

August 20, 2015

Dear Parents,

Welcome back to school and to our class, "The Discoverers"! We hope you all had an enjoyable summer and are ready for an exciting, fun and learning-rich year for your children. We certainly are looking forward to a wonderful and rewarding year during which your child will have endless opportunities for academic, social and emotional growth. Since children grow and learn at different paces and in different ways, our classroom environment is set up to meet the needs of all children.

In our class, the foundation of our studies stems from the Cosmic Curriculum, developed by Dr. Maria Montessori. Our cultural lessons follow the "Five Great Lessons", which are "The Story of the Universe", "The Story of Life", "The Story of Humans", "The Story of Writing" and "The Story of Numbers". We look forward to guiding each student through a discovery of the universe and his/her contribution to the universe through our cultural lessons.

Dr. Montessori's amazing philosophies and approach to learning will be woven throughout our curriculum. All the subjects are interrelated; mathematics (with its incredible concrete to abstract methods), geometry, literature (including reading, writing, grammar, word study, research), science (botany, zoology, experiments), history, art and much more.

We will strive to achieve the following objectives for our students:

- Provide a safe and trusting environment at all times
- Develop a positive self image in each child
- Help our students learn to make positive decisions
- Encourage a sense of responsibility in each child
- Provide quality academic instruction to each student at his/her level
- Instill in each child a desire for lifelong learning

Communication Between Home and School:

Communication between home and school is vital in ensuring a successful school year. Our primary means of communication is through our class newsletter that will be posted through email sent via the Family Communication email group. Please be sure to read the newsletters to obtain current information.

This year we will have monthly Class Meetings from 5:30 pm - 6:30 pm on the second Tuesday of every month except for December. Class Meetings will provide us the opportunity to share our love of the Montessori methods and materials through parent education sessions, offer discussion groups and

address any questions you may have. You will find these meetings of great value as they will provide insight into the purpose of the Montessori materials and their hidden lessons, deepen your knowledge of the developmental planes and make connections between home and school. The best way to ensure your question is on the Class Meeting agenda is to email your question to your child's teacher at least a week in advance. Due to limited Class Meeting time, emailed questions will be answered prior to opening the floor for new questions and discussion. Be sure to join us on our first meeting scheduled Tuesday, September 8th at 5:30 p.m. in the Discoverers' Classroom! - *(Child care is not provided).*

Beginning in January, we will be implementing monthly Tuesday Morning Class Visits for parents. More information about Class Visits will be shared in the near future.

Snack Reminders:

Please follow the snack schedule included in this packet. All the snack schedules will be included in the newsletters as well as posted in the parents section of our website. Through this schedule, you will be able to know which day is your child's snack day. We will also send home a snack tote bag the day before your snack day as another reminder.

All snack items must be in prepackaged store-bought containers. Some snack ideas include: apples (sliced), bananas, broccoli (pre-cut), sugar snap peas, carrot sticks, celery sticks, cheese cubes, grapes, hard-boiled eggs, peaches, plums, string cheese, grape or cherry tomatoes, turkey, vegetable dip, wheat thins, Triscuits, etc. Whole fruit may be sent as long as there is enough for each child to have his/her own piece of fruit. (There are 34 children in our class.) Items with artificial sweeteners are not allowed.

Since some children have potentially dangerous allergies to peanuts and other nuts, please do not bring any foods for snack containing peanuts or peanut byproducts (such as peanut oil) or foods that may contain peanuts or any other types of nuts. For further information about snacks please refer to the handbook section of the Lakeland Montessori website (<http://lakelandmontessori.com/parents/handbook>). Thank you so much for providing healthy snacks for the class.

Brief Daily Schedule:

Arrival time begins at 8:15 am. Students who are not inside the gate before 8:35 am will be considered tardy and a parent must sign in at the front desk. It is important that students arrive on time as their work cycle begins immediately upon arrival. The morning work cycle and lesson time is from arrival in the morning to 11:15 am. We then have circle time before P.E. at 11:30 am. Lunch is from 12:00 pm – 12:30 pm. Parents are welcome to have lunch with their child, but not during the first three weeks of school. Please let me know through an email if you would like to have lunch with your child. We have an afternoon work and lesson cycle from 12:30 pm– 2:30 pm. We clean up and prepare for dismissal at 2:30 pm. The children have "DEAR" (Drop Everything and Read) time during dismissal, which means they are reading

silently during this time. Your child is welcome to bring a book from home to read during this time if he/she would like. Dismissal times are from 2:45 pm – 3:05 pm.

