

July 27, 2009

Dear Parents:

Welcome to the 2009-2010 school year at The Prep School Academy!!! All of us at The Prep School Academy are very excited about the new school year, the new school facility, and about working with your family! It is going to be an exciting year!

To start the year on the "right foot", I have put together this letter that updates you on your child's class placement, calendar events, and other important reminders. Since many things are going to be new this school year, due to the new facility, I know I will not be able to cover all aspects of the school year... But, together, you, your child(ren), the staff of The Prep School Academy, and me will "blaze a trail" that establishes the future success of this new endeavor, The Prep School Academy! As the school year begins and progresses, look for additional information from me about new incentives, procedures, programming, etc. I guarantee you will be hearing a lot from me over the next few weeks! ☺

For now, please read on to gain valuable information that will help you better understand The Prep School Academy's 2009-2010 school year! ☺ Don't forget - school starts on **Monday, August 17, 2009!**

## ***classroom assignment***

Your child has been assigned to the following classroom\_\_\_\_\_

Your child is in the \_\_\_\_\_ POD (*this is what we call the whole group of this age group - usually two to three classes make up a "POD"*)

Your child's attendance schedule is\_\_\_\_\_

## ***The Prep School "CARE SKILLS"***

As part of our on-going process of educating young citizens in a socially responsible manner, our staff has created and adopted some basic "care skills" for the students of The Prep School Academy. These care skills will influence the actions of our students while at school and will be reviewed daily with the students. The care skills are as follows:

1. Use Active Listening (*eyes on speaker, mouths closed, ears open, hands and feet quiet*)
2. Give only "Put Ups" (*use positive messages - "you are nice", "I like you", etc. Put ups are the opposite of put downs*).
3. Respect The Prep School (*treat our environment with care*)
4. Keep Hands and Feet to Yourself
5. Be Honest

Please feel free to review these skills with your child(ren). They are an excellent tool for teaching respect and responsibility towards all things found in your child's environment.

## ***staff biographies***

Meet the staff! You will find the biographies of all of our staff members in this packet of information, the Academy staff AND The Prep School staff! Although these biographies are short and sweet, you can discover more about our staff members through your daily conversations with each and every one of us! We are looking forward to finding out more about your child and your family this year!

## ***school supplies***

Included in this packet of information are the supplies your child will need for the beginning of school. School supply lists are organized by PODs. Please look for this list in this packet of information and bring supplies on the first day of school, August 17. Thanks! ☺

## ***school calendar***

Included in this packet of information, you will find a Fall 2009 school calendar. This calendar lists all events and activities that will take place at The Prep School Academy for the months of August through January - and is probably the most important piece of information in this packet! Here are examples of some of our exciting events: \* Open Houses, \*Halloween Program (all students participate), \* school pictures,\* and MORE!

Be sure to keep track of these special dates listed on the calendar, so you don't miss out! We are going to have many **BUSY** months ahead!

## ***academy "specials"***

- The students have SPANISH twice a week on Mondays and Fridays! During this time, students learn basic Spanish vocabulary, play games, and listen to stories in Spanish.
- The Kindergarten students have MUSIC three times a week on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays and the first and second grades have music two times a week on Tuesdays and Thursdays! During this time, students learn basic music skills and techniques and SONGS. Ms. Carrie, our music teacher, works with the students by playing instruments, singing songs, practicing rhythms, and playing games. In addition, the first and second graders have individual instrument instruction on Tuesdays and Thursdays.
- The students have MOVEMENT twice a week! During this time, students move their bodies and get some energy out! They play games, learn group sports, and work on individual movement skills. Ms. Jana is our movement teacher! In addition to movement, the Kindergarten students have KARATE with Ms. Jean, our favorite karate teacher who taught at our school for seven years before taking a "sabbatical" last year. We are so glad she is back!
- The first and second graders will be learning a second language (either sign language or French) on Tuesdays and Thursdays and will have an ART class on Wednesdays!

## ***weekly classroom newsletters***

By Monday afternoon of each week, your child's teacher will have a weekly classroom newsletter for you to read. This newsletter lists the weekly curriculum objectives for the classroom, upcoming events and deadlines, homework details, and other important events. PLEASE read your child's classroom newsletter EVERY WEEK!! By doing this, you will stay abreast of the happenings in your child's classroom. If you have questions about anything in the weekly classroom newsletter, be sure to ask your child's teacher.

## ***morning routine***

At the Academy, students will "sign in" and sign up for lunch in their classrooms. Look for this "sign up" station in your child's classroom. In addition, your child's lockers will be located within their classrooms, too.

