

Director's Corner

February 2017

Dear Fraser Families,

It was great to see everyone at Family Fun Night! I appreciate how many families come out to play with us. I'm also so impressed with the creativity of the Family Fun Night planning committee. I want to give a special thanks to Elizabeth Eng for all of her behind-the-scenes planning; Webster Ford for his great book reading; and Jessie Noid, Sam Aon Theth, Maddie Ahern, Mackenzie Willits, and Mirsada Dedic for their dramatic re-enactment of the book.

We had some very exciting news this past month. We were informed that Fraser School was voted both "Best Preschool" and "Best Child Care" in the Reader's Choice Awards in the Richfield Sun Current. Thanks to all of you that voted for us! We will receive a plaque that we will display proudly in the school.

In the last newsletter, I wrote about an upcoming licensing visit from the Department of Human Services Licensing Division. Typically, our licensor visits our site during the first quarter of every other year. However, I've been informed that DHS has suspended their regular licensing visits while they work to conform to some new federal regulations. At this time, they are only visiting new programs, centers that have a history of noncompliance to the rules, and following up on licensing complaints. Prior to visiting, our licensor will send a packet of information for me to complete. So, even though it is an unannounced visit, we will know when they are ready to resume their typical licensing visits.

Even though we know that our licensor won't be here at any moment, we are continuing to prepare

for the visit. Krista Shaw, Fraser School's health services coordinator, has been contacting some families regarding updating their child's health or immunization information. We want to make sure that all of our children's files are current and accurate.

Finally, I want to remind families that Fraser School will be closed to children on Monday, February 20. We will have a staff development day where the school employees will receive several hours of annual training that is required by the state of Minnesota. Amongst the topics are Sudden Unexpected Infant Death and Abusive Head Trauma training. We will have a presentation on Fraser School's Child Care Risk Reduction plan and will practice our lock-down and evacuation procedures. In addition, our CEO/President, Diane Cross, will speak to the Fraser School staff about Fraser's 5-year strategic plan.

Thanks for sharing your children with us,

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Valentine's Day at Fraser School

Fraser School allows each classroom teaching team to decide if or how it will celebrate holidays such as Valentine's Day. Please look in your child's classroom newsletter or for a note explaining what each group is doing. Whatever your child's classroom is doing, please do not send treats in the valentines without consulting your child's teacher. We have many children that have a variety of food allergies and we do not want to have an allergen exposure because teachers were not aware of what was in a valentine envelope. Instead of adding candy or other food items in the valentine, consider some stickers or a temporary tattoo. Please help us take care of all our friends at Fraser School.

Summer/Fall Registration

This is traditionally the time of year when we would send home a registration form for summer and fall enrollment. Families would return the form with their children's expected schedule for the rest of 2017. Families whose children are discharging for kindergarten are also asked for a discharge date. There were several drawbacks with this system:

1. Colleen Polson (Fraser School's intake/billing coordinator) would need to remind many families of the deadline and give some families multiple copies of the form.
2. Many families' circumstances would change from March to May so the schedules that we received in early spring were not necessarily accurate for very long.
3. For those families whose children are discharging for kindergarten; many don't know the last date of attendance until late spring or mid-summer. Many families

change their discharge date to earlier than their original date.

4. Colleen manually enters all of the schedules and discharge dates into our database system; however, since much of the information changes within months, Colleen is double entering much of the data.

This year, we have decided to change our strategy. **Your child's existing schedule will remain as is until you tell us otherwise.** If your child's schedule will change in the future, please check with Colleen Polson about whether your child's classroom can accommodate the desired schedule change and when. Please give as much notice as possible for schedule changes but you need to give at least two weeks' notice.

If your child is discharging for kindergarten, please tell us your child's last day of enrollment as soon as you know. The absolute last day of Fraser School for those going to kindergarten will be August 30, 2017. On September 5, 2017, we will begin our new fall session at Fraser School.

We have not identified dates for a summer session in 2017. **If you want your child to be absent for several months this summer (for example, for parents that are teachers), please let Colleen know the last date of your child's attendance and their return date.** You will need to pay the summer off retainer fee to hold your child's spot.