Early Release Day Dismissal:

We have 10 Early Release days during the school year. These days are indicated on the school calendar. Dismissal for students on these days is at 12:15 pm from the outside playground gate. The children will not be having lunch at school on Early Dismissal days.

Events:

Event days are special days at Lakeland Montessori. Throughout the year, LMS, along with the Parent Action committee (PAC) hosts five major events in which the school community gathers on campus to interact with family and friends, watch student performances, and have a great time. The following are highlights of these events along with dates to add to your calendar.

- *Friendship Feast* (November 20, 2015): Families bring a covered dish to share and enjoy a picnic-style lunch on the school grounds. Food sign-up and the exact date information will be available closer to the time of the event.
- *Multi-Cultural Festival* (December 18, 2015): Students perform songs, skits, and dances from the school-wide continent study. This year we will be studying the continent of North America. Families are asked to bring a food to taste, either from their own culture or from the continent being studied.
- *Historical Timeline* (February 11, 2016): Students in 6-9 and 9-12 will research a historical figure from the current year's continent of study (North America this year) and present the information to the parents during the Historical Timeline event.
- *Tea and Art Show* (March 25, 2016): Enjoy a time of tea and refreshments with your child as you browse the artwork completed by the students.
- *End of Year Festival* (June 9, 2016): The upper elementary classroom hosts this event as the culmination of their service learning projects. Booths are set up as interactive activities for the students and families, along with various food items to enjoy.

These events are also posted on the LMS calendar on the website. Watch for additional details in our weekly newsletter.

A-Z Reading:

The Discoverers class utilizes an excellent online leveled reading program in the classroom. It is part of the children's daily work plan and the children love the books offered to them to read. It is individualized so that each child is reading at his/her own level and can advance accordingly. They read short passages

or books on the computer and answer questions about their reading afterwards, concentrating on comprehension, vocabulary, comparing and contrasting, author's purpose and other reading elements. The questions relate to the Common Core standards. The children have enjoyed reading the books in class. Since it is individualized, I will be assessing each child's reading level the first couple days of school so that your child will be reading at the best level for him/her. You can then access the A-Z program at home. You just go to the website, www.learningA-Z.com and then your child goes to "Raz Kids" and logs in using the user name, "Discoverers2" and clicks on his/her name. Your child does not need a password, just the username. The books in the assignment list are there. The level should be slightly on the difficult side so that your child can learn new vocabulary words but not too hard to be frustrating. It should be interesting and fun to read. After reading the book, your child then takes a comprehension test. He/she can go back to the story if not sure of the answer to a question, which is a good strategy to follow, instead of guessing. A-Z Reading is only a small part of all the reading lessons and opportunities the children will be having in class.

Homework:

The children will not be having regular daily homework. However, they will be assigned book reports, at least once per nine weeks. The book reports are prepared at home and then brought in to class for a presentation. Each book report will be focused on a different genre (fiction, non-fiction) and/or topic, such as "characters", "plot", etc. The book report is a creative as well as informative assignment.

The children will have certain spelling words to practice each week for their grade and/or reading level with a spelling assessment on Fridays. The spelling lists will be included in the weekly newsletter.

If the expected class work is not completed, then homework may be sent home to be completed.

There will be other projects and short assignments that the children will do at home during the year which will be connected to what we are doing in class. You will be notified of these through the weekly newsletters.

High Frequency Words:

I have included in this packet the "high frequency words" for grades kindergarten through three. The words become successfully harder so if your child has difficulty with some of the words from a previous year it would be helpful to practice those before going on to the next grade. Please use these lists for your child to practice at home. They are posted, as well, on the parents section of our school's website.

Student Work:

The Discoverers have a composition book in class where they paste some of their work (on paper, writings, etc.). They also have a specific writing notebook, a math and geometry notebook, and a sketchbook to use after or together with certain lessons. The children also have a portfolio to include work they have done that they feel is even more special. There will be work sent home one day a week, which will consist of a daily work sheet and a few samples of work done on paper, including the corrected spelling assessment. You are welcome to arrange a time with me to come in and look at your children's journals.

Sharing:

The children will be able to sign up for a day the first couple weeks to bring in something from home to share. The children love doing this as it is a way for them to tell us a little more about him/herself. It encourages public speaking skills as well as listening skills. It also helps to build community within the classroom. We will be having sharing only the first couple weeks (or special occasions). Sharing has included favorite books, rock collections, pictures, souvenirs from vacations, a beautiful flower, something from a favorite sport, hobby, etc. Please do not include toys for sharing.

