

Denali Montessori School
Monday Memo
February 21/22, 2022

CALENDAR of the Week:

Monday: Have a marvelous Monday!
Presidents' Day Holiday!

Tuesday: Have a terrific Tuesday!
School Tour 9:30-10:30am
ACCESS Testing
Elise & John Challenge Alaska Field Trip 9:00-2:00
Baumer Skating 1 – 3pm
Climate & Connectedness Survey Gr 3-6

Wednesday: Have a wonderful Wednesday
Climate & Connectedness Survey Gr 3-6
Child Study 8-8:50am Katrina
Ruth @ Director meeting 9:30-10:30am

Thursday: Have a thriving Thursday
Climate & Connectedness Survey Gr 3-6
Optional Meeting with Cindy Hemry regarding new principal selection process 3:45

Friday: Have a fantastic Friday!
Climate & Connectedness Survey Gr 3-6
Fur Rondevous Dog Sled Races on Cordova ~noon
Lee/Kirkland Eagle River Nature Center 9:30-1:30
Moyer Community Walk 12:45-2:15pm
Homan/Jasmin Skating 1:45-3:15pm

Future Dates:

- March 3 Staff meeting is cancelled
- March 3 Meet & Greet Principal candidates at the Ed Center
- Climate & Connectedness Survey Gr 3-6 through March 25.
- Principal Selection Tentative Date March 18.
- Computer Refresh is now the week of April 4
- IReady diagnostic is opened Jan. 10
- Fastbridge & SAEBRS moved to April 18 – May 6

Dear Staff:

Thank you so much to Elise, Kim Baumer, Ayumi, and Kaely for volunteering to represent **Denali Montessori at the Alternative Fair Saturday afternoon**. Alicia also did a lot of prep work. They demonstrated materials, talked about the program, answered questions, and showed a video. We also had our brochure ready thanks to Alicia. Please advertise the fair to parents in your class letter.

It's important to sell our school at every opportunity. I remember John Tichosky, a former PTSA president, telling me how important it was to brand ourselves. I try always to say our full name, Denali Montessori School, not just Denali. John was the person who initiated the new sign on the front of our school to be Denali Montessori School instead of Denali Elementary School as part of our official name change. (Just a little history before I move on).

Fur Rendezvous starts here this week. **Friday, the Dog Sled Races resume**. They usually go down right in front of our school about noon. If you plan to go out and watch from the curb with your class, please remind them of safety.

The Radar notes are lengthy again this week. The **School Report Card** is out. It's worth checking out. Our prospective parents do and ask questions about it. I'm proud of our 96.82 Attendance rate. That is a direct reflection on you as staff making our school welcome to students and parents and encouraging them to be here. Furthermore the high rate is across our demographics. The testing data is there also and doesn't look so good demographically. This would be a future goal. The data also is a year old. Our volunteer hours average is about 40 hours a week during non-COVID years and has now resumed.

Also on the Radar, check out the 3rd grade Author Read Aloud presentation this week as well as the MTSS check in dates coming up this week and in March.

Our Climate & Connectedness Survey window continues. Please do this with your 3-6 graders. It's essential we have this data. We use this information to plan our goals and focus our needs. Please encourage your parents to fill out the family survey.

This Friday is a high absenteeism day and that is just about those I know. We always have surprises. Please be flexible and help each other out.

We will **start interviews the week of February 28- March 4th**. I'm anticipating at least 1-3 vacancies next year. The second week of interviews will be the week after Spring Break March 14-18.

Please do not use our super subs, Maddy and Kim Santagata as prearranged subs. We need to use these for our daily unexpected needs. You do need to actively try to fill your absences as best you can.

Take care and stay safe – water and chocolate are in my office.

Ruth cell 907-947-0101. Direct phone 907-742-4502 Enclosure: Radar

Repeated Information:

Thank you for being prompt to morning playground duty. Check the schedule and if you cannot be there on your duty day, arrange for someone else to take your place. The 10th Street specialist will now be on the playground helping to supervise student play. They will also help let in late arrivals after 8:50am into the chicken-coop door

Currently, Elementary IS having February parent teacher conferences. Secondary conferences were cancelled. That is probably the source of the confusion. **The Elementary Guidance is to schedule in person with conferences by zoom upon parent request.**

Staffing continues to be a challenge. There doesn't seem to be any one -day absences anymore. If you have symptoms, you need to stay home, call Nurse Marissa, and most likely test. This can take up to 2-3 days at times. There is a 5-day absence for all positive test results. You need to send the PCR, (not rapid), result to Marissa. Cason_marissa@asdk12.org 907-742-4501

Staffing Timeline for School Year 2023:

Feb. 24: School Allocations will be released to principals following adopted budget on Feb. 22.

Mar. 4 - 14: Displacements will be determined

Feb 1 – Mar 29 – School Interviews.

