

Hello Families,

Thank you again to all the guardians who were able to attend the recent information night and asked such great questions. If you couldn't make it, we wanted to share some of the common questions and answers with everyone. We are getting very excited for this new chapter with you and the students, and appreciate all of the support and encouragement you have given us. Please do email *either* teacher with further questions.

We look forward to working with you,

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Will the new schedule still be Montessori-aligned/focused?

Yes. While each teacher is focusing her preparation / lesson planning on fewer subject areas, this will allow for each of us to plan more in-depth, focused lessons. We will be able to not only spend more time with your child on each subject, but we will also have more availability to individualize your child's daily work in both major content areas (Language Arts, and Math). This aligns with the Montessori method of following the child. Also, each classroom will contain the necessary Montessori materials for that content area. The Montessori Language Arts, Math/Geometry, and Cultural materials are fundamental to the curriculum, and we both envision much of the assigned work and practice work to be completed with the materials.

How will the multi-age aspect work (in terms of working with mixed-aged peers)?

During each of the lesson periods (an example of which you can find below), there will always be 2 grade levels in the room at that time. One grade will be receiving instruction in either English Language Arts, or Math/Geometry, while the other grade will be working independently in the classroom. Each lesson period is scheduled to be 40 minutes in length; and while some lessons will utilize the entire period, most lessons will end with some individual or partner work time remaining. At this point, the mixed age levels can most certainly interact in the classroom.

The other major time where there will be the multi-age interactions is during the Cultural lesson periods. For both classes, these will remain whole-group lessons, with all grade levels being present, and working alongside each other.

In addition, the children will still interact in daily whole (homeroom) group situations during morning circle, afternoon jobs, specials, lunch/recess, project presentations, as well as special events and celebrations. These times are perfect for providing the leadership opportunities that Montessori classrooms are known for.

Will my child still have an individual work plan?

Yes and no. Each child will still utilize a grade-level list of independent works specifically designed to reflect, build upon, and provide practice for the topics being taught in lesson. Their independent work will still be evaluated and teachers will provide feedback, but in most instances a letter grade will not be assigned. Instead, works will be recorded as "presented", "practicing", or "mastered" and will be used as formative assessments to guide the child's instruction.

The biggest change is that each student will not have a personal weekly workplan/goal sheet with their name on it. This saves trees (we would have to print 92 pages per week!) as well as allows for continual monitoring of a child's progress.

We also feel a shift in attitudes toward independent work is crucial at this time. As we began the year, we wanted to build a child’s ability to see a work to completion and then maintain focus and flexibility to plan and complete a different task. As they move into the second semester, we want to build on their abilities to sustain focus, self-monitor, and create by allowing them to dig for deeper understanding within their work, instead of just being focused on *how many* works are completed.

Example *Daily Schedule / Lesson Periods*

Who is where, when? The students listed in the Teacher-led columns will receive lesson in that room. The students who are “independent” will be working in their homeroom groups in either room depending on the day.

For example: On a Monday morning, all second graders will receive an English Language Arts lesson with Ms. Chelsea, while first graders from 2118 are working independently in the room. At the same time, all third graders will be receiving a Math or Geometry lesson from Ms. Camille and 2115’s first graders will be working in that room independently.

	Ms. Chelsea - 2118	Ms. Camille - 2115	Independent
Morning Circle	HR	HR	
8:15-8:55	2	3	1
9:00-9:40	1	2	3
Specials, lunch, recess	HR	HR	
12-12:40 (Cultural Lessons)	Whole Group (children will be in HR groups, although in different classrooms according to day)	Whole Group (children will be in HR groups, although in different classrooms according to day)	
12:45-1:25	3	1	2
End of day community building, jobs, announcements, handouts, etc.	HR	HR	