In the mornings, you need to walk your child to his/her classroom, have him or her sign in and sign up for lunch, and then take your child to the designated morning classroom. For the Kindergarten students, this classroom will either be Ms. Lisa's classroom (after 7:00 a.m.) or Ms. Amy's classroom (after 8:00 a.m.) and for the first/second grade students, this classroom will be the first/second grade classroom - Ms. Allie will be in this classroom at 7:00 a.m. (she is our "opener") and Ms. Jenny will be in this classroom starting at 8:00 a.m.

A continental breakfast of cereal, milk, and juice will be served from 7:30 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. only. If you arrive after this time, you will need to serve your child breakfast at home or bring in his or her breakfast.

## ***procedure for accessing the Academy facility***

As mentioned at the Open Houses in May, both entry ways to the Academy facility will be secured, so that "outsiders" to our Prep School Academy community cannot access our facility. This will be done by locking the entry way doors and by installing a security panel that will open the entry way doors if the correct pin number is entered. At this point, we are working with Koorsen to have this security system installed and the "magical pin number" has not yet been assigned to our system. Continue to look for information about this pin number, as the school year approaches. For the first few days, we will have staff members helping parents and families work with this new security system (however, it will be very similar to what we have currently at The Prep School facility).

## ***traffic flow and parking***

To help with the traffic flow at the new facility, we are interested in setting up a traffic flow "plan" for entering and exiting the parking facility. From analyzing our space, it makes the most sense to have families enter the parking lot off of Third Street and to exit the parking lot by turning left down the alley and heading over to Fourth Street.

This traffic route would help the families who are turning off of Third Street into the Academy parking lot to continue to move, instead of having to stop and to wait for people leaving the parking lot. The idea of having a car stop on Third Street could lead to a potential accident, since other travelers on Third Street are not use to stopped traffic on this street.

In addition, the alley behind the Academy facility that leads to Fourth Street is designed for one-way traffic. If our "flow of traffic" leads out this direction, we will have fewer problems with traffic "back-ups" due to people trying to go both ways on this one-lane street.

I hope this traffic flow plan makes sense. If you have further questions, please talk with Lia or Amy. We can answer more detailed questions. In writing this part of this packet, I feel like Michael Keaton in the movie, *Mr. Mom*, having to explain the proper car pool procedures!

As for the parking, parking at this facility should be ample since there are the same amount of parking spaces at the Academy facility as at the current Prep School site **AND** at the Academy facility, there will only be half as many children. The staff will be parking at a different location - not in the lot located in front of the building, so we will not take up valuable parking. I know we "share" our parking, but Mira Hair Salon does not open on Mondays and the rest of the week does not open until 10:00 a.m. making it easy to find parking during drop-off times. As for pick-up, we will see what transpires. There are also two spots located off of Rogers Street, right beside our facility, for quick drop-offs and quick pick-ups! Feel free to use these spots, if you would like!

## ***play spaces at the Academy***

The Prep School Academy has an indoor playground that each class will visit throughout the day. Please check your child's daily classroom schedule to see when your child's indoor playground time is. While in the indoor playground, students will play with balls, create art projects, swing in our hammock, talk with friends in our tree house area, etc.! The students are lucky to have this space available to them because in stormy, cold, or wintry weather, students can still have a space to get some energy out! We love our indoor play space!

**Our indoor play space is also available TO RENT for parties and events! Talk with Lia, if you are interested in this indoor area for parties and events!**

During the Fall months while the weather is still warm and pleasant, students of the Academy will visit the local park, Builders' Steele Park, once per day. The park is located one minute away (by car) and five minutes away (on foot). Teachers and students would leave the facility, cross Rogers Street, and head west - into a neighborhood area. There are sidewalks the whole walk. For safety procedures, two teachers will ALWAYS go with the class and a backpack filled with first aid and a cell phone will be brought along. In addition, a crossing guard will be present to stop traffic when the students and teachers walk across Rogers Street. Check your child's daily classroom schedule to find out about walks to the park. On the days that students do not walk to the park, they will spend time in our indoor play space!

## ***field trips***

All members of the Academy will take field trips throughout the school year. As the school year starts, teachers will begin to plan their field trips. Due to the wonderful location of the Academy's facility, in the HEART of the Bloomington community, members of the Academy will take walking field trips - in which they walk to different community locations! The Kindergarten POD will take monthly field trips and the first and second graders will go on a field trip every two weeks.

For field trips, students leave at a designated time in the morning and most often return before lunchtime. Be sure to look in your child's teacher's weekly newsletter for more information regarding our upcoming field trips. Some field trips will have a small fee associated with them - this cost goes to cover the entrance fee for the trip.

In addition, chaperones are always welcome on field trips - just be sure to talk with your child's teacher about chaperoning details. As a chaperone, you are expected to help with all of the children - not just your child. So, please be ready for this. Thanks for your participation!

