

Welcome to the 2019-2020 School Year!!!

Dear Free Horizon Families,

Hi, my name is Rachel Kiechle (Ms. Rachel) and I am the new Lead Teacher of the Dillon classroom. I am very excited to be the new Lead Teacher in this classroom! I have a lot of experience teaching Montessori, with ages 3 to 9. Welcome back to the families who have already been here and welcome to new incoming families.. I am looking forward to getting to know all of you!

My goals as a teacher are to create a safe learning environment where students can feel comfortable to not only discover their learning potential in all subjects, but to also allow them the space to build on their unique character and place within the classroom community, school community, Golden community and the global community. I will do my very best to not only provide meaningful learning opportunities for students, but I will also model and encourage hard work, curiosity, enthusiasm, cooperation, integrity, responsibility, kindness, and independence for the children in the classroom environment.

My door is always open to you if you have any questions or concerns. I am also very open to you coming in to visit to not only get to know me further, but to also allow you to become a member of our classroom community. I am honored and grateful that I get to be a part of your child's Montessori school experience.

Sincerely,

Ms. Rachel Kiechle

Back to School Night

- Tuesday, August 13th 5:00 pm - 7:30 pm
- 5 different information Q & A Sessions in the classroom (20 minutes each)
- Since that is a short amount of time, here is further details about the Dillon classroom (attached is an Intro Letter, Classroom details, Sample Work Plan, Student Timeline Assignment Instructions, and a Parent Questionnaire for parents to fill out about their child)
- When you first arrive, go to the gym for a school information session with Ms. Kresta before heading to the classroom
- Here is the schedule breakdown:

5:05 - 5:25 Gym
5:30 - 5:50 Gym + Classrooms
5:55 - 6:15 Gym + Classrooms
6:20 - 6:40 Gym + Classrooms
6:45 - 7:05 Gym + Classrooms
7:10 - 7:30 Classrooms

Contact Info

The Parent/Teacher partnership is extremely important for your child. Communication is key for success, so please feel free to contact Ms. Rachel at any point if you have any questions or concerns. The best way to contact me is through email at I check my email at least twice a day and will respond within one business day, but am usually quick. If a face to face conversation is more appropriate, please email me to set up a time that works best.

Helping the Class

There are many ways you can volunteer for our class. We need parents to fill Thursday folders, help with spelling tests, help with reading groups, cut, laminate, and chaperone on field trips. To chaperone or volunteer in the class, you must complete the Volunteer Orientation. The front office will be able to provide you with more information. Email Lisa Kingston for further information (lkingsto@jeffcoschools.us). Also visit website for further details: <http://www.freehorizonmontessori.org/families/volunteer>

Birthday Celebrations

Each child has an opportunity to celebrate their birthday, in the classroom this year. Families are encouraged to attend and share in this special day. In the beginning of the school year, I am going to give out a homework assignment where students will create a timeline of their life (the instructions for this assignment will be included in this packet). Students can use their timeline during their birthday celebrations in the classroom.

Treats are no longer allowed here at school. Please understand this is a district-wide mandate, and there can be no exceptions. However, we do encourage parents to bring in some form of non-food treat to give out to all of the students in the class (fun pencils; knick knack toys; stickers; etc.)

Celebrations will last about half an hour. As you can see, celebrating your child's birthday is a big deal in our classroom. It is important for us to honor each child's life and let them know that we are thrilled they were born.

Snack

Snack time is different for each student depending on when they feel like they need a snack during Work Cycle. Students have access to a snack table in the classroom and can sit and eat quietly after they have completed a work during morning Work Cycle. A healthy snack is most desired, and please also keep in mind that this should be just a snack and should take children no more than fifteen minutes to eat. A water bottle in class is

also *highly* recommended. It is an expectation that students manage on their own when they feel like they need a snack as long as they clean up after themselves and follow the rules and procedures for eating in the classroom.

Homework Policy

Homework folders will be sent home on *Mondays* and need to be returned the following Monday.