Finally, if your child is old enough to attend prekindergarten in fall 2017, you will receive an email so you can let us know if you would like your child in prekindergarten and if you would prefer a summer or fall transition. We will try to accommodate requests but we may not be able depending upon the discharge dates of the current pre-kindergarteners.

End of Day in the Gym

Currently, at the end of the day, we gather all remaining toddlers, preschoolers, and pre-kindergarteners in the gym at about 5:20 PM. We are finding that the initial 15-20 minutes of this time of day can be chaotic. We are blending six classrooms and it is a very busy pick-up time for families. In addition, many of our staff members are scheduled until 5:30 so we are trying to be respectful to get them out on time. We are brainstorming some ways that we can change our practices to help the situation.

Here are some ways that you could help us during that time of day:

- Arrive promptly when your child's scheduled day ends.
- Take your child with you from the gym. During the initial blending of all the classrooms, we are trying to get an accurate count of how many children we have. It can be very confusing when we have children that remain playing in the gym either with their family member present or while their family member gets items from the locker/cubby.
- Please make sure to sign your child out on the correct clip board. If you're not sure which one is correct, please ask. Again, as we blend the classrooms, we are trying to get all children signed into one sign-out sheet but this takes several minutes.
- Keep your child within your sight and sound supervision at all times. (See the related article right next to this one.)
- Please help us reinforce the rule that only adults open gates and doors.

Thanks for your help!

Supervision of Children

We are required to have all children enrolled in Fraser School under the sight and sound supervision of an adult at all times when inside our building. This includes times when a family member has taken charge of the child.

I know that some family members are more comfortable with leaving their child out of their sight for a few minutes and I definitely respect those decisions. Unfortunately, those decisions can affect our compliance with licensing. Following are some recent examples of actual situations that have occurred:

- Family members and children racing in different directions through the hallway to see who can reach the door first. While racing, the child is out of the family members' supervision.
- Family members leaving a child in the hallway near the locker while they run back to the car to retrieve a forgotten item.
- Family members walking away and out of sight from a child that is refusing to come.
- Leaving a sleeping infant in a car seat in the gym while the family members bring all the gear into the infant classroom.
- Sending a child into an empty classroom to alone to retrieve an item or, oppositely, leaving a child in the hallway alone while the family member goes into the classroom to retrieve an item.
- Leaving an older child in the empty gym while picking up an infant from the Ducklings classroom.

Please understand that I don't write the policies but we all are charged with enforcing them. Thanks for helping us stay in compliance.

This month's events

> **No School**

February 20, 2017
Staff Development Day

> **Fraser Bowling with Celebrities**

February 26, 2017
2:00-6:00 PM
Pinstripes

Upcoming events

> **No School**

April 5-6, 2017
Parent/Teacher Conferences

> **No School**

April 7, 2017
Spring Break

2017 Fraser Walk for Autism

Show your support for Fraser families affected by autism! Grab your walking shoes and join us at Mall of America on Saturday, April 8, 2017 from 7-10am for the Fraser Walk for Autism. This fun-filled morning features a sensory friendly walk route filled with activities, games, prizes and therapy animals.

Sign-up as a team or individual and earn some amazing incentive prizes. Register online at www.fraser.org/Events/Fraser-Walk-For-Autism.



**Saturday
April 8, 2017
Mall of America**



Fraser Bowling with Celebrities

It's time to get up close and personal with your favorite local celebrities! This brand new event, Fraser Bowling with Celebrities, features 8 luminaries including:

Debbie Duncan, Midwest's First Lady of Song
Vincent Francoual, Culinary Director, Cara Irish Pubs

Paul Lambert, Aka "Meat Sauce" KFAN Radio
Collen Lindstrom, Cohost Colleen and Bradley Show myTalk 107.1

Nina Moini, WCCO TV News Reporter

Kat Perkins, Semi-Finalist on NBC's The Voice

Paul Peterson, Lead Singer of Deluxe (formerly Prince's band The Family)

Christopher Straub, Designer and Former Contestant on Project Runway

Join us on Sunday, February 26 from 2:00-6:00 pm at Pinstripes in Edina. We'll bowl, eat and get autographs all while raising awareness and money for Fraser.

Buy your ticket today!

www.fraser.org/Events/Fraser-Bowling-with-Celebrities