## ***t-shirt information and school colors***

You will find information in this packet regarding Prep School Academy apparel (t-shirts and MORE). If you are interested in purchasing apparel, please have your order sheet and money turned in by Friday, August 21<sup>st</sup> (checks can be made out to The Prep School). Prep School apparel is great to have for field trips, to show school spirit on *SPIRIT* days (see calendar) and to wear around town. This year, we have switched to a new company for apparel - Select Embroidery and Apparel. You will not be disappointed with the quality or prices ☺!

For the Fall, apparel will come in one of our school colors (forest green) and other neutral colors. Because the students of Fall 2009 are the first enrollees of The Prep School Academy, they will be the ones to choose the **other school color** for The Prep School Academy! ☺ Voting on the new school color will be done in September!

## ***school pictures***

For Fall 2009, our school pictures will be taken by LifeTouch Photography ([www.lifetouch.com](http://www.lifetouch.com)). On the calendar, you will see that the Academy students will have their pictures taken on Tuesday September 1. Pictures will start at 8:00 a.m. and be taken until 11:30 a.m. However, if the photographer gets done with the Academy BEFORE 11:30 a.m., he or she will go home. In order for us to ENSURE that your child will be photographed on this assigned day, your child MUST ARRIVE at school by 10:00 a.m. If your child is not at school by this time, they might not be photographed. (Since school officially starts at 9:00 a.m., this should not be an outrageous request.)

If your child's picture day is on a day that your child does not attend school and you want school pictures taken, you need to have your child to school by 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, September 1<sup>st</sup>. As soon as you arrive, your child will be "ushered in" immediately to get his/her picture taken, so that you will not have to wait.

On this day, LifeTouch will also do group classroom photographs. These classroom photographs will be taken at the end of the individual pictures. At this point, I do not know the time of group photographs and the photographer does not know the time of these group photographs. We will have a better idea on the day of pictures.

More information regarding pictures will be in your child's mailbox at the end of August. Please look for this information!

## ***Academy recycling center***

As part of the curriculum of the first and second grade program, the students in the first and second grade class will have a year-long community service learning project in which the students provide volunteer hours to local community service organizations and in which they establish their own procedures and system to assist in furthering this cause.

This year, the first and second grade will be focused on helping the environment by recycling and reusing. Because of this, the Academy and The Prep School will collect cans, paper, and plastic to be recycled. Look for recycling bins for these types of items at the Academy and at The Prep School.

The first and second graders, as part of their classroom economy and jobs, will be working in our Academy's recycling station. They will be counting, weighing, packaging, and analyzing the amount of recycled items that come through our Recycling Station. All of these items will be taken to local recycling facilities throughout the school year. First and second grade students will learn more about trash and recycling by visiting local businesses and governmental agencies that work with these topics - like the dump, the Recycling center, the City waste management department, etc. This is a BIG part of our first and second grade curricular goals - authentic experiences!

In addition to cans, paper, and plastics, our Recycling Station will have a "RECYCLEABLE GEM" - this is a special monthly item to collect. For September, our "RECYCLEABLE GEM" is plastic bags. These bags will be collected and then donated to the Animal Shelter. So, not only are we recycling, but we are REUSING! ☺ Keep an eye out for the remainder of the year's RECYCLEABLE GEMS!

Thanks for your participation in our school's Recycling Station. Watch for more details of this program in September!

## ***performances***

The Prep School Academy has three performances per year in which each student (yes, even the first and second grade) is an active participant! The first performance takes place during the Halloween season, the second takes place during the Christmas holiday, and the third takes place on Kindergarten Graduation (in May). During these performances, each POD performs songs, dances, and/or plays, so we expect your child to be present. Of course, we understand if your child cannot be in attendance due to family obligations, but like we said, we really want your child there - it is such a FUN time! Please check the included school calendar for these performance dates! Performances are held at Bloomington High School North!

## ***fundraising***

The Parent Activities Committee, a.k.a. the "P.A.C.", performs many wonderful activities for The Prep School and The Prep School Academy! One of these activities is organizing our school's fundraisers. For the Fall, the P.A.C. has already organized a fundraiser! This year the P.A.C. will be encouraging all families at The Prep School Academy to sell monogrammed bake ware and cookie dough! Fundraising information and details will be available in September and will be placed in your child's mailbox.

In addition, the Parent Activities Committee is always looking for more active members! Please see information regarding the P.A.C. and their activities in this packet of information - a newsletter is included! Be sure to check out Bucceto's Dine and Donate Night once a month on a Wednesday night from 4:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. - organized by the P.A.C.! At Bucceto's on this night, 20% of your total food bill will be donated to the Parent Activities Committee, which in turn goes to funding projects for The Prep School Academy!! Look for more information on this event in your child's mailbox, but our first Bucceto's Dine and Donate Night is on Wednesday, September 9th!

## ***tuition policy reminder***

Tuition payments are required for each full week of school regardless of absenteeism due to illness or vacation. As a reminder, tuition payments can be made either:

1. twice a month (half of the monthly amount due on the first of the month and half due on the fifteenth of the month) or
2. once a month (due on the first of the month).

