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Welcome to the Primary Classroom

*Ms. Casey Stalker, Lead Teacher
Ms. Jolene Trujillo and Ms. Lily Stalcup, Assistants*

Welcome to a new school year! This letter is going to introduce you to procedures in our classroom and necessary items to bring to school. Whenever something comes up that you need to let me know, you can contact me using email. I will check my email before and after school. Drop-off and pick up times are not ideal for conversations regarding your child or any other concerns. Please be respectful of our duty to be present for children.

There is information attached providing tips on saying goodbye. We know it can be a difficult and emotional time; however, your cooperation in making it quick and positive will make this easier for everyone. Please know we are here to provide a warm and welcoming environment.

Drop-off

- *School starts promptly at 8:30am.*
- ***Our drop off window is from 8:15 to 8:25. If you arrive after 8:25, please park and sign your child in at the front office.***
- *Please do not arrive in car line prior to this time as the rest of the school needs to proceed with their drop off time. Arriving before 8:15 will back up traffic as Primary Teachers will not be present to accept children.*
- *Car line should be continuously moving as it is a fire lane. Please do not park or get out of your vehicle if you are using the car line for drop off.*
- *If you need to bring your child earlier than this, please let the office know. If your Primary child has older siblings at the school, there will be accommodations for you. Otherwise, we can get you signed up for before-care.*
- *Please say your good-bye and we will assist children with the location to place their backpacks/personal items.*
- *Montessori education prepares children to be independent, and we ask that your child puts their belongings away. **We work on this continuously and ask for your cooperation in this endeavor.***

*What to bring **LABELED** with child's name:*

- *Backpack for transporting between home and school. We strongly encourage backpacks, not suitcases.*
- *A pair of shoes for children to wear inside (ex. hard-soled slippers, please no characters or light up shoes) They change into these shoes every day upon entering the classroom. This is to help set the tone of our special place together.*
- *Child sized water bottle*
- *Full change of clothes in gallon sized Ziploc bag (seasonally appropriate clothing: 1 shirt, 1 pair of pants, 1 pair of socks, and 1 pair of underwear).*
- *If bringing a lunch from home, please send a cloth napkin for using as a place mat. We will send the napkin home at the end of each day.*

Rest time - Exciting new procedure!!!

Preschool and Pre-K students have a daily rest time. Mats, sheets, and blankets are provided and will stay at school. PS/PK students may bring ONE SMALL "lovey" (if absolutely necessary). Kindergarten students do not have a rest time and do not need ANY rest materials. We'll be looking for laundry volunteers - ask your child's teacher for more information ;)

2 Snacks

All children have an opportunity for a morning and an afternoon snack. Each child should plan to bring two individual snacks on a daily basis. If your child has dietary restrictions, please contact our health office.

Pick-up Procedures

Carline

- Please have your 4 digit number posted in your car window during car line. This number will tell your child's teacher that you have arrived to pick up your child at the end of the day.
- On Early Release Wednesdays, pick-up will begin at 2:00 pm for Primary students.
- Please promptly arrive so that we can put your child in the car and hand you the Ipad to sign your child out.
- Having your child's car seat on the passenger side helps us keep everyone safe.
- We cannot buckle your child in their seat. Please practice this with your child.
- After 3:15 pm if you have not arrived, your child will be taken to the front office and will wait for you there. We will make a phone call to the first emergency contact listed to ensure there is someone on the way.
- If there is something you need to talk with us about, please schedule a time. This will benefit both of us.
- We ask for your support in the first couple months as car line may be slower as we all learn this new system. Thank you!

Care of Self

- Help your child with the path to independence. Make sure that you have your child dressed in clothes that are comfortable, safe, and easy to independently remove for an urgent bathroom trip.
- If your child is wearing a skirt, we strongly recommend having them wear shorts underneath.
- Closed-toed shoes are best for running on the playground.
- Pants with an elastic waist help everyone get to the bathroom in time; belts create an obstacle to success.
- Please apply sunscreen to your child before coming to school, as needed.
- Sunscreen, chapstick, and lotion are all welcome at school as long as it is labeled with your child's first and last name and stored by the teachers (not in backpacks). We will guide your child on how to apply it, but we hope that you have gone over this as well at home.

Care of Environment

- You are welcome to donate a potted **small house plant** to our community! It would also be nice for each family to bring in an unframed **4x6" family photo** to add to a photo album for the children's enjoyment.

Parent and School Communication

- Communication is integral to building a strong bridge between home and school. If something is going to be different at home (divorce, new living arrangements, parent away, grandparents staying, new pets, death in the family, change in transition, etc.) **please let us know** so that we can help your child the best we can.
- Please **email** information so we can best support your family.
- You will receive **newsletters via email** updating you on classroom studies, Montessori philosophy and developmentally appropriate expectations you should have for your child.
- You can also check the **school website** at www.freehorizonmontessori.org to find out about school happenings.
- The official weekly school newsletter ("**Fox Flash**") will be sent out every Wednesday afternoon.
- The children will take home a Thursday folder every week. This will have their work and may have some teacher communications. Please make sure the folder is sent back **EVERY FRIDAY**.

All absences need to go through the attendance line by 8am - 303-982-0280. You can let us know as well, but **NOTIFY THE FRONT OFFICE OF ANY ABSENCE FIRST.**

Birthdays.

Please contact me a couple of weeks before your child's birthday. You will receive more information on this as your child's birthday approaches.

Personal Belongings

Children love bringing special toys and belongings with them to school. However, these usually end up lost or broken. For this reason, we have a **no toy policy**. Your child will have a chance to share special things when it is their turn to take home the **All About Me Box**. Your child will fill this box with items that are important to them and present it to their classmates. This is their chance to share special things from home.

Volunteering

- Free Horizon relies on parent volunteers. There are various committees that branch out from the leadership teams like the Board of Directors, Community Support Network, School Accountability Committee, and The Governance Committee. These groups have very dedicated people and need support from the larger community. The growth and success of our school depends on the completion of volunteer hours.
- There will be some jobs to volunteer for in the classroom, but please consider looking at your child's school on a larger scale.
- We will always have lots of jobs to be done at home and will advertise those frequently.

Student Progress and Parent Involvement

It is beneficial for parents to see what a work cycle looks like in a Montessori setting. We will provide two opportunities within the year for parent observation. These will be called "Bring Your Parent to Work Cycle." Shortly after the first observation, parent-teacher conferences will be arranged. We will meet a minimum of two times a year to talk about your child's progress. You will receive a progress report three times during the year.

Conferences: Fall and Spring (optional Winter)

Progress Reports: Trimesters October, January and End of May

Parent Days at School:

- Fall - Bring Your Parent to Work Cycle
- Fall - Grandparents Day
- Spring - Bring Your Parent to Work Cycle
- End of year- Field Day, Kindergarten Continuation and Luncheon

All confirmed Special Events will be posted on the [FHM website calendar](#).

Montessori Books and References

The Absorbent Mind. Maria Montessori

Montessori: The Science Behind the Genius. Angeline Stoll Lillard

Montessori Read & Write: A Parent's Guide to Literacy for Children. Lynne Lawrence

Teaching Montessori in the Home. Elizabeth Hainstock

We love the Love and Logic [website](#) and all of their resources!

[Here](#) are parent specific resources!

Welcome to our wonderful community of learning!