



Director’s Corner

August 2017

Dear Fraser Families,

August is always a bittersweet time for us. We are saying goodbye to children and families that we have known for years. While we are excited that the children are moving on to other educational endeavors, it is sad because some of our children have been with us for 5 years. I want to wish our outgoing families best wishes with their futures!

It is also an exciting time, though, because we will be welcoming new children and families and gearing up for another school year. The 2017-2018 school year calendar and the new tuition rates are both available on the Fraser website, fraser.org. In addition, we will send a copy of the new tuition rates with the September billing which you should receive in the mail in mid-August. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me by email, by phone, or in person.

It is also an exciting time because of the continued growth at Fraser. You can check out some press releases on fraser.org or on the Fraser Facebook page. Most significantly, our clinic in Anoka will be moved to a new site in Coon Rapids and will about triple in size. We also broke ground on a brand new clinic in Woodbury which is set to open sometime in spring or summer of 2018. With all of the other projects, Fraser School’s construction and refresh has been delayed. When those two projects are well underway, the Fraser School project is next in the queue.

As part of the Fraser School construction project, the IT department was going to research how to better distribute the Wi-Fi signal throughout our classrooms so we can better utilize the

PreciouStatus app. This portion of the project will continue with a consultant coming to investigate where the dead spots are and if we can affordably remedy the situation. Stay tuned for more information about that.

The Fraser School Program Committee has not been very successful in its present form so we are going to tweak it. If you have any feedback about what you would like to see in a parent group, please let me know. Feedback can include the time of the meeting, the purpose of the committee, topics to be discussed, etc. Feel free to call, email, or tell me in person.

Finally, I want to remind families of a way that they can recognize a Fraser staff member for going above and beyond their job duties. There are colorful Caught Caring cards in small plastic holders in the Fraser School hallways. Please complete the card and give them to the front office staff. If it is more convenient, you can also complete the Caught Caring on the fraser.org website. Either way, the staff member will be recognized and entered into a weekly drawing.

Thanks for sharing your children with us,

Deedee Stevens-Neal
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Extra Hours

We have had several families that have been confused by our extra hour's policy. To clarify, families should request extra hours through the extra hours phone line (612-798-8332) or through the extra hours email address (extrahours@fraser.org). You should not email Colleen Polson directly even though she answers most requests. When Colleen is ill or takes vacation, other coordinators will cover the requests in her absence. If your request was sent directly to Colleen, no other coordinator will know of the request. We also do not take verbal requests. It is too easy for any of us to be stopped by multiple parents with requests and/or questions and accidentally forget a request.

Extra hours should be requested at least two business days prior to the requested day. We cannot accommodate same day or next day requests. We also do not answer any requests made over the weekend until the following business day. Once you have requested the extra hours, you must wait for your request to be approved prior to bringing your child. You should not assume that your request will be approved because our classrooms are fully enrolled. Our DHS licensing indicates the number of children that we can have in our classrooms based upon the square footage of each classroom. We cannot add another child if we are already scheduled at our maximum number of children. DHS licensing also mandates the adult/child ratio that we must maintain. We cannot grant an extra hours request if we do not have the adequate number of staff in the classroom to accommodate another child. If you do not receive an answer (an approval or denial) within 24 hours, please follow up with an additional phone message or email.

If you drop off your child early or pick up your child late without having approved extra hours, you will be charged the late pick-up fee. The fees are \$1 per minute for the first 15 minutes and \$5 per minute for the 16th and subsequent minutes. These fees can add up quickly. For example, if a family of a preschool-aged child was approved for one hour of extra care, the cost would be \$9.70. If that same family picked their child up one hour late, the fee would be \$240.

The full policy is in the parent handbook. This is how it reads in its entirety:

“Extra hours, for children currently enrolled at Fraser School, are available when space and staffing permits and must be pre-arranged. Reservations must be made at least two business days in advance by calling (612) 798-8322 or by emailing extrahours@fraser.org. Hours requested are not guaranteed until a Fraser School Coordinator contacts you with approval. An extra hours request will be automatically denied if your family's tuition bill is not up to date. If you drop your child off early or pick them up late without prior approval for extra hours, you will be billed the early drop off/late pick up fee according to the current rate sheet. You can request extra hours by the half hour. Extra hours will be billed on an hourly basis according to the current rates and will appear on a monthly statement after the hours are utilized.”

I hope that this article clarifies any questions that families have had. If you have other questions regarding extra hours, you can contact the intake/billing coordinator, Colleen Polson, at 612-798-8324 or at colleen.polson@fraser.org. You can also contact the director, Deedee Stevens-Neal, at 612-798-8319 or at deedee.stevens-neal@fraser.org.