You will receive a tuition notice in your child's mailbox a few days before tuition is due. You will be charged a \$5.00 per day late fee for any payment not made on time. If the tuition due date falls on a Saturday or Sunday, tuition is expected to be made on the Friday before the Saturday or Sunday due date.

Each Kindergarten family receives five (5) vacation days for the period of August 17<sup>th</sup> through the start of the next Fall (Fall 2010). In order to use these dates, you need to notify the director through our written Vacation Usage Form. You can obtain this form from any staff member. Families of first and second grade students are not eligible for vacation time.

## ***"extras"***

\* Just a reminder - the "official" school day is from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Before school hours are 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. and after school hours are 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. (Family members will be charged \$5.00 per every 10 minutes you are late picking up your child).

\* If you child has FOOD ALLERGIES, we need to know immediately. Please give Lia or LeeAnna a call at (812) 333-2882 to give us this information. We like to prepare our staff ahead of time on details like this!

\* Once to twice a month, The Prep School and The Prep School Academy offers evening services, so that parents can have a "Parents' Night Out"! Parents' Night Out is \$20.00 per child and children ages 2 to 12 are allowed to attend. Look at the school calendar to see when (and at which school location) Parents' Night Out is being offered!

\* Kindergarten families - please provide an extra change of clothes for your child to keep in his/her locker. Please label these items with your family name - this way, items will be easy to identify!

\* Although you have already received this list via email, I have included in this Fall Information Packet a list of needed items for The Prep School Academy. Many of you are working hard to collect wonderful items for the Academy, so THANK YOU! Any donations would be greatly appreciated! ☺

## ***needed family updates***

To maintain accurate records, we have included several forms in this packet for you to complete. Please have any forms submitted by Friday, August 21<sup>st</sup>. Thanks for your cooperation.

1. Family Information Update Form - in case of emergency, please make sure your family's contact information is correct. Even if you submitted a form in the summer, please re-submit - you can never be too sure! Also, be sure to include e-mail addresses - we love to notify you of important events via group e-mail and we use group e-mail A LOT!
2. At the Academy, we will be starting a new Family Picture Wall! If you do not have a current picture at The Prep School that can be moved over to The Prep School Academy location, please bring one in! We love to show off our wonderful families!
3. New families ... Included in this packet are enrollment forms your child's file is missing. Please fill out and return on the first day of school. If you don't find any student forms in your packet, your file is complete! ☺
4. A health record, which includes current shot record (6 year olds get a WHOLE new round of shots!) and **physical exam** (must have been within the last year and must be signed by a physician), is required for each child. If your child is missing a health record, you will find the appropriate form included in this packet. Also, if your child has recently turned six years old, The Prep School Academy needs records of these **new shots!** This must be turned in on the day your child starts The Prep School Academy! So, make your physical appointments and shot appointments now!
5. For all families... On July 23, 2009, our state inspector visited The Prep School Academy for our initial health review. At this time, it was brought to my attention that all students must have a copy of their birth certificate on file at The Prep School Academy. Because of this, I need a copy of your child's birth certificate immediately.

## ***The Prep School fish tank***

Throughout the year, as you have entered The Prep School at the 17<sup>th</sup> Street facility, you and your children have enjoyed our school fish tank. This fish tank was purchased to memorialize one of our past Prep School teachers, Ms. Lisa Rutigliano, who died in an automobile accident in 2006. Lisa's family and friends collected money to fund a trust that would set-up and maintain this saltwater fish tank for several years, because of Ms. Lisa's love of fish! Unfortunately, after a year of funding the fish tank, the family and the funding have disappeared. If at any time you would like to donate to our school "fish tank fund", we would gladly accept your donation! We also collect "pennies for the fish tank" in October, so look for this project at this time!

## ***final thoughts***

In this packet, you have read some details to help you navigate the first few days of this school year. If at any time, you have questions or are confused, please feel free to talk with your child's teacher **or** call me, Lia, at the school (333-2882), or on my cell phone (360-4660). In addition, Amy Mason is the "building supervisor" at The Prep School Academy facility, when I am not present, so any questions that arise regarding the Academy's physical space, policies, or procedures can be discussed with her.

As you finish looking through this packet and notice that your child's "days of attendance" schedule is not correct, please contact me, Lia, immediately. We can make the necessary changes before school starts! Also, if you receive this packet and are not planning on attending the school for the Fall of 2009, please contact me immediately.

Thanks for your patience, understanding, and help during this exciting time in your child's life. Please remember with all new endeavors, there is the potential to have a few "bumps in the road". As we start this new journey, let's work together to have a successful experience! All of us at The Prep School Academy look forward to working with your child and your family during the upcoming school year! Go Prep School Academy! ☺