- **Reading Log** - We expect your child to read for a minimum of 15 minutes every night and fill out a Reading Log. There is a quick and easy reading follow up to be completed by the student. Also, there is a parent section for parents to leave a comment each week.
- **Spelling List** - Each week, students will get a new spelling list. Please encourage your child to practice their spelling words. Every following Monday, students will be tested on their spelling lists.
- **Practical Life** - A graph with many different choices to do at home for the month will be sent home. Students will color in two boxes a week.
- **Math** - Practicing math facts throughout each week is highly encouraged.

Curriculum Overview

Along with following the children in math and language, this year we will be focusing our cultural studies on South America and Africa. If you or anyone you know has been to one of these continents and has pictures, objects, or experiences you could share with us, please let me know. In science, we will be working on Layers of the Atmosphere, Climate and Weather, Scientific Method, Leaves, Plants, Flowers, Invertebrates, Mammals, Vertebrates, and the Human Body.

General Reminders

- School begins at 8:15. Please have your child at school on time so they can be ready to start their day!
- Please be mindful of and follow car line procedures and understand that we will do the best we can to make it as smooth and efficient as possible.
- Work Plans- Children will be given a weekly/ or daily (according to their developmental level) work plan to guide their learning and to assist in making appropriate work choices. There is a sample Work Plan in this packet.
- Great resources for information: the school website, Fox Flash (weekly), Horizon Line (quarterly), class newsletters, CSN website and Facebook page, Student/Parent Handbook, and Thursday Folders- all your child's work will be going home on Thursdays.
- Assessments- Assessments are used to guide our instruction throughout the year. The following assessments will occur this year: MAP, DIBELS, Writing, CMAS (3rds only)
- Toys- No toys in class. Toys can be distracting and have the risk of getting lost or broken. NO FIDGET TOYS UNLESS CHILD HAS DOCTOR PERMISSION OR IT'S PART OF THEIR IEP OR 504 PLAN...

- Conferences- Our first round of conferences will be held in October.
- **Please take all *medicine* to the front desk, both prescription and over-the-counter, to be sure you have all necessary paperwork. Be sure prescription medicine has the pharmacy label on the medication, not on the box.**

Student Expectations

- Always do your best work
- ROSE: Respect others, self, environment
- It's okay to make mistakes as long as we learn from them
- Grace and Courtesy with others and their environment
- Listen to the teacher and follow directions the first time they are given
- Take care of others
- Finish your work
- Think before you speak and/or act
- Take responsibility for your belongings, your actions and your work at all times
- Be safe at all times
- Montessori philosophy encourages: a strong work ethic; passion for learning; independence; kindness; curiosity; perseverance; and cooperation

Student Discipline Hierarchy

- General non-major student behaviors that we give consequences for: ***Off task work; Talking and/or interrupting others when you should be listening; Defiance to teacher; Refusal to follow directions; Refusal to work; Disrupting and/or distracting others; Not completing assigned work; Not keeping hands and feet to yourself; Misuse of materials and/or supplies; Dishonesty; Cheating***
- **First Time** rule broken: verbal warning (documentation)
- **Second Time**: 2nd Warning (individual conference, going over expectations (documentation)
- **Third Time**: 5 Minutes recess loss (documentation)
- **Fourth Time**: Parent Phone Call (documentation)
- **Fifth Time**: Parent/Teacher Conference at school w/ student (documentation)
- **Sixth Time**: Administrative conference with parents and teacher
- **Major Student Behaviors:**
 - **Physical aggression (fighting); Theft of personal belongings; Abusive/Inappropriate language towards others; Threat to hurt self or others; Property damage; Vandalism; etc.**

Personal Belongings

- Your child is responsible for their personal belongings (clothing, backpacks, lunch, personal school supplies, water bottle)
- Please label all of your child's belongings

- Encourage your child to keep track of their belongings throughout the day (I will do the same thing)

It is going to be a wonderful year and we are looking forward to working with you to best serve all the students! Please see the attached handouts for a little bit more information about our Montessori environment.

With Kindness,
Ms. Rachel