also monthly slots to make and bring playdough for our art shelf. We will be sending out a sign-up in the coming weeks!

## **Lunch**

- The school lunch program is wonderful. I encourage you, without reservation, to check the calendar on the website and select your choices. You will not be disappointed.
- If you pack your child a lunch, know that we will supply cloth napkins, tablecloths and plates. Children with home or school lunch will be offered a choice of water or milk to drink.
- Our refrigerator is very small, so we ask that you include an ice pack in their lunchbox if they have perishable food items. Please pack their warm food in a thermos as we are not able to heat food in our classroom.
- Please save sweet treats for after school and avoid sending candy, chocolate and other desserts in your child's lunch.
- We are a green school and appreciate your effort to avoid sending in yogurt or applesauce pouches and tubes that cannot be recycled. We will continue to invite children to put yogurt and applesauce in small bowls to practice using utensils at the table.

## **Personal Belongings**

- Please label all of your child's personal belongings on the tag of the clothing item. This aids our efforts in helping them keep track of their things and minimizing "lost and found" items.
- If your child has something from home that they would like to share with their classmates, they are welcome to tell me in the morning and share the item when we gather as a group. Please limit items to these categories: something from nature, photographs, something they have made or something from a different culture. Please encourage your child to keep toys at home.

## **Supplies**

Please supply your child with these items to leave at school:

- One pair of indoor sneakers with non-marking soles (Please refrain from lights, bells or whistles.)
- At least one extra change of labeled clothing for accidents and spills, weather appropriate.
- Rain gear (a suit or pants/jacket)
- Two wet bags for soiled clothing
- Sunscreen if you prefer, we use a specific brand
- Water bottles are *not* needed this year. Our classroom water fountain is always available, and we have cups for meal times.

## **Specials**

All children that are not Kindergartners will have opportunities to go to the gym during the week. We send 4 children each morning. Each child should get to go at least once a week, but will not go every day. Kindergartners go every afternoon to P.E. with Steve in the gym. Children that do not have a pair of indoor sneakers with non-marking soles will not be invited to gym in an effort to protect our beautiful gym floor.

Angela will join us for music in our classroom community on Tuesdays this year. She loves to bring instruments found around the world for us to experience and new songs to sing! Kindergartners should bring their Ukulele on Tuesday for lessons with Angela from 10-10:30am.

## **Birthday Celebration and Snack**

Your child will be invited to have a special birthday celebration with their classmates during the school year. Summer birthdays will be celebrated on their half birthday. This year, you will be invited to join us in the classroom for the special gathering. I will reach out to you before your child's birthday to choose a date and give you a handout with all the details.

Many children also enjoy bringing a snack to their celebration. You may send in a low or no sugar birthday snack for your child to share with their class. Please save cookies, cupcakes and other sugary snacks for their celebrations at home. I have many ideas for delicious, healthy birthday snacks. If you would like some suggestions, please ask. Teaching the children about healthy food choices is part of our curriculum. I appreciate your help in this effort.

## **Medication/Illness**

- If your child becomes ill at school, I will call you to come and pick them up. They will rest in the comfortable room adjacent to the front desk until you come for them. For specifics about our illness policy, please refer to your parent handbook.
- If your child needs to take medication at school, you must fill out and sign a medication form. This is available online or you can get a copy of this from the front desk.

## **Drop off and Pickup**

- If someone other than you will pick up your child, their name must be on the approved list of adult drivers on your child's account in our database or the child must have a signed note from a parent or guardian. We will check ID of everyone I don't recognize. I appreciate your patience with this safety precaution.

- If you arrive to school after 8:40, wait at the front desk with your child. The front desk will call our classroom and an adult from the classroom will come to walk your child to our classroom. Thank you for assisting in limiting classroom disruptions in the morning.
- If you need to pick your child up early for an appointment or any other reason, check in at the front desk and then come down to the classroom. Wait outside the door until an adult from the classroom comes to check in with you. We will walk your child to the door to greet you.
- If you know your child will be tardy, please email me ahead of time so we can make a plan for lunch.

### **Teacher Availability**

The support system we create for your child will be strongest when we are on the same page. The more we know, the better we can provide for your child's needs and interests. Please never hesitate to contact me. Kindly keep in mind the school's policy prohibits texting between teachers and parents.

School Phone: (231) 929 - 9325 (**Extension 153**)

Email: [taylor@traversechildrenshouse.org](mailto:taylor@traversechildrenshouse.org)

### **How to contact me:**

- Call the front desk during school hours (8:00-3:30) and leave a message. I will check messages at the end of each school day
- Set up an in person, or phone meeting
- Email me and I will respond within a 24-hour time period. I appreciate your patience as I coach soccer immediately following school several days during the week. I will do my best to respond the following day between 12:00-12:30pm or 2-2:30pm.
- Send a note with your child in the morning

Looking forward to being partners with you in this year ahead!

Taylor Vancil