Walk-Around-The-Sun:

The following is an excerpt from the LMS family handbook located at <http://www.lakelandmontessori.com/handbook.htm#celebrations>:

In recognition of the day a child is born, we gather at group time and tell the child's life story as they hold a globe and "orbit the sun", provided that we receive the Milestones Form (available on the school website under the Parent's files section) with your child's information. You are welcome to join us for this activity. We are unable to accommodate birthday party type activities during classroom time.

If you would like your child to participate in this event, please contact me via email at least three days before you would like the event to take place. Walk around the sun times will be either at 11:15 am. (before P.E. and lunch) or at 2:30 pm (before dismissal). It does not have to occur on your child's actual birthday, if that time is not convenient for you or for the classroom.

Field Trips:

Plans are being made for this year's field trips. We will be going on at least three field trips. Please check the weekly newsletters for further details, including signing up to ride the bus as a chaperone.

Classroom Volunteers:

We welcome and appreciate our wonderful classroom parent volunteers! Throughout the year we will need help with many different projects: our class garden, chaperoning for field trips, the play we do for the Multicultural Festival, the Historical Timeline”, laminating materials for the classroom, reading with children, helping with science experiments, cooking/baking, and much more. I welcome new ideas for special projects, too, so please feel free to contact me with your ideas.

Presently a volunteer is needed to help with setting up a small aquaponics tank in our classroom. We will be using goldfish in the fish tank and growing leaf vegetables in the water. Please let me know if you are interested.

We are looking forward to a wonderful year!! If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Warmest regards,

Sandy Moss, Lead Teacher
Smoss@lakelandmontessori.com

Sheila Beale, Assistant Teacher
sbeale@lakelandmontessori.com

Discoverers First Snack Schedule (2015-2016):

Mon., Aug. 24	Rebecca Alexander
Tues., Aug. 25	Adam Barcia
Wed., Aug. 26	Samantha Barcia
Thurs., Aug. 27	Hannah-Blair Bennett
Fri., Aug. 28	Gianna Bordas
Mon., Aug. 31	Ayden Bounce
Tues. Sept. 1	Joshua Evans
Wed., Sept. 2	Madison Fedler
Thurs., Sept 3	Mason Gabbard
Fri., Sept. 4	Lily Graham
Mon. Sept. 7	Labor Day
Tues., Sept. 8	Wingrove Hanley
Wed., Sept. 9	Nicolas Harris
Thurs., Sept. 10	Lily Harwell
Fri., Sept. 11	Miles Howe

Mon., Sept. 14	Zach Jensen
Tues., Sept. 15	Savanna Johnson
Wed., Sept. 16	Scarlette Johnson
Thurs., Sept. 17	Grace Lipham
Fri., Sept. 18	Gabi Marroquin

Mon., Sept. 21	Gemma McCavera
Tues., Sept. 22	Ryon Morgia
Wed., Sept. 23	Peyton Pharris
Thurs., Sept. 24	Matias Quinonez-Arguedas
Fri., Sept. 25	Aiden Red

Mon., Sept. 28	Eve Morris
Tues., Sept. 29	Park Sadler
Wed., Sept. 30	Laurel Seddon
Thurs., Oct. 1	Jay Sichelman
Fri., Oct. 2	Benjamin Snyder

Mon., Oct. 5	Thrasher Stine
Tues., Oct. 6	Abbey Terfehr

Wed., Oct. 7

Grant Vanderbilt

Thurs., Oct. 8

Ian Varnadore

Fri., Oct. 9

Michael Webster

Polk County Schools

First Grade High Frequency Word List

First grade students are expected to know the 71 Kindergarten high frequency words and 143 additional high frequency words by the end of the school year. Students are asked to read these words aloud from a list. Words are scored as being correct if they are recognized and pronounced accurately and quickly. Mastering increasing number of high frequency words is evidence that students are moving toward becoming fluent readers.

The emphasis on these basic words is to promote reading success for students by establishing the opportunity to acquire vocabulary that is encountered consistently in printed material.

Acquiring a large reading vocabulary is the foundation for the comprehension of printed text. This is a key to reading success.

