



School Talk

WEEKLY UPDATE!

August 28, 2021

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Welcome Back (or for the First Time)!

All of us at MPSA are looking forward to seeing your children this coming Monday, August 30. All PreK4, Kindergartners and 1st through 5th grade students begin on Monday. All PreK3 students should check their Welcome Letters for their start dates.

Bus Info: All bus information has been uploaded to ParentVue. If you do not see your child's information, please do not contact MPSA. Contact APS Transportation at transportation@apsva.us or call 703-228-8670.

Drop Off & Pick Up: Children can be dropped off by 8:30AM if they want breakfast. If not, we ask that children aren't dropped off until 8:40AM. All walkers and car riders are to be dropped off at Door #5 on Highland Street. Walkers should walk up to the door where they will be greeted by staff. Car riders should pull up to the curb (with the school on the right side of your car) and unload there. If you need to unbuckle your child from a car seat, we ask that you find parking and do that and then walk up to the school as to not hold up the flow of the drop off line. Pick up is in the same spot for both walkers and car riders. Please follow the same procedures. Dismissal is 3:41PM. Children not picked up by 4PM will be taken to the office and parents will be called.

Attendance: If your child is going to be absent, please call 703-228-2037, email montessori.attendance@apsva.us or fill out [this form](#) before 9:30AM to avoid a robocall.

[Lunch Safety & MPSA](#)

Families have expressed interest in how MPSA will be ensuring the safety of our children during lunch. Please read our detailed plan for lunch protocols [here](#). MPSA is also required to follow the safety protocols that APS has for schools and those can be found [here](#) along with other information about the school year.

Close contacts: Here is a chart explaining the definition of “close contact” when it comes to Covid-19 exposure.

Determining close contacts in a school setting

Exposed Person	School Prevention Strategies were in place	Less Than 3 feet	3 to 6 feet	More than 6 feet
Student contact and case while wearing a well-fitted mask consistently and correctly.	Yes	Close Contact	Not a close contact	Not a close contact
	No	Close contact	Close contact	Not a close contact
Adult contact (regardless of mask use)	Yes or No	Close contact	Close contact	Not a close contact

[Annual Online Verification Process](#)

The APS Annual Online Verification Process (AOVP) opened on August 23. All families should sign into ParentVue and complete the process as soon as possible. The purpose of this process is to ensure that we have all the latest and up-to-date information for your child. This includes emergency contact information, dismissal information and other important pieces we need to keep our students safe. Please check that we have the correct phone numbers and e-mails listed as this system is where we turn to when we need to contact families.

[Volunteer Information](#)

Beginning August 30, 2021, all visitors to any APS schools will need to be fully vaccinated and complete the APS Volunteer Screening process. You can find the online application [here](#). You will be prompted to upload a picture of the back and front of your vaccine card when you fill out the application. Once your vaccination has been confirmed, you will receive a link to complete a

mandatory virtual training course and a background check will be performed. This protocol could take at least 2 weeks to complete.

There are no exceptions to this protocol. No visitors/volunteers will be allowed on school grounds in any capacity without having passed this process. This includes volunteers for the PTA and any events or activities that happen after school or on the weekends. Please understand that completing the process does not give you immediate access to the school. All visitors and volunteers must be scheduled or given an appointment to enter the school by Kia Haynes, MPSA's Volunteer and Partnerships Coordinator, or an administrator.

Volunteers for lunch: Unlike other APS elementary schools, our teachers eat with their classes, so we do not need volunteers to help oversee lunch.

Welcome Letter from Our Counselor

Dear Families,

Welcome to a new school year! Like my colleagues, I am so delighted that learning is onsite this year and no longer virtual. It was great to see so many of you at the open house on Thursday. It is a pleasure to be able to work with **Ms. Carol Halvorson**, who is our part-time counselor. She will be responsible for working with the UEM students: teaching the SEL lessons, working with individuals, running a small group and middle school transition. On days when Ms. Halvorson is not here, I will be available to support any UEM student who is in need of speaking with a counselor. I want to share with you my role as a school counselor and share my contact information. Please visit the counselor tab on the MPSA website which has useful information. I will be updating this in the coming week and on a regular basis. You can always contact me if you have further questions.

While a school counselor has many responsibilities, our primary roles are:

- deliver social-emotional learning lessons twice a month to each classroom
- be of assistance to individual students in need of academic, social or emotional support
- facilitate small groups for specific social-emotional or academic skills
- serve as a consultant for parents and staff having concerns for a student
- serve as an advocate for students in the case of any physical or emotional abuse such as bullying or relational aggression. We are mandated reporters which means we are legally obligated to report if we suspect any physical abuse, emotional abuse or neglect by caretakers.

My contact information:

- The best way to contact me is through email: diane.reeser@apsva.us
- My office phone number is: 703-228-8804
- I check email more than once a day; voicemail messages on phone line 1x in the morning MPSA staff is an extremely loving and dedicated community of professionals.

We are here to work together with you in support of your child's academic, social and emotional needs. You and your child/children are also part of the MPSA community. You matter! You belong! Please reach out to me if I can be of service to your child.

Kind regards,

Diane Reeser, MA MPSA School Counselor

Band & Orchestra Safety Information

From Mr. Randy Glasner (Band) & Mr. Erik Kamenski (Orchestra):

String players (violin, viola, cello) and percussion players (snare drum and bells) will always be masked and maintain 3-foot distancing during instruction. Wind players (flute, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, trombone, and baritone) will be provided bell covers for their instruments from the county and must use them to play during indoor class time. While indoors, players will be at least 3 ft apart and only lower their mask while playing and then cover immediately after. When conditions outdoors allow, some wind instruction will take place outdoors for additional safety. Wind instrument students will be responsible for the bell cover and wash it each week and bring it to lessons. Students who lose the bell cover will have to purchase a new one and only be allowed to pretend to play during indoor class time. These guidelines follow NAFME, VMEA guidelines as well as additional from APS.

Upper Elementary Montessori Kit Pick Up

This is a reminder that this coming **Monday, September 28** is the pick up day for Upper Elementary Montessori tool kits.

All tool kits will be distributed from the **walker/car rider door (#5)** on S. Highland Street. Drive up to the curb and **remain in your car**. The teachers will bring your child's kit to you. To expedite this process **please write your child's name and teacher** legibly and large on a piece of paper and secure to the passenger side window.

Lower Elementary/Primary Montessori Parents: This is **not** the time for you to come and pick up kits. If you did not make your distribution days and still need to pick up a kit, please contact your child's teacher about how to make an appointment with the main office for pick up. Thank you!

Upcoming Dates

- Monday, August 30: First Day of School for PreK4 and K-5th.
- Friday, September 3-Monday, September 6: Labor Day Holiday, NO SCHOOL

- Tuesday, September 7: Rosh Hashanah, NO SCHOOL
- Thursday, September 9: Back-to-School Night (Virtual), Time TBA
- Thursday, September 16: Yom Kippur, NO SCHOOL

 **Keep in Touch**

- MPSA on APS: <https://montessori.apsva.us/>
- MPSA on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/MPSArlington>
- MPSA Library on Twitter: https://twitter.com/MPSA_Library
- Principal Genove on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/CSGenove>
- Arlington Montessori PTA: <http://acmpta.com/>
- Arlington Montessori Action Committee (AMAC): <http://www.arlingtonmontessori.org/>