Mar. 22: Sped Staffing

Mar 30 Elementary Staffing

April 12-16: Sped TA placement

Arrival Change: I would like to let our students have a movement opportunity before they enter the building in the morning. I am suggesting that we use the 10th Street morning Specialist on the playground to help supervise the big playground at 8:40 am – 8:48am. I am also going to ask for parent volunteers to help supervise. At 8:48 the teachers on duty will blow the whistle to line up. The students should be lined up by 8:50 when classroom teachers come out to pick them up.

1/10/2022 New COVID Guidance Highlights (5 minutes)

ASD is following CDC guidelines -

Asymptomatic staff who test positive return after 5 days, (not 10)
Administrative leave for fully vaccinated staff is now up to 5 days
Fully Vaccinated includes one booster if eligible
5 months for Moderna and Pfizer
2 months for Johnson & Johnson
Administrative leave is applied for to supervisor (Principal).
Needs vaccination card
Proof of PCR positive test result

From Dr. Bishop:

New CDC recommendations as a follow-up from this weekend's letter.

- Isolation period if you test positive for COVID-19 has been reduced from 10 days to 5 days.
- We only accept molecular test results. No antigen and/or home test results.

Questions about leave should be directed to Benefits and questions about testing/vaccinations/isolation should be directed to Health Services.

Resources for families and staff:

- [COVID 19 Updates Home Screening Guidelines](#) (All languages may not be updated, but communications is working on this)
- [Return-to-School/Work Policy](#)

AEA Computer Refresh (1 Minutes)

Pushed back 3 weeks dues to supply chain issues.

Denali Montessori new date week of April 4

Please be aware of who walk home in your class. They need to walk directly home every day. The playground is rented until 6pm and is not available for sledding or playing.

Please help students not just throw their masks on the playground at recess or after school. This has become a major litter item. Eddy put a waste basket for used masks at the playground door so that dirty masks do not get put into the clean mask basket.

We are looking for host teachers for next year. Please let me know if you are interested. You need 5 years of teaching experience. Thank you to Kjerstin and Christine for volunteering.

I hope you read the email from me about toner and the supply chain. Let's be extra frugal in our use of the copiers. We are a hands-on program. Let's emphasize those materials over paper activities.

COVID test courier service has begun. Tests need to be administered before 3pm so Marissa can get the tests to the courier by 3pm. If you haven't yet worked with this company, the

registration takes a few minutes. See Marissa for help. After that, Marissa will be able to look you up and I have been getting my result that evening.

Important enough to repeat here: We have access to central office personnel if we are short of substitutes. I have to know by 7am if this is the case to put in a request. Remember, the earlier you put in your leave, the better our chance of getting a sub. We have had some positions filled. I suggest you make the call in the evening if possible. It is easier to cancel a sub than our chance to fill a position after 7am. Put in leave requesting a sub even if you have pre-arranged with one of our regular substitutes. Thank you!

Denali Montessori received like monies based upon student enrollment last spring for Montessori math materials and professional development over the next 5 years. This is why we were able to buy so many materials in May and August for you. Therefore, Montessori Material requests for PTSA would be best to be non-math material requests.

Our **PTSA** is offering \$300 classroom grants. You need to submit receipts to PTSA with a short one-paragraph narrative about how you are using the monies.

PTSA would also like to restore the volunteer box in the workroom. If you have any workroom related tasks a volunteer could do, even if they are not in your room, please put it in the box in the workroom. We have parents eager to help.

I encourage all of you to join our PTSA. We cannot function well without them. They provide funding for Montessori trainings and materials that our general budget cannot cover.

This note is from our new president Julia Kentch: We are encouraging parents, students, and staff to join PTSA using Memberhub. The address is denalimontessori.memberhub.com.

Starting October 24, we will need to use all 10 digits to call. This includes the area code.

Please remember we are required to sanitize after lunch and the end of day. The spray bottles are safe for students to use with directions about how to use it appropriately. I had the opportunity to monitor Upper El Lunch Friday and noticed a number of students who were not intermittently masking. Please make sure everyone does this. It's the only way we're going to stop the spread. **'Masking and symptom free' is our mantra.**

Again, saying the pledge daily is a School Board Policy. If you are forgetting this, you could make it a student job to remind the class. Setting aside a consistent time for this also helps.

TIFFS have been created in Power School for students who went to summer school. If you are creating a TIFF for a student you are bringing to MTSS, you may want to check to see if one has been created. Remember, 4-6 of data, both quantitative and qualitative is needed to help the MTSS team help you. SAEBRS data is also required. We will have more training at upcoming staff meetings on the expectations for MTSS and our October Data meetings with me.

I sent out the new duty schedule Friday to start Monday Jan. 3, 2022 to include the new plan for three teachers on duty 3:30-3:40pm. The staggered dismissal remains.

PEAKS Denali ELA % proficiency:	SY17/18 48.1	SY18/19 47.0	SY20/21 41.0
Math % proficiency:	40.4	35.6	35.5

The need for monitoring progress and data is clear.