Photos of Fraser School Children

In the Fraser School Parent Handbook, we have a policy regarding the school's use of photos of children that are participating in school-related activities. Annually, we require that families explicitly give or not give permission for photos of their child to be used in the classroom and the classroom newsletter; whether the child can be included in the class photo; and/or whether the child's photo can be used for marketing purposes in the general public.

We have also had an unwritten rule that families should not take photos of other children while participating in Fraser School activities. When a family takes a photo, we don't have control of the photo and its distribution. This jeopardizes a family's right to control their own child's image. While this has been our "policy" for a period of time, we do not have this written anywhere. This policy will be included in the 2017-2018 revision of the Fraser School Parent Handbook. I'm so sorry that this rule was not more transparent.

To clarify, families can take photos of their own child/children participating in Fraser School sponsored activities; however, they must not include any other children in those pictures. This would include daily activities, field trips, Family Fun Nights, class picnics, etc. The only exception to this rule is if the other child's parent is present and gives verbal permission for their child to be photographed. If a parent takes a picture and inadvertently includes another child, we ask that the photograph either be deleted or that the other child is completely cropped from the photo. Please do not distribute photos of children other than your own through print or electronic means. Thanks so much for your cooperation.

August: National Eye Exam Month

August is National Eye Exam Month. This is a great time to ask your child's primary health provider about the need for vision checks for your child. The American Optometric Association recommends that infants from 6-12 months be taken for a baseline eye exam. Optometrists may check for eye function, ocular health, and vision.

Optometrists also recommend annual eye exams for children starting at age 3. During this preschool-age range, doctors can identify and treat abnormalities such as lazy eye (amblyopia). From this age into elementary years, they may also be able to identify and correct more common vision issues such as nearsightedness (myopia), farsightedness (hyperopia), and astigmatism. Most of these can be easily corrected with eye glasses.

You should also tell your child's health care provider about other eye issues such as itchy eyes and dry eyes. Your health care provider can identify if these are symptoms of greater problems or more common issues, such as allergies. Your health care provider may be able to recommend some eye drops to make your child more comfortable.

In addition, adults should focus on their eye health, too. Some suggestions from the American Optometric Association include:

- **Eat a balanced diet.**
- **Don't smoke.**
- **Get regular exercise.**
- **Protect your eyes from the sun.**
- **Protect your eyes from short-wavelength visible light.**
- **Get periodic eye examinations.**

This month's events

> **No School**

August 31-September 1, 2017
Staff Development Days

Upcoming events

> **No School**

September 4, 2017
Labor Day

Measles Update

There was about a 26 day stretch when there were no new reported cases of measles within the state of Minnesota. The state considers the outbreak over when there are 42 consecutive days of no new reported cases. Unfortunately, there was another case reported on July 13 in Hennepin County. This was an adult male that had visited many of the same places as the last known infected individuals had. The county is expecting more cases since this latest individual had been particularly active during the incubation period. The incubation period is 21 days so other cases may appear during the first and second week of August.

Fraser has taken unprecedented steps to ensure that our children and staff are safe. We have obtained the immunization records of all children that play in our common spaces, including those enrolled in services other than Fraser School. Fraser staff members have consulted with any family whose child is un-immunized or under-immunized. The Fraser School Health Services Coordinator has communicated with the families of the infants that are too young to be immunized.

If you have any questions about the measles outbreak or the steps that Fraser has taken, feel free to contact the director, Deedee Stevens-Neal, at 612-798-8319 or deedee.stevens-neal@fraser.org. You can also contact the Health Services Coordinator, Krista Shaw, at 612-798-8325 or at krista.shaw@fraser.org.

Staff Development

On August 31 and September 1, Fraser School staff members will attend various staff trainings. On the agenda for these two days is:

- Staff members from Fraser's mental health division will train on how to handle children that have repeated challenging behaviors. During this training, we will all hear about how to teach children about the Zones of Regulation, which is a tool used to teach children self-control.
- Fraser School staff will receive a refresher course on the Positive Supports Rule. This is a regulation that took effect on August 31, 2015 and determines procedures that are permitted and those that are prohibited. The training also includes information on culturally competent caregiving and Person-Centered Planning.
- Some of our own teaching staff will give presentations on lesson planning, the assessment tool, and using simple sign language in the classroom.
- Finally, some staff members will take their annual refresher of Non-Violent Crisis Intervention, which is also required by the Positive Supports Rule.

It is important for classroom staff members to have this time to reconnect, renew, and re-energize for the upcoming school year. Teaching young children can be a stressful job and having these days is important for the well-being of our staff.