First Nine Weeks	Second Nine Weeks	Third Nine Weeks	Fourth Nine Weeks
1. down	1. gives	1. door	1. nothing
2. got	2. night	2. kind	2. thought
3. up	3. people	3. made	3. cold
4. and	4. says	4. who	4. sure
5. in	5. when	5. would	5. both
6. oh	6. your	6. also	6. head
7. yes	7. eat	7. know	7. name
8. make	8. from	8. moved	
9. they	9. gone	9. only	
10. walk	10. grows	10. room	
11. help	11. or	11. should	
12. now	12. two	12. those	
13. play	13. be	13. write	
14. too	14. good	14. over	
15. want	15. Mr.	15. town	
16. don't	16. need	16. world	
17. of	17. our	17. different	
18. so	18. right	18. old	
19. buy	19. saw	19. water	
20. that	20. time	20. years	
21. very	21. try	21. because	
22. where	22. away	22. most	

23. day	23. food	23. picture	
24. every	24. funny	24. why	
25. her	25. hide	25. always	
26. said	26. how	26. does	
27. was	27. many	27. even	
28. with	28. some	28. pretty	
29. could	29. their	29. say	
30. friends	30. air	30. sound	
31. new	31. animals	31. any	
32. put	32. around	32. took	
33. she	33. fly	33. again	
34. use	34. live	34. high	
	35. soon	35. love	
	36. turns	36. opened	
	37. city	37. another	
	38. house	38. change	
	39. sometimes		
	40. take		
	41. there		
	42. about		
	43. by		
	44. family		
	45. grew		
	46. read		
	47. work		
	48. writing		
	49. find		
	50. follow		
	51. found		
	52. four		
	53. full		
	54. these		
	55. way		
	56. were		
	57. each		
	58. great		
	59. other		
	60. place		
	61. talk		
	62. together		
	63. won't		
	64. isn't		

Transition from Primary Level to Lower Elementary

Moving to a new class is always an exciting venture. But, the transition from the 3-6 level (or Primary level) in a Montessori school to the Lower Elementary is particularly remarkable, and requires our special attention.

As most Montessori parents know, Maria Montessori was a medical doctor before she became an educator. One of her greatest contributions to education was the realization that traditional education practices do not match the growth phases of children. Children grow in spurts. (Any parent can tell you that intuitively.) Montessori developed an educational model to offer information and experiences during the times when it matches the child's actual interests and ability to easily learn the material. There are also times in a child's life when they need to meet new challenges.

It happens naturally at the time when the child is losing their baby teeth. Certainly children will cling to some of the comforts of their infancy, but they will also enter fully into the amazing time of life we call Childhood... (with a capital C)!

Socially, the requirements of this phase are very different from early childhood. For one thing, fairness is a major issue. Children start to regulate and edit the rules of their own games, as well as create elaborate contingencies to account for different situations. Excuses are not easily tolerated and children expect other children to be accountable. (There *will* be "do-overs", but only if you *really* deserve them.)

This is a BIG difference from the atmosphere in the Primary classes. You can almost "feel it in the air" when you walk into the Lower Elementary. This age group means business.

This is also true of the educational environment, and it is also a change from the Primary classroom. Certainly there is a great level of care and respect for the child, but they are no longer in the fragile and formative stages of early childhood. They are of course still developing, but if they were given the emotional space to construct themselves in the Primary class, they are now ready to handle some increased expectations and responsibility for their own learning.

These differences often come as a shock to both parents and children. At age six, the child has spent *half of their entire lives* in the Primary class. They have mastered it and they are quite comfortable. This is wonderful and exactly what needs to happen for a child. They need to completely master each stage of their development...and then, of course, move on.

The elementary classroom *does* require the six year old to get out of their comfort zone. This is the first of many times in their educational career when they will be asked to do so. But, one of the wonders of Montessori education is how it prepares our children for real life. By the time our children reach the Upper Grades, they will have learned to take on new challenges with ease. They will develop a confidence and awareness of their own abilities. They will know their own comfort zone, but will not be afraid to reach beyond it in the quest for personal growth and a desire to know their own potential.

The first step is always the hardest. But, for our children, it is a necessary step in the right direction, and will lead them to both maturity and fulfillment.

How to Help Your Child During the Transition

1. Let your child express their feelings without judgment. It's natural for us to fuss a bit when we leave our comfort zone. (I know I do, anyway!)
2. Acknowledge that it IS difficult. (Remember your first days on a new job, or in a new home, etc.)
3. Do not try to talk your child out of their feelings.
4. Show your confidence in your child's ability to succeed. Remind them of past experiences or challenges they have conquered (potty training, etc.)
5. Give them time. Allow them to "pull themselves up by their own bootstraps" rather than trying to "make it all better". Your child is growing up, and while this is different and challenging, it is definitely NOT too difficult for them. They have to find the strength *within themselves*. (That is the whole point.)
6. Do not try to make things easier by doing any of their work for them! (You'd be surprised.)
7. Try not to worry... they'll be fine, and the teacher will let you know if there is a true problem.
8. Take comfort in knowing that if your child does have any special learning requirements, that the Montessori classroom is well equipped to meet their needs. (It is a multi-sensory environment and all children are following their own individual education plans.)
9. Enjoy knowing that this will all get much easier before long, and love and support your child to their next phase of development. (Your child doesn't know this "newness" will not last forever.)
10. Also know that if you do this "weaning" now, at the RIGHT time in the child's life, everything else will be SO much easier from now on... for them (and you)!!!