Health Note from Amanda Pugh to go into parent newsletters:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1dbt2y6zFjRu15HgPqfv6rJ4aUO2XLGb0/edit?usp=sharing&oid=113105491581985036047&rtpof=true&sd=true>

Remember our children are all our children. Please help us teach our children the schoolwide expectations kindly and respectfully if you see a student needing a reminder. If there is an unsafe situation whether the child has an IEP, behavior plan, or 504, , I need to be called, not the resource teacher. Please reference the staff handbook student discipline plan for details. It specifically outlines those behaviors that need to be managed by teachers and those by the principal.

Due to rising COVID numbers, I am requesting lunches be in the classrooms again. Two classrooms may use the MPR on Wednesday, Thursday, & Friday. They will need to space out over at least two rows. There is no freedom of movement during lunch. A seating chart is required for both the MPR and the classroom for lunchtimes. Intermittent masking is required. This means that the mask is lowered for taking bites or drinks and then the mask is put back over the nose to swallow or chew. Teachers need to teach this skill explicitly as students may not know how to do this.

AM Entering Lower El West Door with Moyer & Mr. H at the Center door
Upper El Center (Chicken) Door

Lunch: Lower El entering after Recess ALL classes through the West Door

Recess Upper El Exiting ALL classes through the Center, (Chicken) Door

PM Exiting: Lower El West Door with Moyer & Mr. H at the Center door
Upper El Center (Chicken) Door

Field Trips: May resume. **Drivers and chaperones do need to show proof of vaccination or a negative test within 48 hours of the fieldtrip.** Driver form and insurance forms need to be filled out now please in advance of all field trips.

Volunteers in the Building: Need to fill out the Volunteer Form and Waiver Form, (two forms) and we submit it to central office. Although there is a vaccination question, **vaccination is not required for volunteering in the building.** The

information is used solely for mitigation purposes. The guidelines are different for vaccinated and unvaccinated persons.

We can do this together. We will have a thriving and positive school and help all our students follow the Montessori Culture of kindness and respect.

Denali PTSA

We need you to help Denali PTSA make this school year fantastic.

Join the PTSA at www.denaliptsa.org

If you want more information or just to let us know, email us at denaliptsa@gmail.com

We also have many new students to Denali so the culture of who we are and what it means to be Montessori needs to be explicitly taught and reviewed during these first six weeks. More time will need to be devoted to SEL and class meetings as you introduce and reinforce the Denali Montessori expectations. My handbook talk is a more ASD oriented talk. Please sign up for a half hour time if you have not already.

Seating Charts for Unmasked Lunch and Snack Times are Required.

At the district level, unvaccinated adults (staff members), are responsible for an overwhelming percentage of the staff who are currently out due to COVID related illness or status as a close contact.

The goal for ASD and for us is to keep our doors open. ASD has told us that masks and vaccinations are our best tools to accomplish this... Universal masking right now is the only thing that allows unvaccinated students who are non-symptomatic but masked to avoid quarantine due to "close contact" status. "

1. Our greatest vulnerability for students is lunch and "snack" times due to the need for those activities to be accomplished without a mask on or with a mask being pulled up and down repeatedly.
2. Spacing out students at lunch and keeping a seating chart will keep us safer.
3. Some teachers are choosing to use our barriers for lunch or snacks only to help with this unmasked time.

The bottom line is we all need to be masked and symptom free. Adults and students take their masks off only for eating, whether in the MPR, classroom, or staff lounge. Thank you for helping us all stay safe.

Canvas Intervention Trainings

Also published on Canvas are SIPPS, Phonics for Reading, Heggerty, and Star Binder intervention programs. These are available for you to take to be able to offer them to your students. I anticipate that we will encounter more academic gaps for our students coming back to in person learning after 18 months. Increasing our repertoire of choices will enhance their

opportunities for success. ASD and Denali Montessori will be focused upon monthly reviews of student data and student plans for interventions. Be sure to schedule your intervention times into your day.

Climate Building

Your class climate and relationships through teaching the classroom procedures and SEL lessons are your first priority.

Building Dedicated Substitutes and Requesting a Substitute

We also are continuing the dedicated building substitutes this year. Mardena Williams, , and Kim Santagata will be our subs. For planned absences, (approved by me), you put in as no sub required and arrange for one of our building substitutes. For sudden illness, you put in as sub required and a substitute from the larger pool may be called. Our building dedicated substitutes are available for 120 days of our year only. This is outside of any long-term substitute need.

Masking Protocols

Masks will be required inside for all persons, adults, and children regardless of vaccination status. Masks will be optional outside.

If families would like an exemption, I am happy to share the process. Let me know. This is the guidance from our Director of Health Service, Jennifer Patronas;

The face shield must be worn with a mask except for short periods for educational reasons.

If a student or staff member needs a mask exemption, then they must do the following:

1. **Student-** submit a doctor note (signed by a DO, MD, PA, or NP) to Healthcare Services and School Nurse
2. **Staff Member-** complete the ADA accommodation process with the Equity office

Enclosures

1. Radar Notes