Polk County Schools

Second Grade High Frequency Word List

Second grade students are expected to know 71 Kindergarten high frequency words, 143 First Grade high frequency words, and 133 additional high frequency words by the end of the school year. Students are asked to read these words aloud from a list. Words are scored as being correct if they are recognized and pronounced accurately and quickly. Mastering increasing number of high frequency words is evidence that students are moving toward becoming fluent readers.

The emphasis on these basic words is to promote reading success for students by establishing the opportunity to acquire vocabulary that is encountered consistently in printed material.

Acquiring a large reading vocabulary is the foundation for the comprehension of printed text. This is a key to reading success.

First Nine Weeks	Second Nine Weeks	Third Nine Weeks	Fourth Nine Weeks
1. brown	1. before	1. mean	1. church
2. line	2. ever	2. started	2. sisters
3. more	3. cake	3. wife	3. windows
4. stop	4. smell	4. fire	4. birthday
5. few	5. thank	5. rock	5. dance
6. same	6. between	6. train	6. hold
7. alone	7. enough	7. wait	7. ride
8. home	8. idea	8. feed	8. cooks
9. river	9. number	9. letter	9. lion
10. think	10. country	10. lost	10. men
11. children	11. rain	11. sea	11. oil
12. black	12. sleep	12. bone	12. beautiful
13. last	13. light	13. draw	13. morning
14. man	14. answer	14. whose	14. America
15. mouse	15. bark	15. dinner	15. mountain
16. after	16. page	16. important	16. state
17. early	17. paper	17. seem	17. tires
18. someone	18. dark	18. stay	18. able
19. three	19. front	19. maybe	19. bike
20. eight	20. lake	20. near	20. board
21. may	21. past	21. park	21. seat

22. yellow	22. drink	22. sign	22. hole
23. well	23. hid	23. kittens	23. story
24. ate	24. road	24. miss	24. young
25. into	25. small	25. shop	25. above
26. been	26. white	26. steps	26. carry
27. off	27. under	27. surprise	27. group
28. part	28. never	28. words	28. hungry
29. today	29. warm	29. please	29. mile
30. upon	30. both	30. once	30. round
31. which	31. clean	31. laugh	31. myself
32. must	32. own	32. better	32. shall
33. called	33. things	33. asked	33. large
34. through			

Third Grade High Frequency Word List

afraid	especially	lovable	they're
almost	everybody	money	think
also	everything	morning	thought
always	except	myself	threw
animals	exciting	never	through
another	even	night	told
anyone	finally	once	too
asked	friendly	outside	trouble
away	general	own	unhappiness
become	getting	person	united
believe	goes	prettier	until
better	hard	prettiest	upon
build	heard	probably	vacation
buy	high	problem	want
by	hidden	question	watch
care	hole	ready	wasn't
caught	hopeless	recycle	wear
clothes	I'm	responsibilities	weather
couldn't	important	shouldn't	we're
community	impossible	something	were
confusion	independent	sometimes	whether
country	it's	sudden	which
decided	its	sure	while
different	journal	terrible	whole
discover	knew	that's	winner
does	know	their	wouldn't
doesn't	laughed	there	years
done	left	these	your
enough	live	they	you're

Lower Elementary Daily Workplan

Math includes basic operations, geometry, fractions, measurements, money and time concepts, word problems, critical thinking skills, and more.

Language Arts includes reading skills, writing, speaking, word study, grammar, literature, research, and more.

Cultural includes “The Five Great Lessons” and extensions, Geography, History, Science, Zoology, Botany, Art, and more.

In addition, The Daily Workplan includes P.E., community building, Practical Life lessons, technology, and more.

LOWER ELEMENTARY DAILY WORKPLAN

Name _____

Date _____

- Math _____
- Math Facts _____
- Math _____
- Language Arts _____
- Language Arts _____
- Cultural _____
- Cultural _____
- A-Z** Reading _____
- Handwriting _____
- Other _____
- Message _____